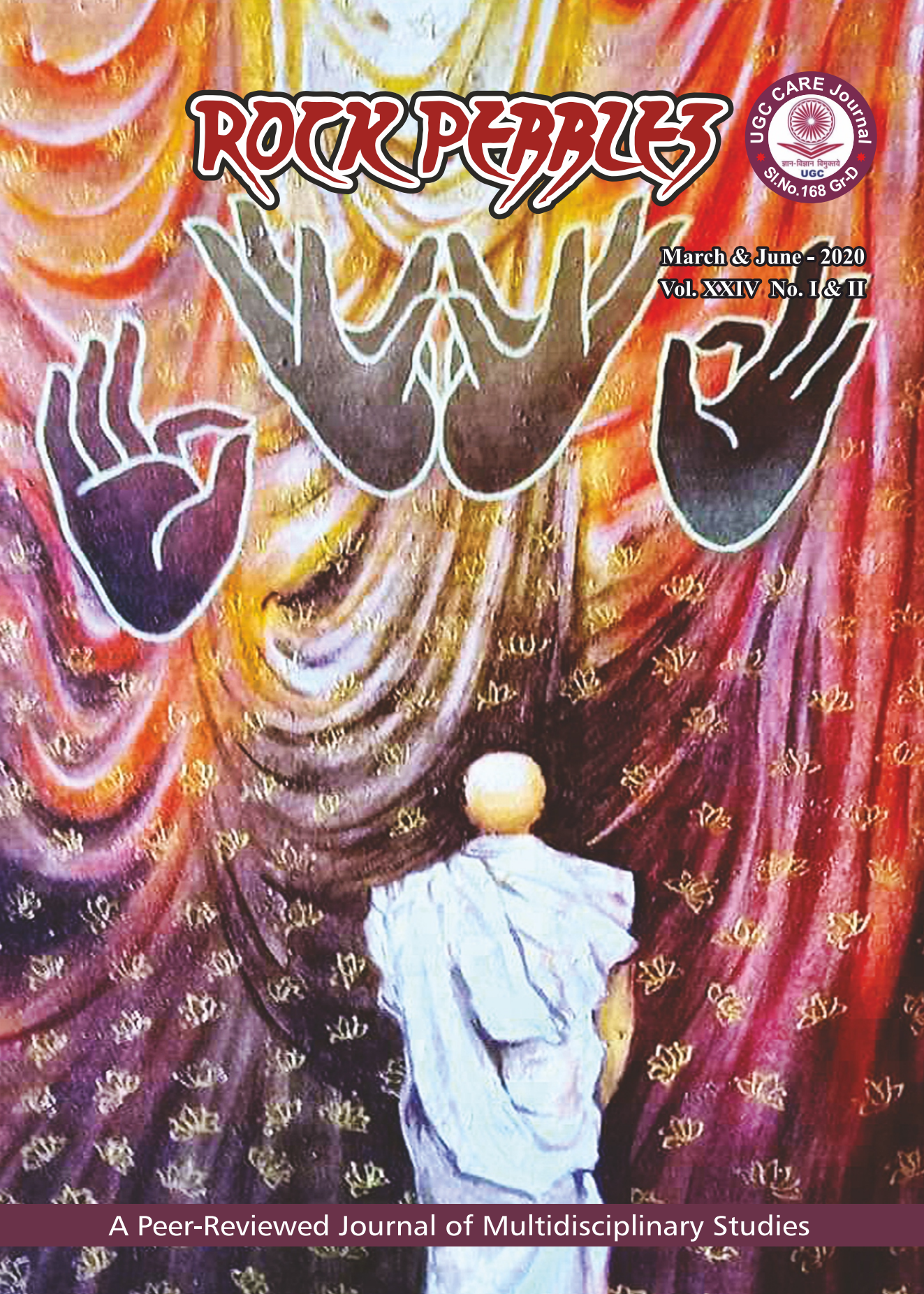


ROCK PEBBLES



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about the Journal

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Editor speaks.....

Literature is always believed to be reflecting the society in different ages and genres. The pangs and panics, the trials and tribulations, the challenges and opportunities of life have been the co-travellers in the course of human progression. Celebration of successful episodes and expression of grief and frustration at the loss of targeted goals have remained the synonym of life. In the present day, the Corona pandemic panic has become a nightmare of human civilization. Literature is replete with the themes dwelling on epidemics and pandemics. And the renditions of heart rending episodes of the people have left indelible impression in the pages of history. Human civilization cannot forget the heart throbbing incidents that occurred during partition of India resulting in migration of people from one part of the country to the other for the safety and wellbeing of their families. The Pulitzer Prize winning picture of 'Starving Child and Vulture' (1993) of Kevin Carter reflecting the deplorable life during the famine in Sudan had once moved the whole world. The present pandemic has resulted in innumerable incidents that seem simply stories on the pages of books or sketches on canvas – millions of workers turning jobless, hoards of workers on foot covering hundreds of kilometers, wife losing husband, toddler playing hide and seek with the dead mother's sari, mother pulling the sleeping son atop a trolley bag, minor carrying the parents on a rickshaw, husband dragging the pregnant spouse on a self prepared toy trolley, father substituting the bullock in pulling the cart carrying his family, train running over the sleeping pedestrians on track, patients in developed countries sleeping beside numerous corpses, hoards of corpses getting cremated together and above all the whole world being locked down. The practice of social distancing, isolation and quarantine are given priority to check Covid-19 from spreading in an age when the world is a global village. The virus has taught the world to be united in waging a war against it with the motto "Vasudheiva Kutumvakam". In a state of the world coming back to the track, The Rock Pebbles family wishes its contributors, readers and well-wishers a healthy, safe and creative life.

-Editor

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Neither being Object nor being Subject: a Backward Movement from Lacanian Symbolic Stage to Pre-oedipal Stage in Han Kang's Novella *The Vegetarian*

Prasenjit Panda

I am much more open about categories of gender, and my feminism has been about women's safety from violence, increased literacy, decreased poverty and more equality. I was never against the category of men.— (Judith Butler “As a Jew, I was taught it was ethically imperative to speak up” in Haaretz. February 24, 2010)

Gender, sex and sexuality have become hot cake for any debate concerning feminism or gender studies. Female body has been seen as a metaphor of weakness and feminine quality by the world of dominating masculine patriarchy. This suppressive phallogocentrism becomes one of the major ideologies by which female body is constructed, evaluated and measured ever since the human eats the fruit of knowledge. The very essence of a female body is wiped out by rational patriarchy as it is believed that female bodies are defective male bodies, marked by lack, the lack which forms the necessity and negative opposite to the plentitude of masculinity and stamped with imaginary associations in which female bodies are experienced chaotic, formless and threatening. Hence female body is termed as Achilles heel for the women world until and unless the advent of postmodern feminists starts seeing the body as no longer a weakness for them rather as a strong weapon to resist, to revolt and to retaliate against the stereotypes presentation of female body in any narratives constructed by the patriarchy. Post modern feminists like Elaine Showalter, Helene Cixous, Luce Irigaray and others have tried to demystify the myth of the patriarchy and its episteme by relating female body with creativity and power. Though not powerful like *Laugh of the Medusa* or not as radical like *Mad woman in the Attic*, Han Kang's *The vegetarian*, a novella which is translated into English by Deborah Smith is the true portrayal of a journey from objectification of body to subjectification of body. The novel echoed a lot about how women were treated at that time after the colonial period, and that is the reason why this novel had a really good local impact at first. The writing encounters a system of severe principles of Korean culture, which demands devotion to the family and conformism. Kang belongs to a

generation of writers who aim to discover clandestine drives, desires, and melancholies behind one's personal destiny. However, the Vegetarian also poetically portrays violence, sanity, cultural limits, and the value of the human body as the last sanctuary and private space.

Han Kang narrates the story of Young-hye who suddenly decides to be vegetarian after having a nightmare. In her dream, Young-hye saw:

Dark woods. No people. The sharp-pointed leaves on the trees, my torn feet. This place, almost remembered, but I'm lost now. Frightened. Cold. Across the frozen ravine, a red barn-like building. Straw matting flapping limp across the door. Roll it up and I'm inside, it's inside. Along bamboo stick strung with great-red gashes of meat, blood still dripping down. Try to push past but the meat, there's no end to the meat, and no exist. Blood in my mouth, blood-soaked clothes sucked onto my skin...but the fear. ..My clothes still wet with blood. Hide, hide behind the trees. Crouch down, don't let anybody see. My bloody hands. My bloody mouth. In that barn, what had I done? (Kang 12)

The nightmares continuously keep coming to Young-hye and she starts to awake whole the night lest that nightmare could come back. Young-hye's husband and her family, especially her father, believe that her decision to become a vegetarian is irrational and from this, the conflict between masculinity and femininity starts. We can clearly see two parallel worlds—one is dominating and the other is being dominated. The novel is divided in three chapters and each chapter uses different point of view—Young-hye's husband, Young-hye's brother in law, and Young-hye's sister—to voice Young-hye's behavior. As the main character, Young-hye is not given space to voice her own perspective. Young-hye's strange madness for being vegetarian should be seen as her strategy for liberating her body from the social norms and dominating world of patriarchy where a female body is reduced to be a male fantasy. She tries to achieve freedom from the male gaze.

By objectification we mean how man who always remains as a subject treats and evaluates a female body as an "object". In the very opening page of the novel, we see how Young-hye's husband narrates his impression about Young-hye in a very stereotypical way.

Before my wife turned vegetarian, I'd always thought of her as completely unremarkable in every way. To be frank, the first time I met her I wasn't even attracted to her. Middling height; bobbed hair neither long nor short; jaundiced, sickly-looking skin; somewhat prominent cheekbones; her timid sallow aspect told me I needed to know. [...] The passive personality of this woman in whom I could detect neither freshness nor charm, or anything especially refined, suited me down to the ground. There was no need to affect intellectual leanings in order to win her over, or to worry that she might be comparing me to the preening men who pose in fashion catalogues (3).

The above statement of Young-hye's husband sounds like a colonizer who is speaking about his colonized subjects. The statement does not only objectifying his wife but also defines the beauty and behavior of Young-hye. Her husband is describing the body features in such a way as if Young-hye neither knows her body nor she knows anything about her own beauty. However Young -hye does not care about her beauty to please her husband rather she tries to possess her own body by rejecting it. Young-hye's subjectivity does not confine in the norms of the patriarchy and the masculine appraisal. Her denial of wearing bra despite the insistence of her husband is a kind of retaliation against the ideal standard of beauty endorsed by the masculine sexuality. Here the bra is seen to beautify the female body which a male desires. "It wasn't even as though she had shapely breasts which might suit the 'no-bra look'. I would have preferred her to go around wearing one that was thickly padded, so that I could save face in front of my acquaintances"(5).

Young-hye's husband nurtures inferior judgment to Young-hye. His decision to marry Young-hye was precisely because of Young-hye's appearance, which demands him to do nothing extraordinary. Young-hye's husband shows his objectification, by positioning his wife as an object and construct hierarchy between them. He assumes as a subject that, his position is higher than his wife and he does not need to feel anxious of other men, as his competitors. Based on his appraisal, he thinks that, there is no man who is 'interested' in his wife. It shows that, there is a hierarchical relation between figure of husband and Young-hye. Domination of men can also be found from the technique of narrative, which distinguishes 'voice' of husband character and 'voice' of Young-hye. Before Young-hye decides to become a vegetarian, the 'voice' of Young-hye is presented in the form of memories and cannot be heard by the husband figure.

The morning before I had the dream, I was mincing frozen meat-remember? You got angry. "Damn it, what the hell are you doing squirming like that? You've never been squeamish before'

If you knew how hard I've always worked to keep my nerves in check. Other people just get a bit flustered, but for me everything gets confused, speeds up. Quick, quicker.[...] My hand, the chopping board, the meat, and then the knife, slicing cold into my finger.[...] Later that day, when you sat down to a meal of bulgogi, you spat out the second mouthful and picked out something glittering."What the hell is this?" you yelled. "A chip off the knife?" (19).

The above statements show that Young-hye's husband often spells uncouth words and it makes Young-hye precisely easily makes mistakes. As a woman and a wife, the figure of Young-hye is not given broader space to voice loudly, to convey her point of view. The relation of Young-hye and her husband is colored with the culture of patriarchy, where men is endowed with greater space to voice and determine, while women are denied to voice something and placed as an object of determination. Thus, the domination of figure husband to Young-hye can be seen in the following quotation.

‘ I sometimes told myself that, even though the woman I was living with was a little odd; nothing particularly bad would come of it. I thought I could get perfectly well, just thinking of her as a stranger, or no, as a sister, or even a maid, someone who puts food on the table and keeps the house in good order. But, it was no easy thing for a man in the prime of his life, for whom married life had always gone entirely without a hitch, to have his physical needs go unsatisfied for such a long period of time. So yes, one night when I returned home late [...] I grabbed hold of my wife and pushed her to the floor. Pinning down her struggling arms and tugging off her trousers, [...] She put up a surprisingly strong resistance and, spitting out vulgar curses all the while, it took me three attempts before I managed to insert myself successfully (30)

The violence which was acted upon Young-hye by her father shows the dominance of father and the use of absolute masculine power to control her daughter in all the way he wants. Her denial of eating meat is unacceptable and irrational to her father and other male members. Meat represents women's suffering under a patriarchal system and male dominance. Because of this, the heroine's denial to eat meat can be compared with resistance against male dominance and, at the same time, it can demonstrate female craving to break free of masculine expectations and to be liberated from gender-based oppression. Her repression started even since Young-hye's childhood. It is vividly narrated below:

Yeong Hye had been the only victim of their father's beatings. Such violence wouldn't have bothered their brother Yeong-ho so much, a boy who went around doling out his own rough justice to the village children.... Only Yeong-hye, docile and naive, had been unable to deflect their father's temper or put up any form of resistance. Instead, she had merely absorbed all her suffering inside her, deep into the marrow of her bones (157).

The narrator of the past in the quotation above is In Hye who is Young-hye's eldest sister. When Young-hye eventually putted in an asylum because of her constant peculiar habit, In Hye reminds that Young-hye becomes the soft target of her father's physical violence since her childhood. Her father who governs the Lacanian symbolic stage forces his daughter to assimilate in the dominant symbolic order. As a daughter, Young-hye was a weak woman and unable to retaliate the violence of his father. However, Young-hye's silence gave her the power to survive the oppression of her father. In her adulthood, the experience of violence which she received from the past can be used as a base of the attempts of embodying her 'strange' behaviors. Furthermore, violence which she receives comes from no other men, but the closest men of her. The oppression of the men guides her to liberate herself from the dominance of men through subjectivity of her body. She rejects the essence of her being i.e womanhood and transforms herself as a tree and wishes to live in a world where she can't be dominated. Young-hye acts out a silent body; on the surface, it can be seen as "tolerant" or powerless, but in essence, it is an active body that carries out a "protest." (Bordo 99)

My wrist is okay. It doesn't bother me. The thing that hurts is my chest. Something is stuck in my solar plexus. I don't know what it might be. It's lodged there permanently these days. [...] Yells and howls, threaded together layer upon layer, are enmeshed to form that lump. Because of meat. I ate too much meat. The lives of the animals I ate, have all lodged there. Blood and flesh, all those butchered bodies are scattered in every nook and cranny, and though the physical remnants were excreted, their lives still stick stubbornly to my insides (49).

Those quotations are the voice of Young-hye, which expresses her main reason to become a vegetarian. Young-hye tries to free herself from the world of 'predators' that, she feels in her body and want to release herself from the violence of human to another human being, or human to other living creatures. Even though being a vegetarian, it causes Young-hye to exile by her family and those who are around her, she insists on her own choice, which makes her as an autonomous woman, who does not need to depend on anybody. Therefore, her decision to become a vegetarian can be understood as her effort to exempt from all forms of violence, as well as to destruct the chain of dominated and being dominated circle. With that reason, in extreme act, Young-hye to any kind of food and then, she decides to consider herself as a tree. Unlike Kafka's Gregor Samsa in *Metamorphosis* whose mind remains the same but the body gets transformed into an insect, Young-hye's body and mind both gets metamorphosed into a tree or in Lacanian pre-oedipal stage where there is no binary opposition. It may also suggest that she consciously rejects the essence of both mind and body which give identity to a human being. The body of Young-hye is used as a mirror that reflects the cultural connections in male supremacy and female relegation—the verbal and sexual assaults by the heroine's husband and the physical violence by her father symbolize the male-centered system that has caused the victimization of women.

'I didn't, you see. I thought trees stood up straight... I only found out just now. They actually stand by with both arms in the earth, all of them. Look, look over there, aren't you surprised?' Young-hye sprang up and pointed to the window. 'All of them, they're all standing on their heads. [...] 'Do you know how I found out? Well, I was in a dream, and I was standing on my head... leaves were growing from my body, and roots were sprouting from my hands... so I dug down into the earth. On and on... I wanted flowers to bloom from my crotch so I spread my legs; I spread them wide...' [...] 'I need to water my body. I don't need this kind of food, sister. I need water.' [...] 'I don't need eat, not now. I can live without it. All I need is sunlight.' 'What are you talking about? Do you really think you've turned into a tree? How could a plant talk? How can you think these things?' [...] 'You're right. Soon now, words and thoughts will all disappear. Soon.'(148-154).

Young-hye desires to become a tree and chooses not to live as; either animal or human is because, both of them are having margins to dominate and being dominated. Three different

sections give three different Korean psyches along with the view point of Yeong-hye. In the second section we see Yeong-hye from the perspective of her brother-in-law. He's a middle aged artist and filmmaker whose life lacks discipline and routine. After a year of without artistic inspiration, he has an idea of people decorated as flowers having sex. After learning that Yeong-hye might still have her "Mongolian mark," a small blue birthmark known medically as congenital dermal melanocytosis that usually disappears in early childhood, he instantly imagines as a blue flower on her buttocks and becomes engrossed with how to turn his fantasy a reality. When he reaches at Yeong-hye's flat where he finds her naked but undisturbed by it,—unconscious rather than seductive. Since the dinner episode with her violent father and her suicidal attempt, Yeong-hye has grown progressively empty, docile and unreceptive. Soon the man is trying to convince Yeong-hye to be painted and filmed. Both her husband and Brother-in-law take the advantage of her body and soul but unfortunately don't consider her as a human being instead of that they see as an object and what is the worst thing here that her Brother-in Law despite knowing her disturbed psyche, has reduced her to a decoration or a prop to suit his sexual fantasy.

The last of the three sections is again third person, this time very close to In-hye's perspective. It's around a year later, and In-hye is travelling to the psychiatric hospital where Yeong-hye now resides. Young-hye refuses to eat anything. In-Hye feels jealous about her as she thinks Young-hye liberates herself from all the social customs and rules but she can't do that. She says "I have dreams too, you know. Dreams ... and I could let myself dissolve into them, let them take me over ... but surely the dream isn't all there is? We have to wake up at some point, don't we? Because ... because then ... (182). Yeong-hye, her sister, and her brother-in-law all experience dreams or visions in which they see their own reflections distorted, their faces altered or obscured. This recognizable but distorted and hazy self is the primordial self. Only Yeong-hye surrenders herself completely to her primal self but both In-hye and her husband fail to do so.

In the *Vegetarian*, South Korean writer Han Kang explores the incompatible conflict between our two selves: one covetous, embryonic; the other accountable to family and society. "Existence precedes essence" is a central precept of Jean-Paul Sartre's philosophy—first a human exists and then she creates her essence, the values and meanings that define her as human. The *Vegetarian's* heroine, Yeong-hye, gradually denies her essence, emotionally segregating herself. She delegates herself into something that exists without meaning, like a plant or animal, and in doing so she ignores the norms of the society that require a suppression of the primordial self. Yeong-hye isn't only marring her desire but she is also defying humanity at large. Yeong-hye finds herself, like Atwood's Marian McAlpin, unable to live within the precincts of society, and like Marian she does not choose to remonstration — her body does it for her. Here is a difference; Young-hye rejects both body and mind. In the broader aspects, she refuses to be human or refuses to be entrapped in the body of a human who is either dominated or being dominating. Unlike in *The Edible Woman*, Yeong-hye's problems cannot be inverted. Can she survive like an isolated being?

The novel doesn't give any answer. Yeong-hye's desires seem to be not to die so much as to live inversely. She only desires to become something that isn't related to violence towards other living beings. Sitting by the fountain soaking in the sun, shedding her dress and roaming around naked as often as she can, her elation and arousal when her body is decorated with the paintings of flowers, and her escape from the psychiatric hospital, only to stand still among the trees suggest that she is trying to join them. She wants to stop being human as humanity is detrimental, rueful, homicidal, aggressive, avaricious, envious, and insatiable – all things she doesn't want to be. And so she defies us humans by becoming vegetarian. She doesn't want to stop living. She wants to stop living like us.

The Vegetarian" is not only exposing the evils of masculine systems but also defiantly renounces, destabilizes, and deconstructs the male-dominant ideology through the language of the heroine's body. It is important to see that when Young-hye's voice is unheeded, her body becomes substitute to the voice; the heroine's body expresses her thoughts "in languages of horrible suffering" (Bordo 97) that "embody a language of protest" (Bordo 102). Young-hye's response towards male violence validates her detestation towards the intimidating and horrible system of male dominance. The frantic act of asserting freedom from the father's law intensifies the possibility of incapacitating patriarchy and defeating the male sovereignty. Young-hye exposes the severity of the patriarchal tradition and the ferocity of male violence by representing her body. Her body becomes "a site of struggle," that exposes "in the service of resistance to gender domination, not in the service of docility and gender normalization" (Bordo 105). Her language of the body wipes out the binary opposition between man and woman and promises a possibility of gender equality. ■

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Multiculturalism in J.M.Coetzee's *The Childhood of Jesus*

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Multiculturalism is a fusion of various cultures that forms it. This includes its own spectrum and its microscopic view- the ways of living, dress codes, compiling literatures and several other correlated parameters. Presently it is evident in metropolitans or states or countries. It got it self originated out of overlapping of several culturalisms. Its very foundation that helps it to grow up is ethnicity, rituals, languages, rationality, customs etc. In modern times it is growing up fast internationally because of transmigration caused by the need to acquire higher and advanced technical education and thereafter hunting for jobs abroad. Globalization, displacements may be for a short time periods or for a lengthy time period are fully supporting multiculturalism.

In the novel *The Childhood of Jesus*, Coetzee sets the scene in Spain and richly splashes the novel with the foresaid designing features of multiculturalism. He opposes Ghettoes and encourages diversified living with different nationality welcoming migration. The writer (Coetzee) has a deep concern with the removal of corruption suppression, oppression, marginalization throughout the world including India as he refers to the Sweeper class through a page of his diary and such issues are highly important in multiculturalism because its soul is 'live and let others live' which had also been the chief slogan of the Jainism religion since time immemorial.

Keywords: culture, culturalism, multiculturalism, traditionality, ethnicity, nationality, transmigration, globalism, ghettoism, cosmopolitanism.

Introduction :

The literary term multiculturalism is one of the essential themes of the postcolonial literary writings which can be dealt with in the best possible way through fiction rather than the other literary genres such as poetry or drama or short story or an essay. The writers like J.M. Coetzee have been practising it to keep international peace and harmony since last fifty years. We know that across the borders of the nation even within the same continent unrest and tension are cropping up throughout the world which could be reduced not by the wars or bullets but by the means of strengthening multiculturalistic living that could be taken up through literature.

Review of Literature :

Multiculturalism comes to us through our own observation and awareness. It also reaches us through people, music dance, films and it also had its existence in form of literary writings. Writers have been highlighting it with issues such as political dominance, lifestyle, colour-combination, its origin, its ecological ethics, its similarities and dissimilarities as compared to the other constituting ingredient of multiculturalism. However Coetzee's view to depict multiculturalism in his novel *The Childhood of Jesus* is migration supported by globalization while inclining it to its origin. Since it is a literary vision which has been paid extra attention since last two to three decades so it would be important to cast a glance over the following list of books to keep proper pace with this topic to widen the scope of our understanding.

1. Nasar Meer, *Citizenship, Indentity and Politics of Multiculturalism*. 2010. London : palgrave Macmillan. 2 Lowe Lisa. *On Asian American Cultural Politics*. 1996. London: Oxford University Press. 3. Collicott J. Baird. *Multicultural Survey of Ecological Ethics*. 1994. Berkley : University of California. 4 Said Edward. *Culture and Imperialism*. 1993. London: Vintage Books. 5. Bhabha Homi K. *Location of Culture* 1994. London : Routledge. 6 Arne Nass. *Community and Life Style*. 1989. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 7 Agnihotri Rama Kant. *Crisis of Identity: Sikhs in England* 1987, New Delhi: Bhari Publication.

J.M. Coetzee, born in Cape Town in South Africa on 9th Feb. 1940 is a renowned novelist, essayist and translator. He had his education in South Africa and in the United States of America. He started his career as a computer scientist and programmer with IBM Company in USA as he had Mathematics with English Literature. He started writing fiction which popularized him internationally. Later on, he became a Professor of general literature in the University of Cape Town (UCT) in the Western Cape province of South Africa. His main fictional works include *Waiting for the Barbarians*, *Foe*, *Disgrace*, *Life and Times of Michael K*, *Slow Man*, *Scenes from Provincial Life*, *Elizabeth Costello* and *The Childhood of Jesus*. To his credit, he has so many premier South African literary awards, Booker Prize (twice) and Nobel prize for literature in 2003. In 2006, he migrated to Australia to have their citizenship. He lives in Adelaid city over there continuing his literary activities with fellowship granted to him by the Australian Govt.

Out of the above enlisted fictional works of Coetzee, this paper selects *The Childhood of Jesus* to depict multiculturalism in it but before doing that, it would be more important to highlight the terms like culturalism and multiculturalism.

In a layman's view or concept, culture consists of all the phases a society passes through to complete one round of civilization which includes peoples' art, architecture, music, painting sculpture, customs, costumes, their ways of speaking, behaving, interacting and so on.

Thus culture includes intellectual and artistic aspects of a society or civilization. From this basic word culture, in its noun form, we have another derived term culturalism which means growth and development of culture or thriving of culture under institutionalization which could be either social or political or religious or a combination of all the above three types. Protection given by institutionalization is neither essential nor required for culturalism to grow up but sometimes it has been observed that there is a hindrance of institutionalization for growth and development of culture.

Culturalism is also picked up as an issue to focus on cultural studies which are devoted to analysis and interpretation of social practices which are not directly under the realm of literature. Tracing the definition and modern history of this term culturalism for the domain of scholars of English, Chakraborty Abin writes (2019: 179) “Coined by Richard Johnson, a former director of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at the University of Birmingham (United Kingdom) the term culturalism refers to the theoretical insights on cultural practices.”

Multiculturalism is a term or concept according to which thriving of so many cultural aspects or features developing at one place or people belonging to different cultures or nationality when come and live together at one place. It can also be called as intermixing of different cultures born at a contact zone occupied by people of different nationality. It could also be visualized as a fusion and hybridity of various cultures. For literary studies, multiculturalism is grinding up of features like nationality, ethnicity, customs, rituals, occupations, nationality, ethnicity, costumes, rituals, occupations, religions, languages, intellectuality, morality and all that could be possibly included under the term multiculturalism. Of course, this term could be consulted in the dictionaries so as to know its meaning and definition but giving its modern definition Lahiri Himadri quotes (2019: 161) “ Multiculturalism is the state policy and practice of giving equal spaces to all groups including ethnic and gender in a nation-state. It sensitizes to the issues of differences and diversities which are to be celebrated in the nation-state. It gained ascendancy in the 1960s and 1970s as a result of civil movements in many Western Countries. It opposes mono culturalism and assimilationist policies such as the melting pot concept and ghettoisation. It speaks of interaction and intermixing of different cultures and ethnic groups. Multicultural environments are favourable for diasporic communities allowing various forms of cultures, expression to merge. It is a live issue in the context of education policies, job opportunities and welfare measures.” There are latest developments in the meaning of multiculturalism as new concepts like globalization, cosmopolitization, environmentalization, cultural constructionism, home land, host land, hybridity, transcendentalism, displacements etc. have been added to it. Let us investigate how Coetzee facilitates multiculturalism in his fiction *The childhood of Jesus* which begins with landing of a stevedore (heavy duty dock labour) whose name is Alvaro and he brings a little boy David with him. He is in search of an employment and a place to live in. Alvaro is asked to submit his papers (essential documents) with address proof by the foreman. His strength and age is also checked for his

appointment against the vacancy of an Estibador (Dock labour). After assurance of job, Alvaro and his boy (not his own son) are given the keys to room No. C-55 and thereafter, Alvaro engages Ana (Office Assistant) in a dialogue which Coetzee writes (2014: 04) as under -

‘Thank you. One last question: Are there organizations here that specialize in bringing people together?’

‘Bringing people together ?’

‘Yes. There must surely be many people searching for family members. Are there organizations that help to bring families together-families, friends, lovers ?’

The reason for Alvaro’s asking such questions from Ana is that the boy renamed David with him lost contact of his mother when they got off the steamer (ship) to land and the boy was so small so as not to reveal any identity of his parents and Alvaro wanted the boy to reunite with his mother which does not happen in the novel. Coetzee names this boy as Jesus and uses it in the title of the book but since this name remains unknown to the boy so he is renamed as David by Alvaro. Besides this issue of an astray (gone missing) little boy, we are reminded of migration on account of finding jobs and both of these situations becomes a solid ground in the novel to foster multiculturalism as people who have come from different parts of a country or nation live together and try to speak a new language of the country where they have come in a mutilating way or manner and in case of this novel the language is Spanish which is hard to master by the labour. Of Course, David (Jesus) being a little boy learns more quickly than adult labour like Alvaro. Another dock labour Emilio Dage wears earrings like oriental labour or Indian Banjaras (tribal people of India). It becomes interesting for the group of labour to know if the earning are made of gold which is also a choice of the ladies and thus we are reminded of multiculturalism, blooming in Spain.

The term spaces or urban-spaces (modern group residential living system) or shortage of urban spaces play a vital role in spreading multiculturalism through varied community based living system at a place (named La Residencia or La Mancha in the novel). Under huge roof separated by compartments, People who live over there speak different languages. Coetzee refers to these languages in the given phrases or sentences- Spanish lessons, Spanish names. One day it will cease to feel like a language. It’s English and that’s all, we will have to speak Spanish in the next life ? Definitely not. All these multi-languages like Spanish, English, Chinese remind us of the concept of multiculturalism.

Coetzee talks about group housing system and the problems co-related to it say a complaint is not being attended on the ground of illegal occupant. Chocking of drainage system of latrines and finding the tenant at the upper floor or lower floor responsible and quarrelling with each other for such problems is quite common. It is that flat system of living that spreads multiculturalism as people coming from far off places may be from abroad immediately purchase a flat of a group housing society. Coetzee refers to phrases such as empty space, falling short of space, filling in all the spaces (page 296 & 297 of the

novel) and it is not only the shortage of spaces that Coetzee refers to in the novel but he also exhibits how it leaves its impact on privately lived life of couples legalized (married) or illegal like live in relationship. In chapter 4 of the novel Alvaro and Ana meet each other. Alvaro as we know is a dock labour who has a little boy David with him and Ana is a lady who is the in-charge (office bearer) for allotting accommodation to on- coming migrated labour. The both of them develop attraction for each other and they are involved in illegal mating together as they aren't married. They have only a sort of live in relationship which is quite common to the multiculturalism of the modern times. To quote Coetzee we have in the novel (2014: 39) "That is all. Ana a tribute to me-an offering, not an insult-you want to grip me tight and push part of your body into me. As a tribute, you claim. I am baffled. To me the whole business seems absurd-absurd for you to want to perform, and absurd for me to permit. It cannot be absurd since it is natural desire of the natural body."

When the mating is over the little child David who is also beside them who listens to their secret talks and whose notice they don't take care of asks them questions about their crossing (secret mating) innocently in the novel *The Childhood of Jesus* (2014: 41). "But is that lady going to be my mother ? are you going to marry her? She said you wanted to push something inside her. Do you really want to push something inside her ?"

Alvaro has no answer to the queries of that little child David so Alvaro deliberately diverts the course of their dialogue and tries to befool that child by telling him that (2014 : 42) " it was only a manner of speaking. She meant that I was trying to force my ideas on her. And she was rights. One should not try to force ideas upon people". This way Alvaro becomes tricky to hide his shame.

Had there been no shortage of space for such private mating, little boy David would not have known what secretly happened in between Alvaro and Ana so such type of revealing of the private life of elders or parents or caretakers are the outcomes of shortage of space of group housing that becomes one of the contributors to the modern multiculturalistic flat system of living of which Coetzee refers to in an implied or indirect manner.

Coetzee in his foresaid novel reaches up to the very roots or origin of multiculturalism as when the dialogues of Sancho and the little boy David proceeds in chapter 20th of the novel, it is Sancho who tells David that the world was not created for our convenience but it is we people who have been modulating or moderating or changing our self so as to fit into it as per our needs and requirement. It is not the world that would change itself for us but it is our self that needs to be changed for the world and such a concept or view or ideology is the very seed of multiculturalism in true sense. Just to have an explanation of the same, we live in the world with different oceans, climatic zones, grasslands, contours, environmentalist divisions and since time immemorial people have been adjusting themselves and following according to the world topography and environmentalist conditions that were made available to them by the geographic world so there came into being different styles of living, food habits, ethnicity which in a combined

way designed multiculturalism may it be culturalism of the Eskimos living in igloo, the gypsies living in a forest, the white or the black living in terrible cold or the heat all developing out of their own adjustment with the type of living in the world. People adjusted with the excessive heat of the world by remaining almost nude so they became black or they adjusted with excessive of cold by covering their body so they remained white or in moderate heat they became brown black as Mongolians or the Indians are. It is an explanation of multiculturalism in which we adjust not the world. To quote Coetzee (2014 : 200) “Why ? The answer to all of your why ? questions, past, present and future is: Because that is the way the world is. The world was not made for our convenience, my young friend. It is up to us to fit into it.”

Of course, the entire novel *The Childhood of Jesus* is full of evidences of multiculturalism but the following representative paragraph may be quoted from the novel in which Coetzee writes (2014: 222) “Everyone comes to this country as a stranger. I came as a stranger. You came as a stranger. Ines and her brothers were strangers once. We came from various places and various parts seeking a new life. But now we are all in the same boat now together. So we have to get along with each other. One of the ways in which we get along is by speaking the same language. This is the rule. It is the rule and we should obey it. If you refuse, if you go on being rude about Spanish and insist on speaking your own language, then you are going to find yourself living in a private world. You will find no friends. You will be shunned.” Here Coetzee gives us the message that while sustaining our own culture one should be ready to accept the culture of the others also.

Transmigration is possible though three means of transport- air, water and road. It brings people of different nationalities together leading to several types of changes may they be social, political or economic. The following representative passage from the novel *The Childhood of Jesus* strongly supports this observation as Coetzee writes (2014 : 135) “Listen to yourself, Alvaro, he says. The things it self. Do you think the thing remains forever itself, unchanging ? No everything flows. Did you forget that when you crossed the oceans to come here ? The waters of the ocean flow and in flowing they change. You cannot step twice into the same waters (as death will occur by stepping in the water of the ocean for the first time so no question of stepping in to the sea water for the second time). As the fish live in the sea, so we live in time and must change with time. No matter how firmly we may pledge our self to follow the venerable tradition, we will in the end be overtaken by change. Change is the rising tide. You can build barriers, but it will always seep in through the chinks.”

In the modern times, one of the factors that is highly helping multiculturalism to grow up is job requirement and if we want to focus on the type of job or employment, then it is labour rather than office bearing work. The given quotes from the novel proves it (2014 : 127) “ We may not feel at home in Spanish but David and Fidel will. It will be their mother tongue. They will speak it like natives from their heart. And don’t sneer at the work you do at the docks. You arrived in this country naked with nothing to offer but the labour of your

hands. You could have been turned away, but you were not: You were made welcome. You could have been abandoned under the stars, but you were not: you were given a roof over your head. You have a great deal to be thankful for”

A stratum, in form of a sample of a multiculturalistic society, can be taken to visualize any one of the constituting factor or element say for example it could be ethnicity or occupation or dialect and language and so on. Let one of such testifying factor be occupation (types of jobs) for the novel *The Childhood of Jesus*. When s we pay attention to the occupation of the sample of population referred to in the novel we come to know that there are more than 15 different types of occupations in which people have been engaged into. They are as under and the page No. of the novel of the referred edition 2014 have also been given in brackets. All these occupations help the society in the novel to have multiculturalistic inclination or sway : (teacher or teaching, p -256) (modeling, p -142) (bestial labour, truck drivers, pump assemblers, p -56) (estibadors, p-13) (gate keepers, p -133) (dray-man, gardeners, p -89) (education officers, p -281) (clerks, p- 01) (psychologists, p- 270) (doctors, p-56) (plumbers, p -155) (magicians, p- 306) (sailors, p -185) (miners, p-290) (pay masters, who are called as cashiers in our country, p- 28).

If we pay attention to the teachers in the novel, we come to know that they are busy teaching history, mathematics, philosophy, music, architecture- drawing, book-keeping, calculus (a branch of mathematics). All these subjects touch arts, science or commerce or in another words humanities, science and social science. Oh ! what a enriched spectrum of teaching and education ! rather we see that there is a large educational institute (chapter - 15) offering courses in English conversation and we know that it is an international language which is the need of the people coming from the other parts as they have to work over there and the courses are in calligraphy, weaving, basket making, flower arranging, pottery, puppetry and all these courses remind us of Sabharmati Ashram run by Mahatma Gandhi in Gujarat State of India.

Coetzee refers to migrations based on the need of job in so many of his novels and in some cases such migrated people are totally lost to their parental people in their native countries or are killed on account of being victims to diseases or fatal rivalry or hunger. One of such cases may be quoted in his novel *In the Heart of the Country* (1999 : 30) where Coetzee writes “The first son, the quarrel someone, the one who will not say ‘yes’ and will leave home to find work on the railways and be stabbed in a brawl and die and break his mother’s heart. As far the other sons, the obscure ones, perhaps they too will leave in search of work and never be heard of again or perhaps they will also die.”

Ghettos refer to a geographic space inhabited by members of a specific ethnic community cut off from the main stream of a society. The members of such communities are unwilling or unable to interact with the world around them and we see that multiculturalism is opposed to such ghettos or ghettoistic ideology or ghettoism. Multiculturalism supports anti-ghettoism that could be called as secularism or secularistic

ideology of living or supporting secular societies. Coetzee also favours secularism. Here we have scanned photo of one page of Coetzee's diary written on 16th June 1986.

16 June 1986
Who shall guard the Guardians? Who shall censor the censors? The question is unanswerable without a theory of absolution. It is not answerable in a secular framework. There must be a class or caste of people outside society who are shunned or kept at a physical distance because they touch pollution. Hence the sweeper caste in India, hence the priestly caste in Europe. Priests cannot marry because they are polluted/holy. That is why priests cannot sleep with decent women, cannot marry: they must sleep with whores. A para-priestly class like the SS (created to perform abominations) has brothels created for it: it is the idea of a domestic life for SS men that offends us most deeply.

“SS denotes secular societies”

The wordings of the above page of his diary have been typed to have an easy understanding of the contents of the referred page:

Who shall guard the Guardians? Who shall censor the censors? The question is unanswerable without a theory of absolution. It is not answerable in a secular framework. There must be a class or caste of people outside society who are shunned or kept at a physical distance because they touch pollution. Hence the sweeper caste in India, hence the priestly caste in Europe. Priests cannot marry because they are polluted/holy. This is why priests cannot sleep with decent women, cannot marry: they must sleep with whores. A para-priestly class like the secular society (created to perform abominations) has brothels created for it: it is the idea of a domestic life for secular society men that offends us most deeply.

Coetzee no doubt supports multiculturalism which is naturally against Ghettoism favouring secularism or secular societies but he is against corruption in the secular societies. Actually speaking he warns us against such corruption. A well-known critic Attwell David who did his Ph.D. on Coetzee's work writes (1916:144) “Coetzee refers to this (corruption in the law makers of a secular society) as a problem particularly for secular societies which

have no means of achieving absolution.” Thus we see that Coetzee’s stress lies on corruption free multiculturalism and his worries also include the sweeper class in Indian as it is clear from what he wrote on the page of his diary on 16 June 1986 exhibited over here.

Praising Coetzee’s art of writing and making use of his cultural content Currie Mark writes (2017 : 152) “The key percepts of postmodern thought are identified in this kind of writing (Coetzee’s slow man and Elizabeth Costello) as the thematic contents of novels as part of a demonstration that there are indeed postmodern narratives. It is worth indentifying two species of this kind of circular relations of narrative and theory. In the first place there is what might be called the circle of cultural contents. According to this circle, the critic will identify key epochal characteristics in the cultural theory of post modernism and proceed to identify those cultural characteristics in fictional representation of the world.”

To conclude, we see that J.M. Coetzee’s fiction *The Childhood of Jesus* is full of multiculturalism from very beginning to the end. This concept has been refreshed with the addition of modern ingredients such as universalization, globalism, transmigration, urbanized way of accommodation (flat system) or group housing which in terms of literary studies become spaces or shortage of spaces or filling of space and all of them have been touched upon by the novelist. Other novels by the same writer may also be investigated either for his multiculturalism or monoculturalism as the case may be. There are the other issues which the novel contains such as gender, sexuality, sex discrimination which are beyond the scope of this paper but they could be studied for their comparisons and contrasts with other fictional writers such as Tony Morrison or Nngugi wa Thingo’ to have a deep insight into these co-related topics to have research or critical studies going on further. ■

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Socio-Cultural Realism: A Humanistic Self of Jayanta Mahapatra's Poetry

Mrinal Kanti Das

Jayanta Mahapatra's conception of socio-cultural realism that he realizes in his locale brings him face to face with history and myth when his "self" is exposed in the act of humanism. The relations between self and reality - the reality that eludes but includes self and culture form the core of Mahapatra's poetry. To him, it is the exploration of myths and it is united with the world of art and sculpture. He continues his search for a heavenly spirit and for elegance in relationship between man and man, and god and god, men and sculptured art. Humanism and human concerns echo much in Jayanta Mahapatra's poetry. As a true humanist, he tries to study the truth by placing himself in the midst of the ruins of the temples, society, rites, rituals, superstitions, beliefs and the other side of modern life. The present study titled "Socio-Cultural realism: A Humanistic Self of Jayanta Mahapatra's Poetry" brings out these realistic elements to establish that a creator as self has a couple of selves with reality to form a socio-cultural diversity in the society. This study is bound to explore the poetic tertiary of Jayanta Mahapatra with special stress for his humanistic self and reality in his poetry. He prefers to code and decode his responsiveness and contemplation using suggestive symbols and myths. One more main concern of this study includes his promise towards society, his socio-cultural concern for the mass which live unobserved and unheard.

KEYWORDS: *socio-cultural realism, self, reality, exploration, humanist, myth, concern.*

The socio-cultural realism is considered as a major subject in Indian English poetry. It gives a realistic description of hopes, aspirations, frustrations, misery of individual qualities. The poetry of Jayanta Mahapatra offers a reflective exploration of cultural patterns and the conflicts of present society in a realistic way. In his poems the Indian point of view and practice towards social problems, serious examination of sacred ritual, connection with local culture and the search for root find a well-known place.

Jayanta Mahapatra explores every instance with the humanistic eye, not allowing his orthodox education or his acquaintance in the myth and tale to colour his viewpoint. His evaluation is accompanied by a constant force of questioning aimed only at making a steady advance towards the truth. He only considers the options, not only in the present but

also in the past in all its diverse shapes such as history, myth, rite, ritual, society, superstitions, attitude, sacred and other social practices, etc. The present realism repels him into the obviously fresh shelter of the past. It also is as smooth and wonderful as the mountains lying far off. The past too was not unidentified to cruelties, gun smoke, shouldering flesh, groans and cries of the people. The survival in the present is an evenly painful journey through the dense jungles ridden with never-ending stones and a lot intimidation.

Social elements of Jayanta Mahapatra's poetry are self and reality which are correlated with poverty. Odisha is a state which is famous inside and outside of India for its object poverty. Like an economist Mahapatra writes poetry dealing with poverty. He shows how scarceness vitally affects other elements of life, sometimes compelling woman to either go to prostitute or to hold knife to be naxalite. In his poems, 'Hunger' and 'Whorehouse in Calcutta Street', Mahapatra describes the life and manner of a prostitute. Here the prostitute welcomes this occupation only being bound by poverty. It is known from her behavior and behaviour with a client when she offers him her body. The prostitute makes the client hurried up in a firm voice, which indicates that she does not have any feeling for her client rather she acts like machine; just to make some money she satisfies the sexual desire of the male folk. A customer might feel somewhat confused of having come into a whore house. After all, the very courtyard of his house seems to be a partner in the conspiracy which is a matter of routine in a place like this. According to A.K. Paniker, 'The Whore House in Calcutta Street' shows both the strength and the weakness of Mahapatra as a poet. The first and last stanzas of this poem, says this critic, have the same quality of tightness, sharpness and precision.

Mahapatra has covered in many of his poems the aching reality of life for the poor. Mahapatra is used to seeing poverty and pain around him that in his poem "Relationship" he writes, "and the suffering of the world returns/ like winter's persistent asthma/ year after year". One could see such a powerfully realistic picture of a victim in his favourite poem "Hunger" which deals with youthful prostitution to stave off hunger. In this poem, the fisherman-father being a victim of poverty cruelly allows his fifteen-year-old daughter to resort to prostitution:

I heard him say: my daughter, she's just turned fifteen
Feel her. I'll be back soon; your bus leaves at nine.
The sky fell on me, and a father's exhausted wile.
Long and lean, her years were cold as rubber.
She opened her wormy legs wide.
I felt the hunger there,
The other one, the fish slithering, turning inside. (16-21)

The fisherman-father finds no other way to earn his livelihood. By thus giving these realistic imageries, Mahapatra does not create any emotion or enthusiasm in us; instead he makes us shame such kinds of women in society. Commenting on these lines, Niranjan Mohanty says, "... the poet has expressed many things: the father's exhausted wile as a plea to live

against poverty, the daughter's youth, and the easy commerce that corrodes the immaculate veil of relationship”

Exploration of self is a regular technique of realising oneself and the extensive socio-cultural setting. Mahapatra's poetry is an assembly place of self and reality. His poetry can at times be helpful in providing answers or reply to questions which the self asks. It can be enormously dear too, and the thoughts, when they come into a poem do not want to be alone in them. The present study is an effort to inspect how poetry assesses Mahapatra as a stimulation point to spotlight his self through which he is able to see a large world around of which he is only a section.

Being born into fixed socio-cultural surroundings Mahapatra inherits easily and automatically through the accrued acquaintance of earlier generations in the type of traditions, folklore and myths. Myths are the strong symbols of man's goals and ambition which provide him with beliefs and help him set his pursuits in an intricate world that continually warns man's reality. They play a crucial role as the old socio-cultural heritage of Odisha.

Jayanta Mahapatra's interest of the experience of the past arouses in him the question who he was. The attachment with the self and the society runs through Mahapatra's *Relationship*. It creates a sense of involvement between self and the other. The individual sentiment of the poetic self is chiefly combined very deeply with the environmental background, ritual and totality of life. Mahapatra has realised the heart-beat of the departed artist in the stone-carving art and figure of the temples in Odisha. He has also made a relations with stone-carving and inscriptions. It is a socio-cultural realism from the poet's humanistic self. Mahapatra's poetry, according to Bhat “makes the reader look inwards, question himself about life, its significance uncertainty and so on leading him to process of personal discovery”.

The inner self and reality of Jayanta Mahapatra have been found with his early days and his poems are their creation. His poems expose the poet's strong affection along with his childhood experiences a lot with the Odia fairy testimonies, mythology, tradition and the high-quality Indian epics. The poet remembers the flash of feelings of the whispers of loneliness that surround him. His heart turns into grave on the sight of his mother now, changed in appearance. The poet feels the pain of his father's loss of life. This representation of human situation forms a necessary part of his poetry thus taking into account almost all the existing grievances of humans in general and of Indians in particular such as scarcity, corruption, crime, lack of communal harmony, social conflict, grass-roots level realities of common man along with his metaphorical ability.

The present study brings out some important elements to establish that a creator as self has a couple of selves. It analyses and throws light on the character and social reality of human life. The self- sure tone and imagination and insight of the poet make approach for an extra deeply felt dwelling place. The poetic inspiration of Mahapatra jumps from his

individual world and the poet is unrepentant, as he feels that his poems are for himself extra rather than for the reader. He preferred to make feel of the life which was once dishonesty in fragments earlier than him. He was advised to seek solutions for himself, trying out his feelings by way of putting them in resistance to the material of the poem he knew he ought to write. Many of the poems of Mahapatra are a search for the self. The exploration for the self gives a sign of continuity to his poetry. Memory helps the poet delve deep into the depths of the past that enables his search into the self. With the aid of memory he tries to discover his own roots, and find consolation from the burdens of the present. The past redeems him from the horror of being nameless; from the fear of aging and death; from the fear of the changing scenario in the present. The poetic world of Mahapatra reiterates the idea that one should journey into one's own self in order to cope up with the outer world without exploiting others and their property. His poems do not excuse themselves as vocal pictures translating into a couple of layers of meaning. Mahapatra grants a continually varying skyline in his poems. He creates a lyrical cosmos which is fully Indian.

Mahapatra's poetry brings out many traits of post colonialism as a lingering colonial past, search for origin and identity. Henry Louis Gates is quite appropriate here to quote: "Ours is a late twentieth century world profoundly fissured by nationality, ethnicity, race, class, and gender. And the only way to transcend those divisions to forge, for once a civic culture that respects both differences and commodities – is through education that seeks to comprehend the diversity of culture".

The poem "Evening Landscape by the River" shows the lost world through a lively representation of actual scene. The poet feels sad as he surveys the sight. The feeling of sadness is almost overwhelming and it makes him feel as if his eyes were closing. The atmosphere is so dark that one forgets everything, even the faces of the dear ones who have departed from the world. The unfortunate fishermen live in busted shacks located close to the river. There is a temple in the distance and it is completely still in consideration. The river is full of water, and in the darkness of the evening, the light of the moon falling upon it unevenly, as if it has no purpose to carry on there. The very minute details of his setting prove that Mahapatra is the son of the Odisha coast.

Mahapatra moves very often from local to universal. His poetry pervades the macroscopic India in the microcosm of Odisha. The evils he has experienced and noticed in his own place, he could combine them with the problems that are collective and universal. He is of the belief that a poet's distinctiveness cannot be only his confidential and personal upbringing, his response to landscape, his awareness of the ritual and culture with which he identifies himself makes up his uniqueness. Mahapatra confirms his inseparable recognition with his native land in one of his poems, "Somewhere, My Man":

A man does not mean anything
But the place.
Sitting on the riverbank throwing pebbles

into the muddy current,
a man becomes the place. (1-5)

There is a synthesis between the man and the place. In order to supply the sustenance to traditional Indian culture in his poetry, Mahapatra takes recourse to the locale—the social, topographical and artistic background of his birth place. So, Srinivas Iyenger rightly observes: “No true poet can escape tradition, for all our yesterdays are involved in the poet’s deeper consciousness; and no true poet can escape the pressure of the present, for he is in it and of it, and the best he can do is to relate the immediate present to the living past ...” (P.641-42).

The well-known town Puri is regarded to be a holy place by the Hindus. It is the blessed place of Lord Jagannatha, the presiding divinity of Odisha. The Hindu disciples find deliverance and extraterrestrial peace at Puri. The poem, “Dawn at Puri” emerges as a practical article of the Hindu psyche and their age-old viewpoint and society. Mahapatra marks this constant belief of the Hindus in this poem:

her last wish to be cremated here
twisting uncertainly like light
on the shifting sands. (3-5)

Mahapatra’s poetry is noticeable for intensity of approach and true lyrical imagination which has a scale of dappled themes. Odisha setting representing India’s cultural and religious past magnificence bequeathing into present and emptiness in modern continuation, love, sex and all outlook and associations which make human life and excellent poetic craftsmanship. His outstanding poetic skills, his authority to use local language, his faultless account of nature landscaped attired in foreign language spurs him to decolonize his poetry. Like other postcolonial poets of other countries like Australia, Africa, Caribbean, he effectively establishes his own individuality, and nation’s identity which was devastated due to colonization. Boehmer is right when he comments on his progressive link: “Indian, African and Caribbean nationalist writers focused on reconstructing from the position of their historical, social or metaphysical difference a cultural identity which has been damaged by the colonial experience. The need was for roots, origins, founding myths and ancestors, national for mothers and fathers in short, for restorative history”.

Cultural diversity and variety in India may apparently contribute to a poet’s identity; but in reality, these forces remain devoted to defining, and authenticating a typical identity. Jayanta Mahapatra is a Christian, living in a Hindu society—a society which pays utmost homage to Lord Jagannatha, the presiding god of Odisha. Jayanta Mahapatra’s grandfather accepted Christianity out of convincing forces of scarcity and dearth. There is always a sense of anxiety and estrangement in his poetry. He perpetuates his hunt for identity and he is keen on the statement of his self-emanating from an absolute part of his holy land and its rich socio-religious society.

Mahapatra’s hunt for roots of origin of man, and the origin of the cosmos leads him to search for relationships with different aspects of life. Finally, he discovers the unending

joy. This everlasting joy exists in love of self along with the humanity in which he belongs to. At last the poet reaches to a point from where he can have everlasting peace. The silence is a key to such recognitions. Hence, this study of the poet and his locale confirms the fact that, in Mahapatra's poetry there lies an indivisible relationship between the poet and his place along with the people. It cannot be denied that Mahapatra's formation of such poetry is only the result of his oneness with the soil. His poetry functions as an inspired medium and depicts the poet's search for his soul. It is a kind of pilgrimage that brings him towards the spirit of his homeland and explains to him the vastness of his being and the sense and significance of his life and living.

As a realist Mahapatra can view life and its various emotions and mysteries against the setting of the landscape of Odisha. The load of the poet's awareness makes him handle the poem in such a way that the calm tranquility of the countryside strips the society off the mask of culture. For the poet, the landscape of his native place often mirrors the past brilliance and the dead ancestors.

So, this is an attempt to project a humanistic self of Jayanta Mahapatra's from perspectives of socio-cultural realism with richest use of symbols, myths, images and similes by showing him as an eminent Indian English poet. He shows a fluent expression of the eternal silence of the unknown and his sensibility is fundamentally Indian. The secret of his success lies in not disowning his Indian inheritance and not falling victim to what has been called 'a feeling of alienation'. ■

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Writing Self, Writing Gender, Writing Culture: Devaki Nilayangode's *Antharjanam*

Asha Susan Jacob

The exponential expansion of life writing has unbolted a comprehensive field of autobiographical practices and has necessitated a redefinition of the genre which has become multidisciplinary. Female autobiographical attempts invite crucial attention as endeavours that rewrite or demand a review of the cultural and historical contours of the community and state. Situating the selves in their space and time, these noncanonical texts seldom mirror the recorded history of their times; but offers vignettes of the perforated history, filling the gaps, functioning as cultural litmus. The proposed paper offers an authorial voice that becomes the historical eye to peep into the dim-lit lives of the female, especially the secluded lives of the *antharjanam*, the female folk of the Namboodiri community, the foremost class and caste of the cultural history of Kerala.

Key words: Autobiography, Antharjanam, gender, culture, self.

The current quantifiable surge of life-narratives necessitates a radical rethinking of the hitherto unruffled terrain of life writing. De-stabilising the accepted norms of the genre, recent ventures bargains for intellectual deliberation. The documenting self, the self-documented, and the gender, caste and class of the selves involved qualify the process of documentation. Sometimes used as a mode of resistance against encroachment upon the space—mental and physical—the genre becomes synonymous with struggle for existence, strategy for survival, and attempts at or struggles of negotiation between the self and community with its written or unwritten mores. The historical canon of autobiography enlists only the life-sketches of mainstream luminaries from which the subaltern including the women are excluded for they have no “locus standi.” Writing an autobiography thus is an attempt to legitimise self and make it audible.

The proposed paper attempts at analysing the personal narrative or lived-in experience of the female who is sidelined from the corridors of power. Autobiography offers her a mode of voicing the self which is otherwise trampled over by male or dominant cultural icons. Female autobiography thus becomes the platform for articulating, through personal experience, the experience of marginalised group or sex, offering cultural vignettes that seldom appear on the mainstream projection of culture.

Life-scripts of the female folk who constitute half the population of India will outline the cultural contours of the country. The perforated cultural history of the country or state which harps on the dominant class and sex can be completely and adeptly filled in only by the inclusion of the female perspective that offers fresh perceptions into the cultural pattern of a variegated society like India. Centering on the female personal narrative from Kerala, the paper proposes to offer a revamping of the understanding of the socio-cultural scenario of the State.

The dominant ideology of 19th century that eulogised the spiritual lead of India over the materialistic West, successfully manoeuvred to shelve the prevailing caste-cum-gender based hierarchy. The autobiographies of the subaltern, including women of the upper caste, have to be located within this framework.”Women’s autobiographies are explorations of female selfhood.... Autobiography can be a means for survival for women, a way of seeking freedom from patriarchal definitions, stereotypical images and expected social roles,” opines K. Satchidanandan (7). Alternative and varied practices of female life narratives thus function as counter narratives to the current canon of life writing.

Hailed as the first full-length account of a Namboodiri woman’s life, *Antharjanam* is a significant feat in the domain of personal, social, and cultural documentation. With a comprehensive introduction by J. Devika which contextualises the narrative, the book turns out to be a useful site for cultural and gender discourse. Compiled out of the two earlier attempts of scripting her life as *Nashtabodhangalillathe* (2003), which was about “growing up in the loveless, dim environs of a Namboodiri household in Central Kerala, even as the winds of change began to sweep over the community in the 1930s and 1940s,” (viii) and *Yaathra: Kattilum Nattilum* (2006) that delved deeper in to her social and personal history, Devaki Nilayangode unceremoniously transports the reader to a world unaccustomed, “providing a brief glimpse of a lost culture and helps correct several myths that surround it” (xii).

The book captured tumultuous attention as it unbolted the gates to the barred world of the *antharjanams*, the inner people of the upper caste Namboodiri community, inaccessible to the general public, and hence the fount of great fascination and curiosity. In the Translator’s Notes Radhika P. Menon succinctly remarks on the significance of Nilayangode’s endeavour: “To the outsider’s eyes, they were living exotica. Cocooned in luxury, shielded from public view, always escorted by an entourage of obsequious attendants and endlessly enjoying a hedonist life full of festivals and elaborate feasts, these upper-caste women appeared to lead a charmed life” (xii). *Antharjanam* subtly discloses how the “awe-inspiring exclusivity concealed a rigid mode of patriarchal oppression that robbed them not only of independence and education but even the simplest and most innocent joys” (xii). Nilayangode attempts in realistic tones to focus on “the penumbral region between the intensely private and the totally public—a space which outsiders have preferred to paint in flatteringly unrealistic colours” (xii). The narrator being a woman candidly outlines the myriad ritualistic practices that made the cloistered life sallow, bland, and harsh.

The multifaceted import of this autobiographical writing necessitates a return to the vicissitudes of the social and cultural history of pre-Kerala era—Kerala came into force as a state only in 1956—governed by caste hierarchy. The Namboodiri community wielded indomitable power in the geographical landscape of Kerala, which comprised roughly of the princely states of Travancore, Kochi and Malabar during the colonial regime, maneuvering political and spiritual authority on account of their material and religious power. The control over the land, which they were entitled as per the mythical Parasuramaic instructions, positioned and established their supremacy above all, especially the physical body of women, particularly of the lower castes who became victims of the voyeuristic gaze and the carnal pleasures of these men. This dominance was buttressed by a set of parameters that guaranteed their exclusivity through conventional rituals and observances that placed them at the apex of the social ladder.

The *illams*—the residence of the Namboodiri joint families—were governed by a set of stringent rules regarding quotidian interactions with members within and outside the family. The uncompromising and convoluted rules of untouchability and unapproachability were austere observed by a carefully maintained mandate regarding the measure of distance between them and other communities in public space. The most operational contrivance with which they fortified social power was through a system of man-woman relationship known as *sambandham*. With the system of primogeniture practised among them, which allowed only the eldest son of the family to have a proper *veli* (marriage), the younger sons were to quench their carnal hunger through alliances with women of matrilineal communities, especially the Nairs. These liaisons, commonly referred to as *sambandhams* had no legal import, and were later condemned with the radical wave of the Namboodiri reform movement headed by the Namboodiri Yoga Kshema Sabha which considered it as a kind of licentiousness that would doom the lives of their own female folk and tarnish the community as a whole.

J. Devika in the Introduction to *Antharjanam* observes: “Gender was undoubtedly one of the major axes of internal regulation among the Malayali Brahmins” (xxi). In those days, the birth of a girl in *illams* was not considered auspicious. As soon as a woman became pregnant, there were special pujas for the birth of a baby boy. The birth of a boy child was announced with much elation, servants ululated and announced the happy event. If it was a girl the news was conveyed with soft knocks and muted whispers. The unceremonious entry of a girl child into this world is described by Nilayangode: “I was born on *Thiruvonam* day in the month of *Idavam*. There were no joyous shouts that day, only soft knocks on doors” (8). The gender discrimination that began at birth continued to the dining area where girls would be served lunch only after the Namboodiris, children, young mothers, and menstruating women.

Her birth as the twelfth child of the third wife of her father at the age of 68 renders her an opportunity to dwell on the matrimonial alliances practised in the community in the past. The mutually accepted solution for marriage of Namboodiri girls with no dowry was

exchange marriage: “Thus, an exchange marriage solved the problem of dowry and my fifty-four-year-old Achan gave away his three-year-old daughter, receiving my eighteen-year-old Amma in return”(4).

Nilayangode records how each woman past puberty had restricted mobility which allowed movements outside their *illams* only clad with a cloak and covered by a *marakkuda*(palmleaf-umbrella) in the company of a female servant. The highly ritualistic domesticity with its elaborate and complicated nature of rituals that commenced with ritualistic bath early in the morning and the hard domestic work removed all hues and flavours from their lives.

Documented State records vouchsafe the hierarchically controlled and ritualistically programmed relationships and activities within the *illamas* recollected by the narrator. K.Devaki Antharjanam’s speech at the Shreemoolam Assembly in 1937 evokes a clear picture of the *antharjanams*:

Most Antharjanams observe ghosha[seclusion]. They have eyes but are prohibited from enjoying sights. They have legs but their movement is circumscribed. Their state is quite like that of household utensils....In short theantharjanam is a jailed creature. Antharjanams are constantly policed; they are not permitted to breathe fresh air, to see the world. An Antharjanam is born crying, lives her life in tears and dies weeping...(214-15)

The respect a woman received was tied to the status of her husband, observes the narrator while furnishing a portrait of her mother. As the competent wife of the celebrated and powerful Parakavoor Krishnan Somayajippad, her mother was esteemed both within the family and outside. “The situation changed after Achan died. Those who had treated her with respect till then began to slight her. A widow with her eldest son aged only fifteen and six young children to take care for, she was helpless and insecure”(9). With no financial scaffolding for them, the condition of a widow even in a reputed family was deplorable. The narrator offers a preview of the community through her own family:”A man who married late in life, fathered several children, and died suddenly, did not have to worry about how his family fared afterwards. It was believed that they would survive if the household had enough food to eat”(10).

While the boys were considered as family assets, girl children were a liability. Gender discrimination continued in the case of medical care also Nilayangode reports: “The doctor visited only when the men fell ill. He was not sent for when the women were indisposed. Nobody paid much attention when women were unwell” (107). The death of her younger sister, which she narrates in a casual manner throws ample light on the insecurity of their lives. The request for medical assistance was laughed at, causing the premature loss of a young life.

Childhood and socialisation in a culture with an enlarged concept of family, especially a joint family system, differs significantly “in terms of its patterns of individuation

and psychic development of what characterizes the western bourgeois nuclear(or single parent) family”(Gilbert xix). Child care in the illam is elaborately described: the children were usually reared by the *irikkanammas*, the Nair maids. The description of the childhood days offers glimpse into their dimmed world: “They took care of us till the pre-puberty ritual of *uduthuthudangal* was performed, usually at the age of nine”(13).Despite the progressive attitude of her sons, the narrator’s mother was rooted in the traditional system that denied girls any kind of freedom:”She did not give us, her daughters, any kind of freedom because she believed that girls should not be encouraged to think and act independently” (11). The ambivalence in the mother, characteristic of her socialisation and position, leads Nilayangode to insist that for all her orthodoxy, “she did not support the discrimination against girls”(12).And nowhere in the narration one finds any affinity or any intimacy between parents and children or among siblings.

The depiction of female life in the illams prove that the situation had not altered to the advantage of women even decades after the comment in the *Nazrani Deepikain* 1905: “To be born female in the illams of Nambutiris where even sunlight does not fall properly is itself hell”(Nambutirimarude Vidyabhyasarithi, *Nazrani Deepika*, 6 Dec.1905, qtd. in Devika). Her life punctuated by ritual bath before sunrise, followed by many dips into the pond all the day for any kind of pollution or violation of any kind of purity, denied her the smallest of pleasure in normal life: “And the same routine was repeated day after day”(Nilayangode17). It was only during the ninety-day period after delivering a child that they were free of the daily drudgery.

“Caste provided the primary grid for differentiation in nineteenth century Kerala. Clothing, jewellery, hairstyle, naming, food - all these constituted an elaborate sign system that had as its basis the system of caste differentiation,” opines Udaya Kumar(2011, 215). Dress codes for both sexes in illams were regulated by customary caste markers. The children of both sexes were denied clothes made of cotton till *uduthuthudangal* for girls or *urupanayanam* for boys for fear of getting polluted by the touch of Nair women for any garment made of cloth. Small children wore the customary loincloths of plantain leaves and as the children grew older, they were given loin clothes of *koombala*, the tender film of arecanut spathe. Gendered seclusion started at the threshold of womanhood, the narrator recounts: “Uduthuthudangal was the first step towards womanhood and it brought tremendous changes to my daily routine....Thus gradually, my life was confined to the inner rooms and to the company of my elder sisters. I could go to pray at the temple but not stay back to play. I could look at the boys and walk in the portico or the courtyard-only until puberty”(31).

The semiological status of attire was a major site of contention during the community reformation period. The Nanboodiri reformers advocated for modification of the prevalent dress code of the antharjanams which had made them as colourless as the utensils in the dim-lit interiors of the illam. V.T. Bhatathirippad voiced his repugnance at the dowdy dress code: “I do not hide the fact that many of us who are married are fed up of your ugly,

disgusting dress and ornamentation, and able to do no more than curse ourselves”(qtd. in xxiii).By the end of 1920s the progressive young men of the community argued among other things for dress reform as well. Nilayangode remains a witness to and a beneficiary of the consequence of such reforms:”My husband’s family who had progressive ideas did not gift me such a pudava. I went to his illam...wearing a green silk sari brought from Madras by his elder brother’s daughter Sarojini”(28).

The ritualistic mode of domesticity and customary seclusion thwarted the aspirations of the antharjanams. They were destined only to obtain limited knowledge. The brief description about her mother effectively brings in the kind of illiteracy prevailed among the antharjanams: “At a time when girls were barely educated, Amma could read the Puranas. The ability to read Ramayana was itself a major accomplishment”(4). She further comments on her own initiation into learning at the age of four: “Initiation into learning, studying the alphabet, and reading the Ramayana - this completed a girl’s education” (28-29).

Right from an early age girls were taught, she remembers, “not to feel revulsion to dirt by making them handle cowdung. This was a lesson to us that a woman needed to face the battles of life with equanimity and calm”(87). But the waves of reform movements that opened up a new world for the young male reached the cloistered world of Nilayangode *illams* well through the library books infiltrated through the brothers. Situating the narration in the historical context, Nilayangode comments: “Girls were not permitted to read and if the hidden books were discovered, punishment was certain. So my sisters went to the room only when there was no one in the vicinity and read behind closed doors” (32). The narrator recounts how her sisters used the available opportunities guaranteed by the monthly rest during the menstruation period to read books:

For three days no one went to see them either. ...Even there was a small problem. Touching books was taboo during those days and we lacked the courage to break the custom. But here, the servant’s daughters came to our aid. One of them sat in front of us and turned the pages. Thus we succeeded in reading books without touching them. (32)

Even their father who ran a gurukulam in his house for the boys of the community could not defy custom by teaching his own daughter who desired to learn Sanskrit. The restriction on female visibility by any stranger after her puberty further curtailed the hesitant decision even to teach the rudiments of the language. The reformation wave sieging over Kerala had its repercussions on the lives of the antharjanams as well. The end of the 1920s witnessed arguments in favour of female education in the community. Nilayangode quotes the progressive Moottiringode Bhavatratan Nambutiripad: “Give them an education that is capable of making them ordinary women, of making them human beings! Let them also become women! Human beings! Let the community prosper” (157). She recounts how her desire to learn English was gratified by the appointment of a Nair woman who taught her the basics till her marriage. It is significant to note that women of the lower communities

like the Nairs were far ahead of the antharjanams in lifestyle as well as access to education.

Feasts that occupied a pivotal role in her childhood days, among which birthdays celebrations were frequent, offered sites of gendered marginalization with special pujas and feasts for the Namboodiris and their sons: “But not for women. In Namboodiri homes nobody prayed for their longevity” (90). At the feasts as well as in life an antharjanam was like those who were destined to eat the left overs as described in some of the Dalit autobiographies that the narrator had access to. For antharjanams eating off used leaves was part of her life, that which ritually made her a wife. “After four days of wedding ceremonies, the woman became a wife only when she fed off the leftover leaf used by the husband. The bride served him When he got up... she... used the same leaf to eat from. This practice would be continued regularly thereafter” (93). Comparing the past cruelty in her community to the present lives of the Dalit, the author observes: “I am almost forced to believe that nothing defines the Indian identity more than half-eaten leftover food” (94).

The lacunae between the progressive public space and the tradition bound private world is well-delineated by the description of the childhood annual bus journey to the mother’s house. Partly on foot and partly in the bus accompanied by the irikkanamma, the journey was more of an embarrassment as many of the buses would not take the strangely-dressed antharjanam with her *marakkuda*. The restrictions on female mobility that increased with progression in age is succinctly put in by Nilayangode: “When I grew up and attained maturity, all these journeys stopped. I was not permitted to go even to the temple. The only place I was allowed out was to the kitchen-sink in the compound. With all excursions stopped, I retreated to my illam like a bird with clipped wings. Till I left home after my wedding two years later, I could catch glimpses of the sky only on my trips to this kitchen-sink” (46).

With little exposure to the world, the visit of the Nair women and their offsprings of the aphans (paternal uncles) offered a glimpse of the world outside with all its colours, freedom, parental affection, which were all alien to the inmates of the illam. They became moments of awareness of their own uncouthness and the tacit form of relationship that existed in the *illams*. The contrast between the sophisticated, cultured, fashionable, learned Nair cousins and their own blouseless, bronze-bangled, drab bodied set new aesthetic standards in the minds of the girls (38).

The financial situation of an antharjanam was always insecure. It was not customary in those days to provide any money for them even for their meagre needs though the families could afford it. Situating herself in the historical and cultural specificity, the narrator reports: “Tradition decreed that they find their own money to meet their special expenses.... In other places too, women of the aristocratic families of the time saved money... for even their most pressing needs” (43).

The decline and fall of the Namboodiri community from its supreme position does not go undocumented. The confiscation of *illams* which had become a regular practice in

those days is recounted with its gendered consequences. Most of the *illams*, with no substantial income and money being a rarity, would borrow money mainly to meet the dowry of their daughters. The householder's failure to redeem the mortgaged land would lead to the permanent forfeit of the land which would affect the female world:

It would not affect the Namboodiris to the same extent. They could eat in the oottupura attached to the temple and can earn money performing pujas. They could, without much trouble, be dependents in aristocratic homes and spend their time eating and resting and cracking jokes....they rarely returned to the *illams* and were largely indifferent to the conditions there. (74-75)

At first they tenanted land, then the gold chain, then with the compound surrounding the *illam* mortgaged, the women folk would be filled with a new kind of terror and insecurity with alien glances extending to them through the bars of the window. With the attachment notice glued to the doors, the women would be forced to disperse in different directions seeking a living and security. Reminiscing over how two such girls were given shelter in her own *illam*, Nilayangode harps on the indifference of the male folk towards their female relatives: "not once did I hear of their father's visits, though he was working as a priest in a temple not far away. I don't know whether he married again but probably continued to crack jokes and make witty remarks whenever he found an audience"(76). The subtly maneuvered presentation of the Namboodiri stereotype's carefree life is commendable.

The vulnerable life of the Namboodiri widow, commented and critiqued by writers and social critics, gets corroborated by Nilayangode. In the Namboodiri community, nothing was considered a greater sign of misfortune than the sight of a widow. She was unwanted, uninvited, and considered a bad augury on any propitious occasion. Without any locus standi either in the natal or in the marital homes, all her life was doomed in darkness (78). "It was believed that the husband's death was caused by the ill-fared alignment of stars in his wife's horoscope. So the widow was held guilty of a criminal act from the moment of his death"(79). With the customary *veli* permissible only for the eldest son, the community had no dearth of young girls widowed even before they became adults. Other than seclusion and ritual fasts, widowhood brought in altered dress code as well.

With the delineation of the widows Nilayangode also exposes the unarticulated frustration of another set of women in the *illam*, the *sapatnis* or co-wives of the Namboodiris. With a brilliant comparison with Lucy, one of the suppressed characters in Sara Joseph's novel *Mattathi*, Nilayamgode takes one to the interiors of the *illam* which were otherwise forbidden to alien glances:

We see Lucy pining for the acceptance of her femininity and longing for motherhood. I know many such Lucys, have known their yearning, their desires and fears, at close quarters. They lived, unwanted, in the inner quarters of *illams*, in their kitchens, as one of the many wives of their

husbands....Sometimes the husbands did not even touch them but their identities were circumscribed by the thaali chain, by the mere satisfaction of being married. They had nothing of their own, their lives have come to naught, and their marriages were merely concessions made to their existence. (83)

Antharjanam is not a mere chronicling of the decline and fall of the domination of a community, but it also offers vignettes of the reform movements that brought in cataclysmic changes in the lives of antharjanams with the advent of modernity into the shores of Kerala. The reform movements demanded and led to alternate patterns of power equations which involved gender as well. Nilayangode delineates in her own distinctively temperate way the attempts of resistance demonstrated surreptitiously: the younger generation challenging tradition by dynamic involvement in the progressive social movements, the girls' endeavours to read books which was tabooed, and other instances that attested the alterations in the cultural and intellectual environment. Such glimpses indirectly "show how the ambience in a Namboodiri home was veering towards a more organized reformation struggle that would change the culture and lifestyle of a community forever" (xiii).

By the end of the second decade of the twentieth century, influenced by nationalistic ideas and enlightened views, the radical youth wing of the Namboodiri Yogakshem founded in 1908 had begun to contend for fundamental modifications in the operation system of the community. The right for marriage for every male member, female education, dress reform, monogamy, and nullification of sambandham were among the demands. Though widow re-marriage was one among the demands, it was considered as self-willed wantonness, remembers Nilayangode who was only six or seven years of age when the historic widow re-marriage took place between V.T. Bhathathirippad's sister-in-law Uma and MRB, another prominent reformist, leading to the excommunication of both MRB and Premji, who also married a widow, which caused much reverberations in the traditional society.

By the influence of reformists like V.T. Bhattathirippad, the proponent of widow-remarriage, the community entered into the maelstrom of intense social change and activism. "The transformation of women's lives was high on the radical reformer's agenda, and Antharjanams began not only to break traditional codes of conduct but also to don the Reformer's mantle, and become a presence in reformist meetings" (Devika 127). The wind of change that blew across the state reached her traditional village too and Nilayangode witnessed these as a child and also joined some of the reform movements later in life as the wife of a liberal Namboodiri. The book relates how in 1931 her village witnessed the hosting of a sub-committee meeting of the Yoga Kshema Sabha which concluded with a community feast with the upper caste and the lower caste people eating at the same table in which her brothers too participated and consequently got excommunicated.

The body of the female which was a site for domination too witnessed the altered perspective of the new generation. A major social change that she witnessed (and herself experienced in later in her life) between 1930 and 1945 as she passed from childhood to

early youth was regarding the elongated earlobe of the female becoming obsolete. The stitching of the earlobe, that had been the site for suppression and torture, “proclaimed the birth of the new woman, one with normalized earlobes and dressed in a sari and a blouse”(109) following the footsteps of social workers like Arya Pallom and Parvati Nenminimangalam.

The description of her marriage at the age of fifteen allows her to vouchsafe it as a blessing compared to the unfortunate events that took place in the name of marriage in many a poor *illam*. The reception of the couple at her husband’s *illam* with the shout of *Inquilab Zindabad* by the *Namboodiris* witnesses the communist orientation of the reformers who spearheaded the reformist activities of those transitional decades. The liberal ambience of *Nilayangode* transformed her mindscape and opened up vistas for participation in social activities, especially in the activities of the *Antharjana Samajam*. These activities that sprang up as an offshoot of *Yoga Kshema Sabha* were energised by the famous declaration of EMS *Namboodiripad*, who later became the first Communist Chief Minister of Kerala: “Let’s make the *Namboodiri* a human being”(149). *Nilayangode* testifies the enthusiastic attempts of the *Samajam* to edify the less fortunate sisters about the importance of education and employment. Self-employment and steady income for women were the mantras they sought to instill in the *antharjanams* across the state. But the training centre for the same, gladly received by the *antharjanams*, could not withstand the vile calumnies of the time for long: “The founding and closure of the training centre formed the last stage of reform movement within *Namboodiri* community. It was also a period of activism that succeeded in bringing mere homemakers like [her] to the forefront of public life”(154).

Antharjanam demands attention as it chronicles a bygone era with elaborate descriptions of its cultural and social landscape. Taking a tour de force of the period, the book offers glimpses of the community life and agricultural pattern that were in practice at a time when walking was central to the life of the people. The gradual change in the system, necessitated with the advent of machinery that replaced the labourers’ songs with the thunderous sounds of the engines, brings in the cultural transit. It also pays a glowing tribute to the medical knowledge of the *Namboodiris*, through the delineation of *Thuppettan*, her father’s brother, an expert in toxicology, and the herbal poison cure treatment that was offered free of cost.

Nilayangode’s autobiography becomes a slice of social and cultural history with its description about the floods of 1924 and the cultural scenario portrayed. *Karkidakaam* the month of rains is delineated not only as the harbinger of the prosperity of *Onam* with its symbolic significance of prosperity, sharing and community feeling, but also as the month of compensation for women as the time of beauty treatment and the prescribed period to address their health concerns. Nowhere else one can find such elaborate, perhaps nostalgic, descriptions about the festival invoking a sense of its colour, fragrance, and flavours. The elaborate description of *Kaikottikkali* during the *Onam* days deftly conveys the enthusiasm of an *antharjanam* as this being the single social entertainment programme for them. The

book stretches across a wide variety of subjects: children's games, feasts, festivals, weather, harvesting, smallpox, granary etc. providing a kaleidoscope of the times. It also exposes the irrational practices of untouchability and unapproachability and its dehumanising effects.

The chapter titled Kuriyedathu Thaatri positions the text in a cultural mores alien to the present and ingeniously brings in the first recorded female resistance that quaked the very foundation of the community. Commenting on the "notorious Smarthavicharam" that took place in 1905, twenty-five years before her birth, Nilayangode confides: "Surely the name that my generation heard most often was that of Kuriyedathu Thaatri. During my childhood, I too heard this name spoken frequently, but always in hushed tones" (114). But beneath the tone of accusation she could also detect a note of unconscious appreciation which might have led to her consequent interest in the legendary heroine and the subsequent narration. Nilayangode recounts in brief, but enough to arouse the interest of any, the sensational Thaatri case narrated to her by the involvement of some relatives of her own. It takes one to the early decades of the 20th century which decreed sequestered life of antharjanams. If an antharjanam was found disloyal or unchaste, she would be excommunicated from the society after a trial to prove her illicit affairs, namely *smarthavicharam*, which usually would verdict against the female. Documented and oral histories of the multifaceted Thaatri narrate how this woman challenged the strict order of her community that dictated monogamy for women and approved polygamy for men by using her body. The beautiful, intelligent, well-informed Thaatri brazenly demanded to administer the law equally to both the parties involved in the case, which was against the practice of the times, that steered the excommunication or humiliation of about 64 men of prominence of her times. Nilayangode's apparently non-judgmental rendition vouchsafes not only the tempestuous impact of the trial, but bestows historicity to her own life narration. The chapter offers a fount of knowledge for those engaged in the socio-cultural tempo of the times.

Gender perspective is transported to another level with the account of the harvest and the human resources involved. The description of the harvest not only reflects on the altering agricultural patterns that the narrator perceived in the different phases of her life in its journey from the tradition-bound ancestral village to her liberal family of orientation, but also exposes another community who also shared the fate of the antharjanams in many ways, and witnessed the spatio-temporal paradigm shifts. The Harijan farm hands who worked for them in her childhood, who were physically distanced from the upper caste on account of possible pollution, were often equated with a crow or a buffalo and considered less than humans. The loyalty and hard work of these people which filled the barns of their masters were never reciprocated or rewarded. Nilayangode recounts how even the women in the family bestowed the merit of good harvest as a reward for worshipping family deities. "But they refused to see the hard work that had gone into such good harvests" (127).

The narrator's transition from one locale to the other corresponded with the social movements that Kerala witnessed. By the time she settled permanently as the householder,

the removal of untouchability had ushered in altered power patterns. The close and friendly association with them allows her to acknowledge their hard work, sense of involvement, and discipline. Reminiscing over the astonishing strength of the female folk of the workers, Nilayangode comments: “They took pregnancy and childbirth in their stride” (128) without taking long periods of rest before and after confinement. Women formed a formidable and unavoidable source of power for the different stages of farming and harvest which were more of a community process. Sensitive to the social changes around her spreading over decades, the narrator offers a socio-cultural critique of the contemporary Kerala scenario:

Such celebration of the harvest is a rare sight in these times. Fields have been converted into large houses. People moved from paddy cultivation to growing cash crops....Several causes such as heavy expenses of cultivation, falling prices of food grains, increased imports, adverse weather conditions, and the complex laws of storage, have contributed to making farming an unviable option. The younger generations leave their villages looking for better job opportunities. (135)

Having lived in and witnessed a transitional period, with its revolutionary land reforms, removal of untouchability, breaking up of joint family system, social activism and revolutionary changes among the uppercaste, Nilayangode observes the lacunae between the past and the present and establishes the relevance of her literary venture:

On looking back, I find little similarity between my present day life and the childhood I spent in my old illam....Today there is no sorrow specific to Namboodiri family. It has the same joys and sorrows, the same anxieties and ambitions as any other family. Time, the great traveler, has ironed out our most differences....[and] there can be no autobiography which claims to be the first by an antharjanam or exclusively about us. (155-56)

The normative view of autobiographical selfhood as centred and unified is conspicuous by its absence in *Antharjanam*. Unlike male life-narratives that place self at the centre, “women, by contrast have flexible ego boundaries, develop a view of the world characterized by relationships...and therefore represent the self in relation of others” (Gilmore xiii). Scanning carefully the inner, gendered space of the illam, the narrative unequivocally discourses the subordinating effects of male domination on the mind and body of the other. Crucial to the narrative is the articulation of hushed accounts of tears and disgrace engendered by the inequalities of the gendered hierarchy and an elaborate ritualistic system of purity and pollution. The mirror image used by Rowbotham in *Women’s Consciousness, Man’s World* (1978) on the development of women’s consciousness finds its application here. A female cannot but gaze into the mirror of cultural representation in the spatio-temporal context to form her identity. A woman cannot, Rowbotham argues, experience herself as an entirely unique entity because she is always aware of how she is defined as a woman, that is, as a member of a group whose identity has been defined by the dominant male culture. Hence one does not see the formation of an independent identity in *Antharajanam*.

Articulated along the multiple axis of gender, caste, and identity the narrative can be historically located within the reform movements that ushered in modernity to the shores of Kerala. The autobiography as a social biography here creates a subject position which is at once collective and individual. The autobiographer is “simultaneously the author of an individual act of truth-telling and the subject of a shared historical memory” (Kumar, 2008, 421). It is grounded on the transition from undisputed obeisance to debates of interrogation and defiance resulting in systematised campaigns to transmute the lifestyle and the culture of the community. Here the personal becomes historical, the gradual liberation of selves from the straitjacketing gender domination through the association of those who contested to carve a space and an identity by a reconstruction of their selves out of the reality of their experience, which had been the given.

Antharjanam offers an insider’s perspective to the shifting power equations and relations. Remaining apolitical and unemotional in her narration, Nilayangode finds herself in the process of the making of a self, as the narrative takes shape. Her gradual transfer from private seclusion to public participation involves a self, formed and informed through a network of relations in the given social, political, historical and cultural matrix. Her autobiographical strategy “posits the subject as knowable only through its interpersonal interactions as part of a larger familial-historical framework” (Corbett 258). It is not history apriori, neither is it intensely personal: hence the justification of the subtitle “Memoirs of a Namboodiri Woman.” The memoir format enables her a safe spring board to construct a text that embeds her private story. It allows her to be mute about her self with its own inner turmoil, aspirations and frustrations, offering for public perusal/gaze only those vignettes she considers as collective. ■

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Shashi Deshpande's Short Stories: A Study in Major Thematic Concerns

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Shashi Deshpande, one of the noted fictionists of India, is a writer with an Austenian range. Her short stories are peopled with men and women in their intricate web of relationship. Though she claims to be no feminist, she does stand by her heroines who struggle for their 'self' and 'identity' in a patriarchal social set up. This paper seeks to study the major thematic concerns of Deshpande in her short stories. In her stories, she touches upon the issues like rape, domestic violence, inter-caste marriage, abortion, female foeticide, widowhood, widow remarriage, longing for the male child, infidelity, sterility, misery of the girl child, suicide and lesbianism apart from other political and historical issues. Her stories are essentially dedicated to the cause of women. Her heroines are modern women who resist every taboo that subjugates them. Her core concern in the stories has been to raise her voice against the injustice that is meted out to women as mothers, wives, daughters, widows and office workers. She wants liberation of women and wishes them to enjoy equal right in marriage, family and elsewhere. Her women are not subservient to men any longer. In her stories, she suggests that it is high time society gave up violence against them from foetus to family and from house to office.

Key Words: Feminist, rape, widow, lesbianism, domestic violence, abortion.

Shashi Deshpande is one of the foremost Indian fiction writers. Her writing career spans about four decades. Her literary output includes twenty three books- ten novels, eight short story collections, four books for children and a collection of essays. Though she primarily excels as a novelist, her short stories are equally captivating and address relevant social issues of contemporary India. Like many noted fiction writers, she commenced her literary career with short stories. Her maiden short story collection, 'The Legacy and Other Stories' appeared in 1978. Then came out 'It Was The Nightingale', 'It Was Dark' and 'The Miracle' in 1986. Her fifth collection of stories 'The Intrusion and Other Stories' was published in 1993. 'The Stone Women', her sixth collection of stories, came out in 2001. Lastly, Penguin published two volumes of her Collected Stories in 2003 and 2004 respectively.

As a short story writer, Deshpande has, like Jane Austen, a limited range. Being a woman, she is concerned about the plight of women and in her concerns she betrays the

influence of Western feminist writers. She portrays the modern Indian women who are caught up in their own dilemmas. Her women characters make every effort to understand themselves and establish their identity as a wife, mother and, above all, as a human being in the patriarchal society of India. More often than not, her protagonists are women who struggle endlessly to find their own voice and assert their individuality in a social set up that forbids them to have their own way. They show resilience in fighting for their rights and are quick in adapting themselves to their quickly changing roles in the modern times. They work outside the house as well as inside. They attend to the needs of their in-laws, husband and children and, at the same time, they do their jobs. Therefore, they feel economically independent and equal to their male counterparts. In this connection Ross's view seems worth quoting here, "The role-taking and role-performance as well as the attitude and aspiration of the girl are likely to reflect the characteristic features of the newly emerging urbo-industrial social system" (232).

Deshpande, in her novels, short stories, essays, interviews and talks, discusses various issues related to the life of women in the typical, traditional Indian society. In her stories, she addresses issues like rape, domestic violence, inter-caste marriage, abortion, female foeticide, widowhood, widow remarriage, longing for the male child, infidelity, sterility, misery of the girl child, suicide, lesbianism as well as political and historical issues. All these issues are related from the point of view of the women protagonists who undergo the trials and tribulations of life. Deshpande's women do not endure the injustice done to them passively. Rather, they stand up against the normative restrictions imposed on them by the patriarchy. Thereby, they convey the message that women are no objects, but are dignified human beings.

Deshpande has always made it clear that her work is not feminist writing. Rather, she clarifies, her stories deal with human beings who grapple with different hostile situations of their life. She allows her protagonists to grow on their own and she almost never preaches any morals or sticks to stereotypes and dogmas. To her characters, struggle is life and they wade their way through difficulties to self-realization. G.S. Amur, the person who motivated her to publish her very first collection of stories, sums up the major thematic concerns of Deshpande in the following manner: "Woman's struggle in the context of contemporary Indian society, to find and preserve her identity as wife, mother and most important of all, as a human being, is Shashi Deshpande's major concern as a creative writer and this appears in all her important stories" (p.10).

The Indian patriarchal system offers little scope for women to attain individual and independent growth and development. Discrimination is invariably practised against them. They are subjected to torture and exploitation and are raped and murdered every here and there. They face problems before and after marriage. They live on the margins of society. However, they have a sense of dignity and self-respect in their lives. They fight their battles by themselves and often come out victorious. However, not all her women characters are the same. Some are weak who remain silent throughout their suffering, while most are

strong enough to bear the brunt from the front and are determined to overcome all the hurdles of their lives.

Deshpande's stories delve deep into the psyche of women. They reveal that she has a sound understanding of human psychology. She has employed a variety of narrative techniques like memory, flashback, first person narration and, of course, the stream of consciousness in order to bring out the reality of women's inner life and experiences. Her plots are so well constructed that they lead to a logical conclusion. Her stories do not begin *ab ovo*. Rather, they begin *in medias res* and have an abrupt ending that leaves the readers in a state of surprise and bewilderment.

Deshpande's story 'It Was Dark' deals with the serious issue of rape. As a matter of fact, rape is the most abominable violence against the body of woman that leaves her in a state of utter physical and mental devastation. In the opinion of Susan Griffin, "In effect, the real crime (in rape) is the annihilation by the man of the woman as a human being" (39). The raped girl or woman is socially and morally killed whereas the rapist is not even denounced or punished. Therefore, the crime of rape is on the rise. In the story, a fourteen-year-old girl from a middle class family is raped. While returning from the school, she begs for a lift, but the man abducts her and keeps her confined in a dark room where he rapes her for three consecutive days. As she is just a teen ager, her first sexual experience is traumatic. When she is brought back from the police station, she lies in bed in a half-dead state. She gazes at the ceiling all the time without uttering a single word. She ceases to exist mentally. Her mother, being a woman, identifies with her daughter and feels her pain and suffering. On the other hand, her father is worried about his social image and wonders what they should do in case she conceives.

In the story, the act of rape is a source of physical gratification to the rapist. To the girl, the act is a source of inordinate pain and suffering. To the parents, the act is the main cause of damage to their social image and reputation. Anyways, the act renders the tender girl abnormal who becomes unable to respond to the world around her. The story is narrated through the consciousness of the mother who does her best to protect her child and takes care of her immediate physical concerns. Her father, on the contrary, attends to legal and practical needs. He is bothered about the social consequences of rape and is less concerned about the trauma suffered by his daughter: "What if something happens?"..."Something?" I stared at him blankly.... "I mean...suppose....After all, she was there with him for three days..." (Vol.I.p.125).

The theme of rape surfaces in Deshpande's novel 'The Binding Vine' too where Kalpana's rape becomes a matter of secondary significance as her parents are more concerned about its social consequences than about the trauma of their daughter. They try to protect their wounded reputation and do nothing to redress the wrong done to her. Kalpana's mother, Shakutai, is an abandoned wife. However, her rape serves to bring her parents together. They consider the chances of her marriage after the stigma of rape.

Both 'It Was Dark' and 'The Binding Vine' offer a serious criticism of social attitudes towards sex and suggest that there is an urgent need to spread sex education in order to make children-both male and female-aware of the issues related to sex. Indian society must cease to treat the topic of sex as a taboo. In her stories and novels, Deshpande is dead against the social practice in India which imposes every restriction on girls and women only. They are expected to protect their virginity and family honour. But boys and men are never advised to practise self-restraint. They treat sex as an 'urge' that must be satisfied at any cost. They never ever think about what it will lead to. In the story, 'The Intrusion', the husband does not care for the feeling of his wife. Thinking her to be his possession and an object of his lust, he assaults her sexually while she is asleep. It was an act against her will. Hence, it was equal to rape, though within marriage. In this case, the husband believes that marriage has given him the authority to have intercourse with his wife at will and his wife's will is of no consequence. This forced sex is an example of sexual violence against women within marriage. Similar cases of rape by husbands occur in novels like 'The Dark Holds No Terrors', 'Roots and Shadows' and 'The Binding Vine' where Sarita, Akka and Mira are victims of sexual assaults within marriage respectively, and all the examples of 'rape within marriage', were foreshadowed in the story 'The Intrusion'.

The next issue that Deshpande takes up in her stories is domestic violence against women. Traditionally, Indian women have been known to be submissive, docile and obedient. They are not expected to raise their voice against the injustice done to them by the patriarchy and the in-laws. Geetha's view explains the reason why women in India are kept in subjugation: "Submissiveness and docility perhaps is what aggravates the problems for most of the women characters in Shashi Deshpande's stories which makes them mark their real feelings or attitudes, since they lack the will to shake off the shackles" (177). The story 'Homecoming' presents the pathetic life of a young woman who enters a hasty love marriage and becomes a victim of domestic violence at the hands of her own husband. The plot revolves around a poor working woman, Ai, and her four children, Anju and Suman, the daughters; and Suresh and Barkya, two younger sons. Anju shoulders the responsibility of running the home with her salaried job. Her mother is a part-time servant at a number of households. Her younger sister, Suman, works as a part-time helper to an upper-middle class woman. In the midst of pulls and pushes of their life, Anju decides to enter into a love marriage against the wishes of her mother. Being blinded by her passion for her husband, she turns a deaf ear to the sane advice of her mother.

However, soon her dreams of an ideal conjugal life are shattered. She is beaten inhumanly by her husband who takes away all her salary too. Initially, she puts up with the violence done to her. But, before long, she finds it unbearable and returns to her mother's place. Here, she speaks nothing for three days except saying, 'I'm not going back'. Her sister, Suman, sees the marks of her husband's brutality on her back. The author presents the situation very poignantly:

The girl had just pointed to Anju's bare back. I saw the scars then, some of them still raw, oozing blood and cried out so loudly that Anju had woken up with a start. She sat up; her hands held out before her, her eyes like a frightened animal's (Vol.1.p.135).

However, the 'Homecoming' of Anju does not end her privations. Her cruel husband follows her here too. He not only beats Anju but also her brother, Suresh, and her mother. He drags her out of her home and keeps beating her and everybody else who happens to come in his way. The social worker, Tai, stands a passive witness to all this, but does nothing to protect her. The author captures the scene very graphically:

The sounds were louder now, she looked back and saw that he had brought Anju out and was dragging her along the path she had walked on so proudly, while Suresh and Ai followed him, Suresh holding on to him like a limpet....Suman's face was terrified by the scene of utter violence she was witnessing....Suman ran stumbling, sobbing, frantic to get to Anju. As she got to them, the man pushed Anju through the small gate, giving Suresh a final brutal blow that flung him against a wall. The boy fell down and lay still. Ai ran to him, crying out his name. He got up looking dazed, his face bleeding (Vol.I.pp.159-60).

The story brings into focus the comeuppance of a hasty love marriage which overlooks factors like caste, family and background etc. The sooner the lovers are disillusioned, the faster the love marriages fade. Even salaried wives are not spared by selfish and pimp-like husbands.

Deshpande deals with the theme of problematic marriages in her stories. She focuses man-woman relationship at crucial moments in their life. However, despite problems in their life, her women do not walk out on their marriage. Rather, they face the adverse situations bravely and bear with the infidelity and adultery of their husbands. The story 'And What's a Son' depicts the infidelity of the husband and the forbearance of wife who accepts the offspring of his infidelity. On the other hand, the story 'The Shadow' depicts the adultery of the wife whose husband accepts her, but spurns the child thus born. Despite doing better than her siblings, the girl never receives any appreciation from her father/step father. However, her mother identifies with her and helps her overcome her grief and serves to alleviate her sense of alienation.

Indian society is still very conservative in terms of its attitude towards widows. They have been circumscribed by social norms and taboos. Until very recently, widow remarriage was something unimaginable and something against the norms and codes of society. But, with the spread of women's education and job opportunities being available for them now, the whole scenario has changed. Their economic independence has paved the way for them and they are now strong enough to survive by themselves in case they become a widow. Three of Deshpande's stories 'The Rain', 'A Man and a Woman' and 'The Cruelty Game' deal with young widows who choose to remarry.

The story 'The Rain' deals with the love-affair between the widow, Radha, and the narrator who is a medical practitioner by profession. The narrator has been in love with

Radha, his friend and cousin, since their college days. He has nurtured his feelings and passion for her. He recalls: “She was the person around whom I’d centred all those vague longings, dreams and erotic fantasies that torment a young man. I thought of her often in my hostel room” (Vol.2.p.228). However, they were not fated to get married. He could not even attend her marriage as he was busy with his preparation for his examination. After some days, he was filled with a sense of loss as he could not make her his wife.

But fate takes a strange turn and Radha’s husband becomes terminally ill. She writes to him about their coming to Bombay for her husband’s treatment. She wanted his help in the admission of her husband to a hospital. Radha had always been a reserved sort of girl in her college days. But, on a rainy night, she pays a surprise visit to the narrator’s house. It was a matter of extreme joy for the narrator as he had always desired for her proximity. This visit was a way for her to get some respite from the tiredness caused by the terminal illness of her husband. She wanted some shoulder to put her head on and cry her heart out.

Her sorrow had changed her face. She takes a bath, goes to the kitchen and comes back with two cups of tea. She feels a little relaxed and they converse together about past days and memories. She wants to know why he is still a bachelor and reminisces how he adored her once: “Then she faced me full as she said, ‘I thought at one time you liked me a lot, didn’t you? I remember you once wrote me a poem.’ She smiled the first smile I had seen on her face since she had come. Why was she talking of all this now? I thought I understood” (Vol.2.p.230).

Radha was talking to the narrator about the past memories as her future looked rather frightful as she was about to lose her husband. In her desperation, she wanted the moral support of a male being who could give her some solace. The fear brings her closer to the narrator and, for the time being, she forgets everything about her ailing husband in the hospital and they fondle each-other erotically. The author catches the moment thus:

Then she moved and stillness between us broke. She came to me and laid her palms on my cheeks.... Her lips were close to mine and at last I did what I had dreamt of all those years back in my hostel room. I bent down and tasted them. She gave a sigh and came into my arms, pliant, fragrant and warm. My lips moved over her eyes, her cheeks, her neck and her hair. There comes a moment when thought ceases, when reasoning vanishes and the mind is just a useless adjunct to a throbbing body. This moment was one of those. And now I was a boy no longer, all those vague flights of fancy had hardened into something concrete. She, too, thank God, was no girl, but a woman, passionate and responsive (Vol.2.p.231).

But, before consummation, the telephone bell rings to announce the death of Radha’s husband. She was now a widow in the prime of her life. She returns to her parents’ village to live with them forever. But the narrator does not want to see her in the state of widowhood. He keeps in touch with her through letters. He realizes that Radha was destined to be his wife. He comes to her village to persuade her and her parents for their marriage. But everyone

was against it. Radha tries to make him understand that widow remarriage is something blasphemous. But the narrator remains adamant. So, ultimately, Radha yields to his repeated requests and they tie the knot.

Deshpande's story 'A Man and a woman' is about the incestuous relationship of a young widow with her young brother-in-law. The story treats sex as a physical need like hunger and thirst and the story writer never touches upon the concept of morality. Lalitha, the protagonist, is a young widow of thirty whose husband, Jayant, left her alone with a four-month old son six years back when he died in an accident. Having no parents and no qualifications was a handicap for her and, to make matter worse, she was not allowed to work outside for money. Her purchase of a red and blue saree and her laughter at the childlike activities of her son are frowned upon by her in-laws.

Then, one day, she suddenly becomes aware of her seventeen years old brother-in-law, Ajit's physical attraction towards her as he wiped perspiration from her neck using her own saree. Instead of getting angry at this deviant behaviour of Ajit, she relished it. Though Ajit has a sense of guilt in establishing illicit relationship with Lalitha, he fails to control his blinding passion for her. She reciprocates his bold advances and they indulge in a sexual intercourse which brings him a new experience about the female body. He expresses his new experience thus, "But, no, it was real and she was a real woman. And not just any woman but Lalitha, whom he had seen in the house ever since he could remember....A body he had seen and touched. His own body responded to the thought like a horse to the spurs..." (Vol.2. p. 202).

If this incest ignites the blinding passion of Ajit for Lalitha, it also gratifies the physical desires of Lalitha after a long gap of time. The story urges the society to be sympathetic towards the widows who have their own urges and desires which do not perish with the untimely demise of their husbands. However, at the end, Manu, Jayant's friend who had become a cripple in the same accident which had claimed the life of Lalitha's husband, proposes to Lalitha saying, "If I'm a cripple, so are you. We are two of a kind. There is so much we can share, so much we can give each-other. Life can become an adventure.... A man and a woman- the inevitable conclusion"(Vol.2. p. 214). And they enter into a wedlock which brings Lalitha out of the most restricted and miserable life of an Indian widow and offers a pair of crutches to the crippled Manu.

Another story that deals with the theme of widow remarriage is 'The Cruelty Game'. This story is narrated from the point of view of a little girl in the widow's family. The girl does not know that her widowed aunt is the cause of anger of the elderly members in the family. Pramila, the protagonist of the story, feels lonely after the death of her husband in Bombay. So she returns to the house of her in-laws with her daughter Sharu. Initially, Mr. Kumar's parents are sympathetic in their attitude towards her and her daughter, but, later on, they grow callous and apathetic towards her as they hold her responsible for the untimely death of their son. Her mother-in-law openly accuses her: "My son- you killed him- enjoying yourself" (Vol.2.p.222).

In India, widows are forced to lead a very austere life. They are not allowed to wear colourful dresses, eat delicious food, and decorate themselves as if their life were a long penance. The same is the case with Pramila in the family. Her fault it is that she, even after the death of her husband, continues to put a small dot of kumkum on her forehead. When it is detected by her mother-in-law, she angrily orders her: "Take that off, why do you have that, take it off" (Vol.2.p.222). It is so tense a situation that Pramila's daughter, Sharu, begins to cry out of fear. Pramila leads an abject life that is full of nothing but humiliation. She is silenced by torture and insult. But, ultimately, she is tired of enduring the injustice done to her by her in-laws. So she decides to remarry which shocks her daughter so much so that, initially, she refuses to accompany her mother to Bombay. Her mother's marriage with her father's old friend, Mr. Jagdish, was something unimaginable or, rather, she could not come to terms with her mother's decision of remarriage itself. However, when she realizes her mother's miserable condition in the family, she gives her consent to go. Thus, the story narrates why a widow is forced to take the decision of remarriage. It is just for her survival and the better future of her child that Pramila leaves the family of her deceased husband where there was nothing positive for her and her child.

The story entitled 'The Story' by Deshpande deals with the theme of female bonding, a topic rarely taken up by any other fiction writer. Written as a first-person narrative, it is related by a grandmother to her granddaughter. It essentially suggests two positive traits of Indian culture at the same time. Firstly, it points out that story-telling is basically a female activity and, secondly, it tells that there is a strong female bonding between mother and daughter and between grandmother and granddaughter. Women have always preferred to share their secrets with other women and they have avoided discussing the issues pertaining to their body with men in their family.

However, Deshpande says that, in the beginning, there was no secrecy between men and women. But, as men started their quest for immortality, which led them to the caves beyond oceans, women were left behind to look after children and home. The first quest helped men gain precious stones that they handed over to the women they relied on and loved most. The next quest enabled them to procure beautiful women whom they had seen only in dreams till then. Their small waist, high bosom, thin legs and shiny skins captivated men's hearts and they came to ignore their former female counterparts. This led to emulation between old and new women to look better. Though men were fascinated by the 'new' women, they, later on, came to dislike them as they were not docile. This 'new' woman was divinely beautiful due to the gentleness of her heart, calmness of her mind and her bewitching smile and, therefore, she looked more like an object of worship than one of lust. In short, she was something non-existent and was just a creation of man's imagination.

Deshpande is very candid in the treatment of sex in her stories. She does not hesitate to discuss lesbianism that has slowly been taking root in India. Her story 'Window' frankly touches upon this theme. In this regard Sudhir Kakkar and Katharina Kakkar's observation seems pertinent. They remark, "...lesbians do not exist in Indian society or so it seems. Again,

it is not as if Indians are unaware of lesbian activity. Yet this activity is never seen as a matter of personal choice, a possibility that is...granted to deficient men, men of 'third nature' in ancient India. Lesbian activity is invariably seen as an outcome of the lack of sexual satisfaction in unmarried women, widows or women stuck in unhappy, sexless marriages. This is true even in the depiction of lesbian activity in fiction or movies"(104-105).

In the context of Indian literature, it was Ismat Chughtai who first ventured to handle the theme of lesbianism in her short story 'Quilt'. In the story, Begum Jaan is married to a rich Nawab who is homosexual. Though she is very beautiful, the Nawab does not find her fascinating. Despite her numerous efforts to establish physical relationship with her husband, she finds him unresponsive. Then she enters into a lesbian relationship with Rabbu, a household servant and a great masseuse. She enjoys her massage for two or three hours before bath daily. However, both Deshpande and Chughtai avoid depicting the indescribable things and prefer to represent the theme of sex in a symbolic and suggestive language. The story 'Window' deals with the attempts of a landlady to establish a lesbian relationship with her tenant's young wife. She offers her flowers and brushes her hair like a lover. She admires her silk saree and whispers into her ear that she was very pretty. This creates a kind of fear in the mind of the young woman. One day, proving her fear right, the landlady enters her room through the window. Again, she grips her hand to take her upstairs to show her the upper storey of her bungalow. However, the young woman frees herself from her and jumps to her bed which forces the landlady to leave the room in disappointment. Here, Deshpande points out how the young woman was able to prevent herself from falling a prey to the lesbianism at the hands of her landlady. In fact, the young woman had already been victimized by another lesbian hostel-mate during her student life and had spent hours together with her in absolute seclusion. This past experience helps her judge the lesbianism of her landlady immediately and resist her advances. Further, it was the landlady's lesbianism because of which a girl who used to come to her for tuition had stopped coming.

Quite surprisingly, Deshpande takes up the theme of sex as a means of taking revenge in her story 'The Victory' where a son vows to take revenge on his father, who has brought home a stepmother after the death of his mother, by following him in his very footsteps. He is deeply hurt by this act of his father as it was an act of betrayal done to his deceased mother. He declares in the very face of his father, "I promise to live my life the way you want, or the way you do, which means lying, hypocrisy, adultery etc." (Deshpande: MOS:1986:28). However, in the end, he is consumed by his own anger.

Her story 'Death of a Child' discusses the unpleasant consequences of sex and childbirth. In the story, the protagonist wishes to dissolve her pregnancy as she does not want to have a third child in less than four years. She says, "I feel like an animal. The third time is less than four years. It isn't fair" (Vol.2.p.610). She is pained to see the inhuman indifference of her husband towards her, "So uncomprehendingly does he look at me that there seems to be no link between us. And this is the father of my child! Panic surges into me" (Vol.2.p.61). She knows what loss a woman has to suffer when she is forced to become

a child-bearing machine by the callous patriarchy. She says, “Marriage, childbirth destroys something in woman. A reserve. Secretiveness. An innocence”(Vol.2.p.63). She is of the view that she must have the prerogative to decide what to do and what not to do with her body. She believes that motherhood forbids women to participate in any other sphere of life: “Children stifle your personality. You become just a mother, nothing more” (Vol.2.p.62). Her decision of abortion may be seen as an act of self-assertion against her indifferent and apathetic husband. However, soon after the abortion, she feels herself guilty of foeticide that torments her unendingly:

“... There is a hollow feeling within me.... Now like a phantom limb, my child seems to cling on to me. Now when he does not exist, he asserts himself. I am conscious of a piercing pain in the place he had filled. Grief becomes real. I swing like a monstrous pendulum, between grief, guilt and shame. Guilt conquers.... But for me the child would have lived” (Vol.2.p.68).

In an interview with Geeta Gangadharan, Deshpande expresses her concern about the condition of women. She remarks, “...until very recently women in our society have been looked upon just as ‘breeding animals’. They had no other role in life. I have a strong objection to being treated in this manner” (Indian Communicator, 20 Nov. 1994).

Deshpande’s story, ‘I Want’, suggests how women’s will is ignored in matters pertaining to marriage. It is supposed that all marriageable girls are in a hurry to enter the institution of marriage. Marriage is the only destiny of girls and if a girl remains unmarried until her late twenties, she is regarded as a burden. In the story, the protagonist, Alka, has to pass through the ‘bride selection ritual’. She is interrogated by the boy’s relatives without being asked about her likes and dislikes. When she is okayed by the boy’s relatives, her mother feels proud that her twenty-seven-year old daughter has finally been approved. She cannot hide her joy, “Now I can look the world in the face again. I used to be so ashamed. A daughter of 27 and not married” (Vol.2.p.143).

Throughout this ritual, the boy and the girl simply act at the dictates of their parents and other family members, having no say in the matter. When they are asked to spend some time in each-other’s company, they find that “Splinters of silence lay between us, piercing our togetherness”. It is a one-sided conversation in which the boy expresses his desire that she must stay at home after marriage and remain docile. At the moment, Alka just thinks that “He had the mould already. All I had to do was fit in” (Vol.1.p.147). She felt claustrophobic and comes out reflecting:

I want...I want...I want....What about me. My silence was such a loud cry of indignation. I was surprised he could not hear me. But I had an odd feeling he would never hear me. Nevertheless, I waited patiently. May be he would still ask me. What would I tell him if he said, ‘What do you want?’ My desires were so elementary compared to his that I was ashamed of them. A man, a husband, a good companion, a good marriage, children, that was all. But I need not have worried. He didn’t ask me. Not once (Vol.2.p.148).

Nobody, including her own parents, shows any concern about what she wants. However, she struggles till the end to make herself heard. Her agony it is to see that her individual 'self' is ignored. Her wishes are not paid heed to. However, she is different from other heroines of Deshpande in the sense that she strongly wishes to preserve her 'self' and establish her 'identity'. A.N. Dwivedi writes, "What keeps Alka apart from the common women is a strong sense of 'self' that she wants to preserve at all costs" (Dwivedi in Pathak, p.277). She submits to her fate and, in the end, it hardly matters to her whether the man will ever 'hear' her or not. The story concludes in a disappointing manner without offering any concrete solution to the problem.

One of the very first stories of Deshpande entitled 'The Miracle' is a commentary on the religious faith and superstition in miraculous episodes. The story is narrated by a female typist who works in a medical research institution. The doctors and experts undertake a research which measures the impact of a particular poisonous herb on monkeys. Most of the monkeys die when a dose of this herbal preparation is given to them. But a large monkey called 'Raaja' is not affected by it. The menial staff, especially Narayan, regards it as a miracle and thinks that Raaja is an incarnation of Hanuman. The members of the institution are divided in their opinion about Raaja. The superstitious people think him to be a deity, while the rational ones want to search out why it is immune to the effect of the poisonous herb that had killed other monkeys.

Deshpande chooses to depict in the story the conflict between religion and science. Religion is a matter of faith, therefore, those who are religious are against the killing of Raaja. The doctors are rational beings, so they are in favour of killing the monkey for exploratory reasons. The conflict at the institute leads the narrator to visit the miraculous Raaja who is huge and dignified like a king, though kept in a cage. This visit forces her to think about the purpose of her own life: "What is my business? Is it to hold on to my job until I capture a man, marry him, bear him children and live my life in such comfort and as much happiness as I can snatch from it" (Vol.2.p.194)?

As a matter of fact, Raaja inspires her to assert her individuality as a human being. Therefore, she decides to pay the woman doctor, who is harsh to her, back in her own coin. A kind of self-realization dawns on her and she feels: "Suddenly I felt as the Buddha must have felt when he sat meditating under the Bodhi tree. Illuminated. Enlightened. My business is to do what I feel like doing. And if I lose my perks by the way, to hell with the perks! And what perks anyway? To be looked as if you exist"(Vol.2.p.194). Thus, the story helps the narrator attain self-realization and become herself.

From the preceding discussion of the stories, it becomes evident that Deshpande has covered, within her Austenian range, a number of themes with women in the centre. Her core concern in the stories has been to raise her voice against the injustice meted out to women as mothers, wives, widows and office workers. She wants liberation of women and wants them to enjoy equal right in marriage, family and elsewhere. She admires the audacity of women in

her stories who are able to cope with any adversity by themselves. Her women are ready to struggle for their 'self' and 'identity' as dignified human beings. They are not subservient to men any longer. Therefore, it is high time society gave up violence against them from foetus to family and from house to office. In conclusion, it can very well be said that her stories are nothing but paeans sung in praise of the victory of the modern woman. ■

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Migration and Marginalization: Inside-Outsider Dichotomy in Siddhartha Deb's *The Point of Return*

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Sivasish Biswas

The problem of migration, illegal immigrants from neighbouring countries has been a burning topic for the eight states of Northeast India since pre-independence period. The eight easternmost states of India, namely Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura loosely termed as the Northeast have faced the threat of illegal influx of immigrants for a long period of time. The threat is mainly from neighbouring countries like Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Myanmar and Tibet. Moreover, interstate migration from other states of India to the region has also created much tension among the indigenous tribes living in the states of Northeast India. This has further led towards the problem of marginalization and identity crisis. Neither the indigenous people nor the outsiders live a normal life in this region and are always under the burden of violence and unrest. The problem has become manifold with the springing up of different terrorist groups who are in constant fight with the State and Central governments for their rights sometimes leading to the demand of formation of a new sovereign state. Siddhartha Deb's *The Point of Return* (2002) portrays such a picture of a marginalized family who migrate to India from the then East Bengal, present Bangladesh, at the time of Independence and live and work in Meghalaya but could not afford a permanent shelter for them and finally find their abode in the Barak Valley of Assam. The inside-outsider dichotomy and trauma of exile work out throughout the novel bringing it somewhere closer to Amitav Ghosh's much praised novel *The Shadow Lines* (1988).

Key words: *migration, marginalization, inside-outsider dichotomy, trauma of exile, identity crisis.*

Assam and its seven neighbouring states of Northeast India have been receiving legal and illegal immigrants for the past centuries. This process was a regular phenomenon even during the Colonial period. After the British spread their territory over Assam and the present Northeast, they hired the Bengali officials from West Bengal for doing the petty clerical jobs. This created a new class of people, the *Babus* who were better educated and apt to doing the office works. Then the Britishers brought the Tea Garden labourers to work

in the newly developed tea plantations from Bihar, Odisha and Chotanagpur. These people were huge in numbers and gradually they started to be recognised as the Tea labourers, adivasis etc. They started to live in the tea gardens and work as daily wage labourers in the tea gardens. At present, this class of legal immigrants to Assam and the Northeast has become more than 25% of the total population of the region. Another group of immigrants to the Northeast Region (NER) are the Marwaris and the Biharis who came to the region for trade and commerce. They settled in different parts of the region and started to do business with the local people. At present, they are broadly termed as the *Hindivashis* very often.

The Britishers found enormous land areas still uninhabited in different parts of the NER. So, they shifted large number of people from the densely populated areas of the then East Bengal to Assam. These people were mainly Bengali Hindus and Bengali Muslims. The expansion of the British Colonial regime gradually transformed the demographic scenario of Assam and the North East. With the cultivation of tea a new industry started to grow very fast in the region. To meet the demands, the British administrative machinery created demand for trained manpower in large number which was not available among the indigenous people of Assam and the North East. Discovery of oil and coal as well as forest resources also increased the demand much more. The emerging enterprise required manpower not only for running them but also for creating facilities like railways, bridges, roads, factories, houses etc. To meet the demand of skilled labourers, the British look for such manpower from outside the North Eastern region. That was the beginning of legal import of people to the barren lands of Assam and the Northeast.

The elite Assamese people did not take this influx of immigrants lightly as it was a threat to the language and culture of the region. A similar tendency was also felt in the hearts of the other tribes living in the entire region of the then NEFA (North East Frontiers of Assam) which never stopped till date. Two significant mass protests sprung up in Assam – ‘the official language movement’ in 1960 to bring back Assamese as the main language of the state machinery replacing Bengali and ‘the medium movement’ of 1972 to make Assamese compulsorily the medium of education up to graduation. The six years long Assam agitation of 1979 to 1985 was also an outraged outcome against the illegal immigrants from neighbouring Bangladesh to Assam and the North East which culminated with the historical tripartite ‘Assam Accord’ of 1985 among the Central and State Government and the AASU (All Assam Students Union). But the problem of continuous influx of illegal immigrants to almost all the states of the North East did not stop. Largely due to political proliferation, the local government has not given due importance in sealing the borders since the last 35 years in accordance to the Assam Accord and the process just got lengthened each time. Even a local political party ruling the state of Assam for a decade could not come up to the expectations of the public in the issue of Bangladeshi immigrants. Of late, the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) passed by the Central Government in 2019 has added much to the cause and mass protests are being flagged against the government for sheltering the immigrants specially the Bangladeshis in the entire region of the North East

for Vote Bank politics. A non-government figure states that around 19 lakh illegal Bangladeshi Hindu immigrants are living only in the state of Assam whose names have been excluded from the National Register of Citizens (NRC) published in July, 2019.

A similar situation is found in the other states of the Northeast where much protests have taken place for safeguarding the ethnic culture and language of the tribes living in those areas. At the time of Independence, the British territory of North East Frontiers of Assam (NEFA) ruled over the entire region. In 1947, the whole region was annexed to the dominion of India as Assam only after 9 years to secede Tripura as a new Union territory in 1956. Nagaland was seceded from Assam in 1956 and became an independent state. Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura have become independent states with Arunachal Pradesh being included as a Union Territory in 1972. Sikkim became a full-fledged state in 1975 and Arunachal Pradesh in 1987. The sixth schedule of the Indian Constitution has given special provision to the people of the hill states of the North East to protect their tribal category, varied ethnic culture and language. The Inner line permit (ILP) also makes these states less vulnerable to the threat of illegal immigration. Meghalaya and Tripura have witnessed the maximum influx of legal and illegal Bangladeshi immigrants as its borders are stretched longer with the erstwhile East Pakistan formed in 1947 and the growing of the new nation state of Bangladesh in 1971. As a result, the number of indigenous people of the state the *Tripuris* has remained a meagre 19% only in Tripura as per 2011 Census. In 1979, the tribal people of Meghalaya staged mass protest against the immigrants living in the state and around 50,000 people left the country with bags and bundles on their back to save their lives. A major portion of these people were legal migrants from other states of India who came to Meghalaya at different times.

Siddhartha Deb's *The Point of Return* (2004) describes the pangs of separation from homeland due to the geo-political shift caused at the backdrop of migration and marginalization. The central character Dr. Dam, a retired government veterinary doctor, worked for his entire life in Assam and in the hill state of Meghalaya but could not own a home for himself and his family in Shillong. He was marginalised by the indigenous people of the state as the *dkhars*-outsiders and left the city with his wife and son to settle in Silchar, Assam. His son Babu, a third generation boy, could not take it easily because for him Shillong was the *home*, he knew. But he has to leave it with his family only because they were outsiders, non-natives. He could not understand how to react to the situation. He could not forget his childhood days spent in the Bungalow located at Garikhana, Shillong but in no way retain it in his mature days. The address of his home is lost forever, never to come back. Though his perspective of life is completely different from his father Dr. Dam, but both of them suffer from the pain of separation and marginalization.

Dr. Dam and his son Babu suffer from the pangs of marginalization in a place which they have known as home. Dr. Dam spent most of his lifetime in Shillong, Meghalaya serving as a government veterinary doctor but a sudden uprising of regionalism singled him and many others like him as the outsiders, non-locals and they have been separated from

the so-called indigenous people, the Khasis. They have been laughed at, attacked and even killed mercilessly. Most of such legal migrants from the rest of the country fled for their lives. Some remained there but lost the past privileges. They could not own a land there any more; neither can they sell any of their property to the non-locals. They became foreigners in their own country losing their own past identity. Many people like Dr. Dam became compelled to leave the hill state and take refuge in any other place, may it be their old house or a new destination.

After retirement from service, Dr. Dam goes to the pension office to clear his pension. To his utter surprise, he discovers the officials there making fun of his situation and insulting him to be a non-local. Looking over his papers, one of the officials who was a local resident of Shillong commented:

“Bengalis...no use for Bengalis, always coming over the border.” (Deb 22)

According to him, all the non-locals who came to the state are un-welcome there in the eyes of the local residents. They don't want any outsider in their state anymore and want to drive away all those who have come there over the years.

North Indians, South Indians, East Bengalis crossing the borders, back and forth, up and down. In '47 they came across because the country was being divided. In '71 because there was a war. After that, they were coming because there were no jobs, no homes, no land, too many mouths, too much water. Always coming across the border, with hordes of squealing children, coming across like locusts, like rain. (Deb 23)

Dr. Dam and his family became the victim of this hatred and insult imposed on them by the indigenous people of the state. They have become illegal migrant in their own country. Dr. Dam is unable to understand this discrimination by way of marginalization. Babu, Dr. Dam's son has a different perspective of the situation. For him, Shillong is his home, as he knew it. But his father's retirement has compelled the family to leave the city forever, never to come back. He cannot take it easily. He looks at the place as his own, not as an outsider. His father's quarter which he has known as the home, his school, friends, everything will be left behind if he leaves. But there was no other alternative to him except to take it as it came. In his words:

I turned from the window, wanting to impress the room I would never see again into my brain, but apart from the beds I could find nothing that would give me taste of the years that had flown by so swiftly. It had already become the past, I thought, this place, our lives here, as I looked at the bare walls and the boxes piled on the floor. I turned back to the window and looked at the night lamp in the cottage across the way, above and facing the bungalow occupied by the Intelligence Bureau. Life here had already become memories and I could almost feel them, small and vulnerable, their noses pressed against the window, pleading to be let in. (Deb 199)

Babu lived his childhood, his adolescence and also his adult days in the city of Shillong. For him the town has no other identity than 'home'. He cannot forget this place. He will carry the memories of this town in his heart throughout his life wherever he lives. His feeling is expressed in the following words:

I felt that I would need to remember this town, our life here, that I had not been conscious of this need in all the years spent here. I had spent the years dreaming of lives other than the one I had had here, thirsting for alternative possibilities. Now I had no time left, no clear feelings that would allow me to take leave of the town properly.....To take leave properly would involve something like that, going early in the morning to Laitkor Peak and seeing the town spread out below like a map and speaking to every inch of it." (Deb 199)

His attachment to the town is not like the one felt by a temporary visitor or traveller. It is original, spontaneous like any other indigenous people of the town. The only difference between them is that he does not belong to the place like the indigenous people; he is an outsider, at least in the eyes of the locals who must leave the place forever. His mind does not allow Babu to leave the place because he is attached to every inch of the town. He wants to live there forever not as an outsider, but as a resident member which is not going to be allowed any more. He must have to leave everything behind. The only thing he is allowed to carry is the sweet memory of a 'home' he lived in. Babu thinks:

.....I had ignored everything, the place and the people who lived here, turning my back on them. You will never again walk the road you took to school for seven years, I told to myself, and there will be a time when you will sit somewhere far from here and need to remember many things. I tried to begin, to remember, tried to think of the town..... (Deb 200)

Siddhartha Deb has written the novel in reverse chronological order starting from 1987 moving backward in history up to 1979. The chapters are also named in such a way that it describes the lives of Dr. Dam and his son Babu and their attachment with the hill town Shillong, Arrival, Departure, Terminal and Travelogue. Deb tries to depict the journey of a refugee who arrives at some station for some time and leaves the place moving forward in his journey. The first two chapters describes the last few years of Dr. Dam's service in the Government Veterinary Department in the newly formed Meghalaya state. He tried to build a house for himself in Assam as he liked Assam more than Meghalaya and acquired a plot of land near the Narangi oil Refineries. But he lost the land before he could build his dream house on the plot. In his last visit to Guwahati, he found the plot transformed into a road by the government. His colleagues and friends Kar, Mukherjee, Dutta etc. advised him to own a land at Shillong long ago, but he did not listen to them as he planned to build his house at Guwahati and settle there after retirement. Now it was too late for him to own a land in Shillong anymore. In Deb's words:

By the time he realized that he would never get his property back, it was much too late to buy land or house in the hill town, even if he had the money for it. The town had changed too, and under the aegis of the new state the laws prohibiting outsiders from acquiring land were already in place. (Deb 43)

Dr. Dam had no other alternative left than going back to Silchar where he possessed a land and a house in which his mother and his brother lived. He decided to build another house for himself, side by side his old house. His concept of 'home' has changed totally after he lost his plot of land at Guwahati. Deb writes:

The house he would build in Silchar was a last-ditch attempt to find a resting place, to face the reality of retirement and not move from rented house to rented house on an ever-tightening spiral, so that he could ultimately set forth on his final journey from the same emotional space at which he had arrived fifty six years earlier, the space of us call home. (Deb 43)

Siddhartha Deb ironically criticizes the local residents of the hill town who have forgotten their history. He laughs at those who have emerged as a known tribe only after the arrival of the British to this region. Before that, they were not known to the outside world. It is only the outsiders, especially the British who have made them known. The British set up the town and developed it into the present his station of Shillong. He describes the history of Shillong only to start from the arrival of British officer Henry Walters, Esq. He writes:

.....on the night of October 19, 1828, Henry Walters, Esq., began travelling from Dacca, crossing the Pandua Hills near Sylhet in Bengal. With baggage, tent and coolies, Walters made a journey to the hills in less than a month... when not scared of being trapped in a tribal village....he wrote in his journal....it is proposed to establish a Sanitarium at this place, for English soldiers and sick people, from Calcutta & c. The elevation is about five thousand feet above the level of the sea. The air is cool, light, and refreshing; and although the sun is hot, it is innoxious. The hill is free from jungle, covered with fine pasture and flowers, but rocky-and the ravines filled with trees and shrubs. (Deb 212)

Deb describes the history of Shillong growing as a town in the hands of the outsiders, the British. At the advent of a local tribal nationalism among the people of Meghalaya in the late seventies, they emerged to be in a fight against the outsiders who have given them their own identity and also the town of Shillong. He describes:

The first foreigners brought the town with them. Before them there was nothing, not even the countryside, because there was no place from where one could demarcate it, nowhere to measure it against; just the valley rising and falling, nestling against the mountains. The first outsiders, with their surveyors, planners, and administrators, their foremen and coolies, constables and postal runners, wishing a

sanctuary among the hills and afraid, still, of its uncontrollable and unknown nature, raised this town from the turf. (Deb 213)

Siddhartha Deb used two different perspectives of home in the novel *The Point of Return*, one is of Dr. Dam who migrated to India from the newly formed East Pakistan (present Bangladesh) in 1947 with his family. He served the Assam Government for some time and later transferred to Meghalaya as a Veterinary Doctor. He served the department as a dutiful dedicated employee. For him, Meghalaya is a part of his country, India. So, he finds it difficult to understand how he could become an outsider in his own country. When he could not build his house in Guwahati, he simply decides to settle in Silchar where he owns a land. For him living in Shillong or in Silchar is all alike after retirement because he has not developed such a close affinity with Shillong that he cannot leave it. So he does not listen to his friends and colleagues who wanted to do something for him to own a house in Shillong. But the perspective of home for his son Babu is different. He knows Shillong as his home and does not accept it at all that they are outsiders in Meghalaya. His mind wants to protest. He does not want to leave the 'home' he knows. For him, his father's home in Silchar is an unknown place. He visited the place only once or twice but never thought of living here forever. Babu does not show his feelings to his father when the latter decides to build his house in Silchar. But he knows his mind that, he cannot accept the new address to be his home throughout his life, never. He thinks:

No one will tell you what you yourself do not seem to know at times, that your forefathers came from elsewhere. From where? It cannot be found on the map of India, which, with its confident peaks and curves and wholeness, eliminates any speculation that in this representation of the subcontinent there are places that do not belong, people who do not belong. (Deb 210)

Babu wants to carry the memory of home with him. He tries to put the memory of his childhood days into the canvas of his mind and turns ready to carry it to any other part of the world he goes:

Depending on person and situation, I assemble maps, photographs, and words, call on memory to furnish further details that will impart some sense of where I lived, something beyond a dim comprehension of remote beauty and even more remote violence....each churning in the storehouse that is me displaces something, changing the contours of my hometown, merging that place with people and incidents that came much, much later. (Deb 215-216)

After leaving Shillong, Babu becomes a lone traveller of the world. He lost his home, his roots. He travels to Kolkata and then to Delhi. As a correspondent of a media house in Delhi, he re-visits his homeland, Shillong for the last time, never to return again. Deb writes:

All this had to be encountered before I knew of the separate countries that exist in our hearts and then learned of the many that I had collected, like a crusty, seasoned

traveller, in my own inner space. It is as if those images I had gathered in that first place, the pictures that I composed of a lonely traveller on the threshold of a new destination. Poised uncertainly between past and future, had begun a process that ended only when observer and image had merged into one. (Deb 218)

His mind accepts the final return of being a traveller in this world, who does not have any final destination, or root and continues travelling to the far end of the world only to return within the sphere. His thoughts get direction at last:

This, then, is a retracing of that runner's route, from the first awareness of what it meant to be an outsider to a final settlement of accounts. Past and present brought face to face at last, strung out on two ends of the long run; father and son, characters and narrator, the town and the self, all come together-here, now, at this whiling, dizzy point of vertigo that is return. (Deb 230)

He understands that no one in this world is an insider or outsider; all are mere travellers in the short journey of the world, only to return to the creator one day finally. He whispers to himself:

This final act of remembrance must attempt, through the taste of fear, to freeze the images for a moment. Hometown. (Deb 231).

Babu leaves the town with all the memories of a home after his re-visit. He is ready to continue his journey as a traveller. He wishes everyone who is living or will live in that town which he knew to be 'home'.

I look at my birthplace, knowing that I will never see it again. I want it to be home for everyone who lives here, for everyone to have a place in it that cannot be lost or stolen. But how you achieve that future is no longer my concern. I tell my hometown, I have truly let go, I know... (Deb 304) ■

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Beauty and Strangeness of Landscape and Culture: An Ecocritical Study of D. H. Lawrence's *Sea and Sardinia*

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D. H. Lawrence has been criticized for his censure of civilization. But his works, including travel writings, provides greater prophesy in his ecological approach to literature. In the modern perspective the preservation of ecology is very essential. An ecocritical perspective can illuminate the travel writings of D. H. Lawrence very well. Emotionally scarred by the war, Lawrence began his quest for psychological and artistic freedom that led him to the secluded places of Sardinia. His main focus in his travel writing *Sea and Sardinia* was the description of the external world and the presentation of a bonding between human beings and nature. Here Lawrence acutely expresses his ecological concerns. In fact, the twentieth century has become a breeding ground of ecological disaster. That is why, Lawrence's ecocritical consciousness in his travel writings has become so much important. Nature serves as a background setting in most of the travel writings of Lawrence.

The term "ecocriticism" came into vogue in the 1970s. It is a combination of "criticism" with "eco", a shortened form of "ecology". Ecocriticism became prominent in the 1990s. It deals with the relationship between human beings and the landscape. Ecocritical writings tell of nature. It generally presents a bond between the human and the non-human world. Ecocritical writings are meant to be directed towards sustaining the survival of the human race. Representation of natural environment is also a prominent feature of ecocritical writings.

Wendy Vacani in her thesis "A Sense of Place and Community in Selected Novels and Travel Writings of D. H. Lawrence" (1994) makes a comparative study of the selected novels and travel books of Lawrence in the light of vivid portrayal of place and community. In the first two chapters Vacani stresses on the social and historical factors that can shape human relationship and the effect of place on human character. The subsequent chapters are critiques of self and society. Jack F. Stewart (1995) speaks for metaphor and metonymy, colour and space in Lawrence's work *Sea and Sardinia*. For Lawrence, travelling through Sardinia was a quest for the Hesperides and a way to self-discovery. He travelled to know the "Spirit of Place" and to read cultural history in landscapes. It was a quest for primitive landscapes. Culture is manifested here through landscape and people, costumes and crafts. This study is not essentially an ecocritical study but it shows Lawrence's deep

sensibilities.

Although beauty and strangeness are two essentially romantic terms, they are also applicable to the Lawrentian endeavors of encountering different premodern societies of Italy and other countries at the time of his travelling. Lawrence's nomadic life is filled in his restless search for the real spirit of those strange lands and cultures around Europe and America which were full of their premodern beauty. As a travel writer, Lawrence first travelled to the remotest parts of Italy and Germany in 1912. From then on Lawrence never left those unknown lands which were ever untrodden by the other travel writers of the world. The very first visit to Italy impressed Lawrence very much. He was taken aback by the premodern life-force of the Italian peasants. In fact, the losing away of the premodern spirit of the Italian peasant life and the very beauty of the Sardinian landscape and culture is presented by Lawrence through his famous travel book, *Sea and Sardinia* (1921). The notion of beauty can be traced back to the ancient times. The concept of beauty was first introduced in classical Greece. The word "beauty" originated from the Greek word "kallos" which means "good" or "of fine quality" in English. Generally, beauty is a characteristic of an animal, idea, object, person or place that provides a perpetual experience of pleasure or satisfaction. Beauty is studied as part of aesthetics, culture, social psychology, philosophy and sociology. As Ratnabali Bhattacharya observes:

Beauty is, in fact, the property of being an organic whole for perception, a whole that is normally of great complexity and intricate organization, and the greater this complexity of elements organized, the greater the beauty. (*Indian Philosophical Quarterly* 99-106)

Lawrence's travel book *Sea and Sardinia* focuses not on men and women but rather on birds, beasts, trees, fruit and flowers, many of Lawrence's meditations on nature turn out to offer thinly disguised commentaries on human nature as well, and particularly on human sexual conflict." (Fernihough 128) Lawrence's travels abroad were constant sources of inspiration that he enjoyed through the touches of strangeness of human beings around nature. The natural objects like the mountains, rocks, sea, the hills, woods, flowers – all attracted Lawrence very much. Lawrence was sensitive to every natural object and passionately loved them. Again, strangeness is an essential term for D. H. Lawrence. This is because his encounters with the 'unknown' and the 'unconscious' bear witness to the strangeness that he perceived around nature, culture and inanimate objects of the foreign lands. Lawrence had curiosity to know and feel the strangeness of nature and natural objects. His relation to nature and the natural objects is manifested through his travel writing, *Sea and Sardinia*. Like the romantic poets, Lawrence also adored the serenity of nature. Nature remained a powerful source of inspiration for Lawrence. Lawrence tried to capture the old beauty and strangeness present in the remote Sardinian landscape and culture. In his travel book, *Sea and Sardinia* Lawrence depicted the beauty of the places like Etna and Cagliari with a sort of perfection. The beauty of the Etna and Cagliari was presented by Lawrence

with a romantic touch. Instead of being a modern travel writer, Lawrence here is writing absolutely romantic poetry:

This timeless Grecian Etna, in her lower-heaven loveliness, so lovely, so lovely, what a torturer! Not many men can really stand her without losing their souls. She is like Circe. Unless a man is very strong, she takes his soul away from him and leaves him not a beast, but an elemental creature, intelligent and soulless. Intelligent, almost inspired, and soulless, like the Etna Sicilians. Intelligent daimons, and humanly, according to us, the most stupid people on earth (Lawrence, *Sea* 8).

Lawrence's intuition goes far ahead to describe Sardinia as a land of timeless beauty and strangeness. This beautiful place transported Lawrence to the utopian world-view. To his knowledge, Sardinia was almost unaffected by the European civilization:

Sardinia, which is like nowhere. Sardinia which has no history, no date, no race, no offering. Let it be Sardinia. They say neither Romans nor Phoenicians, Greeks nor Arabs ever subdued Sardinia. It lies outside; outside the circuit of civilization (Lawrence, *Sea* 9)

This part of Sicily is the storehouse of the old landscapes and the surrounding natural resources. The beautiful lemon trees that Lawrence saw in a place few miles away from Messina were fascinating for him. They stood between the mountains and the sea. In fact, they symbolized all that Lawrence imagined in his premodern sensibility. The land itself had a mixture of antique beauty and strangeness. As Lawrence said,

The landscape is ancient, and classic-romantic, as if it had known far-off days and fiercer rivers and more verdure. Steep, craggy, wild, the land goes up to its points and precipices, a tangle of heights. But all jammed on top of one another. And in old landscapes, as in old people, the flesh wears away and the bones become prominent. Rock sticks up fantastically. The jungle of peaks in this old Sicily. (Lawrence, *Sea* 14-15)

Like a romantic poet, Lawrence paints the real picture of the landscape of Sicily with utmost sincerity. Indeed, this depiction of the beautiful island of Sicily is poetry in prose. The minute description of nature and the natural objects by Lawrence reminds of his ecological consciousness. Indeed, this depiction of the beautiful island of Sicily is poetry in prose. The Romantic period in the history of English literature produced many great poets like William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Lord Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley, John Keats and others. They all conjured up the beauty in nature in their poems. William Wordsworth was a great Romantic poet who reacted against the French Revolution of 1789. This revolution greatly affected the poetry of Wordsworth and other Romantics. In fact, Wordsworth did not strictly follow the classical rules of writing poetry. Instead, he used the language of the common people in his poetry. He relied on nature and the relationship

between human beings and nature. In fact, the “Return to Nature” was the tagline of most of the poets of the Romantic period. Like Wordsworth, D. H. Lawrence also thought that war was a great disaster for humanity. War means the destruction of nature and the natural beauty of a land. Lawrence resorted to nature and the natural beauty in most of his travel writings. In fact, in *Sea and Sardinia* Lawrence showed that the beauty and strangeness of nature can make human beings happy in life. Industrialization is the cause of the destruction of nature in and around Europe. Lawrence’s love for nature was found in his fascination for the Hagg’s Farm in his early Eastwood days of childhood. His travel writings manifest the “human animal at war with civilization”. (Gay 722) Lawrence always thought that natural and spontaneous life is never possible without the close relationship of human beings and nature.

Sardinia in the island of Sicily is full of strange natural beauty all around. It is a very beautiful land with its old landscapes and surrounded by the sea. It is a place where many beautiful water-closets are seen here and there. Sardinia was attractive to the travellers around the world from the ancient times. Lawrence also eulogized Sardinia for the quality of spontaneous life-style and the natural beauty all around. In his travel book, *Sea and Sardinia*, Lawrence described the beauty and strangeness of Sardinia in minute details. Critics and scholars have different views about Lawrence’s dealings of Sardinia. The natural beauty of Sardinia is best summed up by Francis Hackett in his review of *Sea and Sardinia* published in the *New Republic* 11 January 1922, 184-85:

A certain amount about sunset and evening star, and a certain amount about cow-droppings and water-closet. A good deal about the maleness of the male, written with a touch of femaleness. And yes, certainly, Sardinia. That’s the subject of the book. (Draper 173)

The Sardinian sea with a dark sky and the chilling wind was a different experience for Lawrence. To Lawrence, the Mediterranean Sea was strange and ghostly. The Sardinian wood is very beautiful for Lawrence. But to his intuition, the ship was a symbol of real beauty:

Yet how beautiful old gold-coloured maple wood is! How very lovely, with the ebony curves of the door arch! There was a wonderful old-fashioned Victorian glow in it, and a certain splendour. Even one could bear the Hygeias let in under glass - the colour was right, that Wedgwood and white, in such lovely gold lustre. There was a certain homely grandeur still in the days when this ship was built: a richness of choice material. (Lawrence, *Sea* 28-29)

The author is sailing through the sea by a ship. He sees no other person than he and his companions on the ship. They all go under the rising wind. The ship that Lawrence boards is beautiful and joyful at the same time. But inside the joy there is matter of sorrow also. To his dismay Lawrence regrets that the Italians have become mechanical money-stinkers.

Everywhere there is the talk of 'liras' - the Italian currency. The ancient Italy had taught the Italians the idea of agriculture, but the agrarian Italy had ceased to exist. Now, all the romanticism of agriculture around Italy has passed away yielding place to a mechanical money-making Italy. The orange orchards are no longer the treasures of modern Italy. The orange tree of Italy has gone. There remains an Italy full of lira notes. The premodern Italy boasted of its agriculture well. But now the Italy after the war has ruined. The after-war atmosphere has become a chaos. The modern Italy, according to Lawrence, has shifted shrewdly from its right path. But to his utter disappointment, the agrarian Italy with its premodern sensibility is passing away only giving way to an Italy with mechanical money-making:

Romantic, poetic, cypress-and-orange-tree Italy is gone. Remains an Italy smothered in the filthy smother of innumerable lira notes: ragged, unsavoury paper money so thick upon the air that one breathes it like some greasy fog. Behind this greasy fog some people may still see the Italian sun. (Lawrence, *Sea* 35)

The spirit of Cagliari is remarkable. The people there are really poor. The harbour is strange. Barring all, Cagliari is different from Sicily and Malta. The stony Cagliari is very hot in summer. The landscape here is strange with gloomy hills. Furthermore, the strange landscape of Cagliari is like nowhere. The vast bay with salt lagoons and the sand bar is surrounded by a range of mountains. It is, for Lawrence, the world's end. Here is the starting point of Cagliari which has serpent-crested hillson either side. The Cagliari, belonging to nowhere reminds Lawrence of the spirit of place:

The spirit of the place is a strange thing. Our mechanical age tries to override it. But it does not succeed. In the end the strange, sinister spirit of the place, so diverse and adverse in differing places, will smash our mechanical oneness into smithereens, and all that we think the real thing will go off with a pop, and we shall be left staring. (Lawrence, *Sea* 62)

Sardinia is extraordinary in the eyes of Lawrence. It is much like Cornwall. Most of the spaces of Sardinia are uninhabited and scrubby. The peasants work in the lonely landscape. Most of the peasants put on black and white costume. There are patches of lands which are good for corns. There are moor-like hills in the wild landscape. In fact, all the strange magic of Sardinia is seen in the sight of peasants with their many-coloured costumes. This almost ordinary country is strange all around:

Sardinia is another thing. Much wider, much more ordinary, not up-and-down at all, but running away into the distance. Unremarkable ridges of moor-like hills running away, perhaps to a bunch of dramatic peaks on the south-west. This gives a sense of space, which is so lacking in Italy. Lovely space about one, and travelling distances – nothing finished, nothing final. It is like liberty itself, after the peaky confinement of Sicily. Room – give me room – give me room for my spirit: and

you can have the toppling crags of romance. (Lawrence, *Sea* 79)

Sardinians were generous and honest people permeated by nature. They have one downright mind. They believe in socialism. They love the guests from other countries very much. They show such good behaviour to Lawrence. The Lawrences were really touched by the cordiality of the Sardinians. Lawrence remarks rightly that “such delicate little generousities have almost disappeared from the world.” (*Sea* 89)

The landscape of Mandasin Sardinia is strange and Celtic. This strange landscape is far more moving and disturbing than the lovely glamour of Italy and Greece. There is much more barrenness and somberness in the air of Mandas. Lawrence observed that,

The landscape continues the same: low, rolling upland hills, dim under the yellow sun of January morning: stone fences, fields, grey arable land: a man slowly, slowly plowing with a pony and a dark red cow: the road trailing across the distance: and then, the one violently unfamiliar note, the enclosed cemetery lying outside on the gentle hillside, closed in all round, very compact, with high walls. (Lawrence, *Sea* 91-92)

The interrelationship of landscape and the premodern people of Sardinia is the main focus of Lawrence in *Sea and Sardinia*. The spirit of place or landscape has a great effect on the human beings. To sum up, the close relationship between the nature and human beings, which brings peace and harmony in life in sharp contrast to the “guilts and sophistries of civilization” (Lawrence, *Sea* cover page) is manifested at its best in Lawrence’s travel writing. ■

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Politics of Patriarchy, Gender and Caste Hegemony: A Feminist Reading of Balarama Das's *Maha Lakshmi Purana*

Bikash Chandra Dash

Patriarchy, gender and caste analysis have been subjects of engaging interest for last several decades. Feminist thinking has been increasingly influential with the publication of 'Subjugation of Women' by John Stuart Mill in 1869, 'A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: with Structures on Political and Moral Subjects' by Mary Wollstonecraft in 1792, 'Sexual Politics' by Kate Millet in 1970, '*The Second Sex*' by Simone de Beauvoir's in 1949, 'The Personal is Political' by Carol Hanisch in 1970, '*Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*' by Judith Butler in 1990. Mill (1869) advocated the equality of sexes and right to vote for women which was an affront to the conventional norms during his time. Wollstonecraft (1792) opposed the idea that women are the ornaments to society and the property to be traded in marriage and strongly advocated the women rights for education. Millet (1970) argues that political aspect of sex has been ignored in the feminist discourse and she discusses the role of patriarchy in sexual relations. *Beauvoir* (1971) argues that women is not born rather they are made by gender stereotypes attributed to them in society. Advocating the existentialist philosophy, *Beauvoir* delineates the construction of gender and explains how women are relegated as 'other' and are considered as second sex. She observes that "Man is defined as a human being and woman as a female – whenever she behaves as a human being she is said to imitate the male." and again her remark that "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman." provided fuel for the strengthening of feminist movement. Friedan (1963) proves that the assumptions that fulfillment as a woman is achieved by being a housewife and a mother is baseless. Performing housewife job, having marital sexual life and having children does not portray the personality of a woman. Moreover, the experiences of a woman cannot be separated from the larger social and historical context. Butler (1990) theorizes on gender by stating that because of socialization process gender is socially constructed and the traditional mindset on women result in the perpetuation of the domination of male over female. Thus, the literature on feminism revolted against male hegemony in order to end discrimination against women.

In feminism, three important aspects are highlighted time and again. These are (a) interrogating patriarchy (b) Contesting gender hegemony and (c) critiquing the concept of

triple Marginalization. With regard to the third, it can be stated that a black female is dominated by black male at home, a black women is dominated by white male and further a black women is dominated in a hostile and belligerent white ethos.

The concern for the dignity, identity and protection of women from exploitation, different waves of feminist movements started with the emergence of above mentioned gender literature. Radical feminism advocates for the deconstruction of the gender conceptualization and dismantling of the traditional institutions including patriarchy and marriage perpetuating the oppression and enslavement of women.

Similarly caste system, a typical Indian phenomenon, stratifies people into *Brahmin*, *Kshyatriya*, *Baishya* and *Shudra* in which *Brahmin* occupies the highest position and *Shudra* remaining at the lower part of the caste ladder and are considered untouchable. This is the highest form of inequality in society. People belonging to lower caste are not allowed to enter the temple, to share water from common source, share graveyard to burn the dead bodies and so on. Their touch is considered polluting. This caste complexity was severe in post vedic period under the influence of *Brahminism* though it is existing in many parts of the country even today. Many movements started in the country to fight caste menace. In the light of the above problematisation of patriarchy, gender inequality and caste hegemony, the present paper purports to analyse the 15th Century Odiya poet Balarama Das's *Magnum Opus 'Maha Lakshmi Purana'*.

Poet Balarama Das was one of the famous *Panchasakha* or Five Friends of the medieval Odisha. *Panchasakha* is a School of Thought in the Indian state of Odisha belonged to 15th Century A.D. which consists of five famous writers, poets and philosophers like Jagannâtha Das, Achyutânanda Das, Balarâma Das, Ananta Das and Jasovanta Das who brought revolution not only in literary field but also in the socio-cultural life of the common people in the state. During the *Panchasakha* period and prior to that, the Odishan society was caste ridden and practice of untouchability was in its worst form. The untouchables were not allowed to enter temples and worship God. The people belonging to lower caste were not allowed to listen the religious scriptures like *Vedas*, *Srimad Bhagavad Gita* and *Bhagavata Purana* etc. The political system was under the clutches of upper caste. The kings of the period were basically focusing on religious activities being guided by sages and *Brahmins* and therefore the *Brahmins* were enjoying an upper hand to have a definite say on the decision making process of the state. Under such political condition, it was a challenge for the subaltern class including lower caste people and women to get social justice. At this backdrop, the advent of *Panchasakha* era brought a ray of hope for them who were victimized by the ritual and rigidity of *Brahmanism*¹ and *Manuvada*². The literary creations of *Panchasakha* intended to demystify the ritualistic post-vedic religious tradition and argued that realization of God is possible without middleman and all the barriers are man-made. All are the creations of the supreme power regardless of class, gender and caste. The artificial distinctions have been intentionally created to benefit a particular class or caste or gender. Thus, gender and caste consciousness emerged during the 15th century

which influenced all walks of the life of people in the state of Odisha. The philosophers belonging to the *Panchasakha* School who were also considered as the religious rebels brought neo-*vaishnovite* revolution by contesting the then existing orthodox religious, social and spiritual tradition to establish the social justice and gender equality.

Neo-*Vaishnavism* is a reformist sect of old or orthodox *Vaishnavism* which believes in the humanitarian values like equality and tolerance without any discrimination of mankind on the basis of caste, colour, creed and socio-economic status advocating that God can be achieved or realized by chanting his name with devotion without any recourse to rituals, offerings and sacrifices to Him with the help of *Brahmins* and sages. The rigidity of post Vedic rituals and eventual degradation of *Brahmanism* brought bifurcation of society on the basis of caste hierarchy leading to inhuman practices of untouchability. Thus the orthodox *Vaishnavism* was challenged by the advocates of neo-*vaishnavism*. In this respect, the contribution of *Panchasakha school* of Odisha is immense in bringing subaltern caste and gender consciousness movement by challenging the orthodox *Brahmanic* ritualistic socio-spiritual order prevalent in the then Odisha. The clash between Neo-*Vaishnavism* on one hand and old or orthodox *Vaishnavism* on the other was not, of course, a typical Odishan phenomenon. It had pan Indian ramifications during the period. The revolution was championed by Sri Chaitanya in Bengal and Srimant Shankardev and Madhavdev in Assam to liberate common people from the traditional religious rituals, blind belief, caste discriminations and *Brahmanic* rigidities. In Maharashtra, *Santh* (spiritual leader) Tukaram and Jnanadeva brought out a spiritual movement reiterating that God can be realized by devotion without rites, rituals and offerings by means of *Bhakti* or devotion. The western parallel of Indian medieval neo-*vaishnavism* can be discerned in the reformation movement by Martin Luther of Germany and John Wycliffe of England who led 'Lollard Movement' a pre protestant Christian religious movement to reform western Christianity.

In a nutshell, neo *vaishnavism* emerged as a socio-spiritual movement combining devotion and faith on ultimate godhead Bishnu and equality of man irrespective of birth, descent, caste, community etc. In the new movement *Raganuga misha bhakti* ³(love oriented devotion) was replaced by *Ghyana Misha Bhakti* (Knowledge oriented Devotion). Emphasis was given on rationalism and knowledge rather than on devotion based on rituals. *Panchasakha* philosophers reformed religious tradition suitable to needs of common people intending to establish an egalitarian society. They established that right to religion does not belong exclusively to *Brahmins*. They extended the right to religion to common people without any distinction. The then society witnessed the dominance of *Brahmins* who proclaimed that spiritual *sasthras* (books/texts) cannot be read by lower caste people. Most of the common people did not know Sanskrit language and most of the Texts were written in Sanskrit. Therefore during *Panchasakha* period many original texts were translated into local language or rewritten with addition of local cultural milieu which influenced the common people to a great extent. The following section of this paper provides the narrative in Balarama Das's '*Maha Lakshmi Purana*'.

The narrative in Balaram Das's *Maha Lakshmi Purana*

The narrative in the *Maha Lakshmi Purana* centres around the characters like Lord Jagannatha, Lord Balabhadra, his elder brother, Goddess Lakshmi, the wife of Lord Jagannatha and Sriya a *chandaluni* (an untouchable woman). Goddess Lakshmi (the goddess of wealth) goes to see and bless her devotees and she makes no caste discrimination in visiting the houses of all including upper and lower caste people (*sudras*) and untouchables (*chandalas*). Lakshmi becomes highly satisfied with the devotion of Sriya who worships her with all devotion and sincerity and Lakshmi blesses Sriya with riches and fortunes. In the meantime, Lord Balabhadra witnesses that Lakshmi visited the house of a lower caste untouchable woman Sriya and becomes annoyed and tells to Lord Jagannatha about this and orders him to remove Lakshmi from *Srimandira* (temple of Lord Jagannatha, Balabhadra and sister Subhadra). When Lord Jagannatha takes sides of Lakshmi, Lord Balabhadra gets annoyed with Lord Jagannatha and asks how come you give importance on a wife rather than to a brother. If one wife goes, one more can be taken. Can a brother be found, if one is departed? Then he repudiates the position of a wife and orders Lord Jagannatha to remove Lakshmi from *Srimandira*. Then, Lord Jagannatha decides to carry out the orders of Lord Balabhadra to remove Lakshmi from *Srimandira*. On her return, Lord Jagannatha forbids Lakshmi to enter the *Srimandir* and told her that his brother had witnessed the fact that she visited Sriya *chandaluni*'s house and therefore she became impure. Poet Balaram Das writes,

“Gobinda boile Lakshmi hoila ki baai

Chandaala sahi ki jaaithila kaahi pain” (Das's Maha Lakshmi Purana p.15)

Above stanza in English translation is as follows:

Gobinda (another name of Lord Jagannatha) says, “Lakshmi have you gone mad? Why did you visit the hamlet of *untouchables*?

(Translated by the author of this paper)

The above stanza has been written in a situation when Lakshmi tells Lord Jagannatha to allow her to enter *Srimandira* as Lord Jagannatha was standing and thereby obstructing the entrance into the *Srimandira*.

This indicates the practice that untouchables did not enjoy the right to worship. Particularly women were seen in low esteem. As Lakshmi visited the house of Sriya, that become a matter of criticism.

Further, Lord Jagannatha rebukes Lakshmi by designating her *Chandaluni* (untouchable) as she visited the house of an untouchable. Lord Jagannatha says,

“Dhikkara bahuta mote kale bada bhaai

Haadi dwaare thiba Lakshmi paana dwaare thiba

Snaana na kari pasuchhi deula bhitare

Taa tharu papini aaau sansaara re naahin"

(Das's *Maha Lakshmi Purana*, p.15)

Above stanza in English translation is as follows:

Lord Jagannatha says my elder brother Lord Balabhadra has scolded me very much saying that Lakshmi sometimes visits the house of a *Haadi* (an untouchable sub caste in Odisha) and sometimes the house of a *Paana* (another untouchable sub caste in Odisha) and enters *Srimandira* without bath. There is not a bigger sinner than Lakshmi in the world because of this. (Translated by the author of this paper)

This type of dialogue between Lakshmi and Lord Jagannatha depicts the severity of caste complexities in medieval Odisha. The then society of Odisha witnessed the ugly cast discrimination. If an upper caste person touches a lower caste person, he/she becomes polluted and has to take bath for purification.

Another dimension of the discourse is debilitating gender status. Here male dominance over female is clearly reflected. Lord Balabhadra represents the power structure and patriarchic discipline of a family in which the decision of the male member is unquestionable. Elder brother Balabhadra gets annoyed with Lakshmi because Lakshmi visited a *Chandaluni*'s house and received offerings and *puja* from her. Other members especially female members of the family must seek permission on every matter. Otherwise they will be subjected to disciplinary action which happens in case of Lakshmi. Lord Jagannatha tells Lakshmi that he had to carry out the order of his elder brother otherwise his brother Balabhadra might punish him. Thus, Lakshmi can no longer stay in *Srimandira*.

In the argument and counter argument, Lakshmi was compelled to leave *Srimandira*. Before that, She curses both the brothers that they would suffer from their deed they committed and would remain starved/poor for twelve years. Now Lakshmi is revolting against the system. She vows to take revenge of her insult, discrimination and injustice. Here the poet Balarama Das envisioned a gender empowered society. Das has revolted against the tradition of gender discrimination and gender subjugation and questions the patriarchy.

The text moves further with an interesting turn towards contestations to male hegemony. Thus, there begins a transformation of situational subaltern to a new or protestant subaltern⁴. Lakshmi after leaving *Srimandira* plans to make both the brothers beggar. For that purpose, she invites *Asthabetala*⁵ to rob everything from *Srimandira*. The *Asthabetal* successfully accomplish the task. After the robbing of everything, both the brothers become penniless. Using her supernatural power, Lakshmi creates trouble after trouble to ensure that both the brothers suffer without food and she becomes successful in doing so. After undergoing a prolonged hardship and hunger and begging for food from door to door unsuccessfully, both the brothers finally reach the palace of Lakshmi which she constructed with the help of Viswakarma, the engineer of Gods. Without knowing that the palace belonged

to Lakshmi, both the brothers beg alms. The servants of the palace tell the brothers that this palace belongs to a *chandaluni*. The servants ask the brothers will it be all right for them to take food prepared by a *chandaluni*? The brothers deny and tell them that they should provide raw food materials and make necessary arrangements so that they can prepare food themselves. Accordingly the servants of the palace provide them everything as per the demand for preparation of food. Knowing well that the two beggar brothers are none other than Lord Jagannatha and Lord Balabhadra, Goddess Lakshmi was aware of what was going on without coming to the scene and She understands that the caste ego is still there in them.

Here, it can be noted that poet Balarama Das is not a radical feminist. Unlike radical feminists, he did not prescribe for the dismantling of the institution of family. Poet Das maintains a balance. He wanted to dismantle the male hegemony and remove gender disparity on the one hand and to preserve and strengthen the value of the institution of family on the other.

Das writes,

Gruhe Mahaa Lakshmi thaai bichaara je kale

Raandhina bhunjibe jebe ehi dui bhaai

Naarinku purusha aau lodibe kimpai

(Balarama Das's Maha Lakshmi Purana, p.32)

The English translation of the above stanza is as follows:

Lakshmi thinks at her palace that if two brothers will eat food by cooking themselves, why does a man require a woman?

(Translated by the author of this paper)

Therefore, Laskmi requests Fire God not to burn the firewood so that brothers fail in preparing food themselves. Therefore, both the brothers fail to light the fire and as a result food could not be prepared. Being completely helpless and suffering from acute hunger, both the brothers finally agree to take food from a *chandaluni*'s house. Accordingly food prepared by Lakshmi was served to both the brothers. While taking food both the brothers could realize that the food they are taking was prepared by none other than Lakshmi as the food items served to them were as per their choice which is basically known to Lakshmi. Now both the brothers realize their mistake. Lord Balabhadra tells Lord Jagannatha to request Lakshmi to return to *Srimandira* and accordingly when Jagannatha meets Lakshmi and begs pardon from her. Lakshmi says,

"Chandaaluni boli mote dela ghaudaai

Chandaaluni ghare ebe bhunjila gosaain

Chandaala bitaala hela dui goti bhaai

Dhika tumbha bada pana dhika tumbha kathaa”

(Das’s *Maha Lakshmi Purana* page 39)

Above stanza in English translation is as follows:

As per the depiction of the above stanza, before returning to *Srimandira*, Lakshmi reprimands both the brothers that you removed me from *Srimandira* by calling me *chandaluni*. But now you, the Lord of the Universe, have taken food from a *chandaluni* or untouchable i.e. me. Therefore, you two brothers also have become *chandalas*. Big shame to you and to your pride and greatness.

(Translated by the author of this paper)

In this way Lakshmi repudiates the system of patriarchy and traditional caste mindset of that time. Finally Lakshmi keeps a condition for her return to *Srimandira*

Lakshmi says

“Jagata maata boile tumbhe kara satya

Chandalu braahmana jaae khiaa khoi hebe

Samaste khaaina hasta jale na dhoibe

Hadi ra hastu braahmana chhadaai khaaibe

Braahmana khaai hasta ku munda re pochhibe

Anna khaai sarbe munde pochhuthibe hasta

Tebe bada deula ku jibi Jagannaatha

Heu heu boli agya dele mahaa baahu” (Das’s *Maha Lakshmi Purana* page 40)

Above stanza in English translation is as follows:

Goddess Lakhmi, the mother of the world, tells to Lord Jagannatha that if you want me to return to *Srimandir* then you make a promise that in *Srimandira* both *Brahmanas* and *Chandalas* will eat together. A *Brahmin* will snatch the food from the hands of a *chandala* and eat and after taking food they will not clean it with water rather put their hands on their head. There will not be any consideration of high and low on the basis of caste. Lord Jagannatha agrees to the conditions of Lakshmi and Lakshmi returns to *Srimandira*.

(translated by the author of this paper)

Finally there is victory of Lakshmi who becomes a situational subaltern in the beginning and finally revolts against the male hegemony and ensures that the disparity or inequality and discrimination on the basis of caste and gender no longer exist.

Balarama Das has used a framework of mystic powers and mythological characters to popularize his philosophy among the common masses. Poet Das has established a link

between supernatural entity like goddess Lakshmi and Sriya an untouchable woman who gets blessings of Lakshmi. This symbolizes the rejection of the ritual to be performed by an upper caste i.e. a *Brahmin* to get God's blessing much against the then existing practice. It also bears a revolutionary and liberal philosophy by declaring that God is accessible to all and there is no need of any means other than knowledge and *bhakti*. His creation bears the caste and subaltern consciousness of 15th Century Odisha and has immensely contributed for the present day's healthy tradition in *Ananadbazar* (the place where devotees in the temple or *Srimandira* take *mahaprasada* (food items offered to Lord Jagannatha) of Lord Jagannath temple of Puri where people irrespective of their caste take *mahaprasada* together.

The narrative of *Maha Lakshmi Purana* can be interpreted in the light of feminism as has been problematised in the introductory part of this paper. To recall, the feminist philosophy and strategy of John Stuart Mill, Mary Wollstonecraft, Kate Millet, Simone de Beauvoir', Friedan (1963), Carol Hanisch, Judith Butler for emancipation of women can be applied to the text under discussion. Lakshmi being the wife of lord Jagannatha and of a divinely aristocratic social condition has been ironically subalterned at home/family under the bondage of patriarchy and gender hegemony as well. Given the medieval orthodox Odishan society and culture, Balarama Das has realistically projected social condition and status of medieval women. As a rule, a Hindu woman was not allowed to leave home without the permission of elder members of family.

In the present context, Lakshmi, the wife of Jagannatha neither took permission from her husband, Jagannatha nor did she take permission from her husband's elder brother Lord Balabhadra. Viewed from the feminist perspective, Lakshmi was punished for having violated the rules of patriarchy and at the instruction of a strict disciplinarian elder brother Balabhadra, She was forced to leave home. Though Jagannatha was not willing to abandon his wife Lakshmi, he was pressurized by his elder brother Balabhadra.

Lakshmi a situational subaltern takes side of Sriya, a caste subaltern or a mute subaltern which indicates the unit or support of the subaltern to fight against injustice to promote women empowerment. Sriya was given justice through the victory of Goddess Lakshmi or else she would remain a voiceless subaltern for all time to come. Breaking the barrier and rigidity of gender stereotypes, Lakshmi goes to the house of Sriya *chandaluni* and blesses her for her *bhakti* (devotion). At the same time the narrative of *Maha Lakshmi Purana* brings to the fore the fundamental fact that given the medieval Indian society, women belonging to lower caste like Sriya became innocent victims of politics of power and the politics of social exclusion.

As the narrative comes to a close, it becomes quite clear that the subaltern own the game. Patriarchy, caste and gender hegemony was defeated as Balabhadra, Jagannatha finally surrendered before Lakshmi. Thus, above analysis reveals that Balarama Das's *Maha Lakshmi Purana* has been satisfactorily contextualised in the light of feminist, caste and gender discourse.

Conclusion

In the conclusion it can be stated that Balarama Das's '*Maha Laskhmi Purana*' is a strong vindication of the equality of man and women irrespective of caste and sex and the rights of human being including the right to religion. The power structure of a family is synonymous with patriarchy. The politics within a family is the politics of male hegemony and subjugation of women. Similarly the power in the traditional society was located in caste (upper) like institutions. This traditional power structure was vitiated by the involvement of religious faith and rituals. The upper caste, by virtue of controlling the religion, controlled the life of common mass and political structure as a whole. The personal is political or the private is political is a belief of feminists that the private experiences of an individual cannot be separated from the larger social and historical context. 'What is Political' is inextricably related to power in the context of who exercises it over whom. What a woman experiences in a family is not a private matter as it is inseparably related to power structure of that family. Thus, there is politics of hegemony and exclusion within a family leading to exploitation of women. Balarama Das's *Maha Lakshmi Purana* exposes the politics of patriarchy, hegemony and exploitation going on in the name of caste and gender. At the same time his message and solution is far reaching in bringing consciousness for common masses. The subaltern consciousness is very much related to their caste consciousness which can be understood in the contention of Partha Chatterjee (1989) that subaltern consciousness cannot be separated from caste consciousness. Within the framework of neo-*vaishnavite* movement, the traditional mindset of gender domination and patriarchy has been deconstructed by poet Balarama Das who himself was a *sudra*. Simone de Beauvoir in her 'The Second Sex' in 1949 postulates that woman is not born, they are made. Therefore reforms are required to disable the socio-cultural attributes assigned to a female to save her from exploitation. Das's creation bears a message for social reform and women empowerment much prior to what the contemporary feminist writers are talking about. ■

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Significance of Literature in the Third Millennium

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This article makes an endeavor to illustrate the significance of literature in the globalized world. Literature of a nation plays a pivotal role not just in the reflection of its traditions, conventions, way of life and social, religious and cultural practices but also in transferring them to the successive generations. The contribution of literature to the dawn of human civilization is very remarkable. Ever since mankind witnessed the birth of knowledge era, literary works have been written in every nation and in every age. When the literature of a particular country which was written at a certain stage of its history, is perused, it would highlight the socio, political, religious, commercial and agricultural conditions which prevailed then. Study of literature not only makes people know the past but also guides them to live well in the present. Further, it sensitizes the masses about right and wrong, good and bad, values and vices and so on. The nature of literature is described as reflective, educative and enlightening. When the world travels at an unprecedented pace in the third millennium, like many other conventional branches of knowledge, the province of literature also seems to lose its shine. It faces the prospect of slipping away from the unprecedentedly fast moving life of third millennium which appears to accord more value only to the subjects of science and technology and displays reluctance in integrating literature into the world of knowledge. This article exemplifies the need for upholding the uniqueness of literature studies and revival of classical literary creations.

Keywords: *Third millennium, sensitization, Enlightenment, reflection, entertainment, instillation of ethical values, elimination of vices.*

Introduction

Ancient Greek Philosopher Aristotle in his work *Poetics* articulates that the study of literature, which did not have any separate terminology, then, is so indispensable that it cannot be allowed to go away from the intellectual world. In his point of view, Literature is a branch of knowledge that provides both enlightenment and entertainment for mankind.

A keen analysis of the nature and functions of literature would reveal the fact that it keeps humans as humans: It sustains humanism in humanity: All we find in literature is a miniature world with a variety of dimensions. Literature showcases the virtuous and the vicious, the lofty and the crafty, the fighters and the traitors, the gutsy and the lusty, the

merciful and the merciless and so on. There are scarcely real world characters that do not have portrayal in literary works. A common feeling a reader of literary work cannot help developing is certain characters of the work resemble them and also the circumstances in it might remind them about their own. The readers will also feel as if they are travelling with the characters of the literary creations. A well created literary work attains immortality, eternity and deathlessness. For instance, Homer's works *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and Virgil's creation *Aeneid*, the tragedies of ancient Greek tragedians Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides and the comedies of Plautus and Terence not only served as reservoir of ideas for the larger world of western literature but they are still perused and enjoyed by intelligentsia across the world. The fact that they are still prescribed in higher educational institutions across the globe bears testimony to their literary depths. The scholars cutting across national and geographic boundaries still find those classical works enormously delightful and exceedingly enlightening. The greatness of these great classical works is so profound that they will continue to have massive impact upon the minds and hearts of people not just now but in the times to come. In ancient times, both the rulers and the ruled enormously benefitted from literature. In the absence of well-developed educational institutions then, literature played the role of keeping the people ethical, scrupulous and law abiding by getting them to know the unpleasant consequences of being violent, wicked and unethical. The present day world has witnessed unprecedented scientific and technological developments and also on a scale that is unheard of before. As a result, modern world has become very mechanical and it does not seem to accord value to human emotions and feelings which only make the life of humans meaningful and consummate. Comparatively, the third millennium world is perhaps economically stronger and brighter than the former times but it is devoid of the emotional bond and peace among the people. Such a sorry state appears to prevail everywhere irrespective of nations. It is paradoxical that the countries which claim to be advanced superpowers display the trait of belligerence and they subject the smaller nations to intimidation and threat which is the manifestation of the fact that the so called superpowers have not attained as much progress in the moral and ethical spheres as they have achieved in their external lives. Such a pitiable condition can be found in individuals as well. This phenomenon of economic and materialistic growth without ethical and emotional enhancement will prove to be a menace to human life on earth. This defect can be eliminated by reviving and renewing the world of literature which has the potential to bring about inward transformation in humanity which, in turn, would be of great help in the creation of a peace loving world.

Qualities of Literature

The first important thing worth mentioning is the aesthetic and artistic quality of all literature. The difference between ordinary language and the language of literature is the former merely communicates the facts, ideas, opinions and so on whereas the latter articulates the ideas in a very effective, emphatic and impressive way. In literary language, the expression is as effective as the expressed. When the readers or the listeners get to

come across literary articulation, it would allure and entice them so much that sometimes they will consider the instrument of articulation far more beautiful than the subject of articulation. Literature seeks to fulfill the expectations of both the mind and the heart. Perusal of standard literary works would get the readers to feel as if they enjoy the blow of breeze. The language of literature is delightful to listen to. The creators of literature go for the full exploitation of artistic components in language such as rhetoric devices and figures of speech to make their creations lively, penetrating and very interesting. Even when people happen to hear certain fragmented literary expressions, they pierce through their hearts and get across the idea extremely effectively. For instance, the phrase „you too Brutus“ which occurs in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* is still in large use for revealing the trait of betrayal. Even after many centuries, this phrase continues to assist the users to vocalize the idea very effectively and aesthetically. When Keats says „A thing of beauty is a joy forever“, it is musical and mystical. Robert Burns' line, „My love is a red red rose“ is delightful to both the mind and the heart. The key components of literature are innovation in expression, novelty in articulation and depth in the treatment of themes. Novel description and freshness in rumination distinguish a literary work from the rest. The very successful literary works accord top priority to both the matter and the manner and substance and style. Both the components in such works are structured in a profound and deep manner that arrests the attention of the users even in their first interaction with the literary creations. Regarding the quality of literature William J. Long in *English Literature: Its History and its Significance for the Life of the English Speaking World* states as follows:

Literature is the expression of life in words of truth and beauty; it is the written record of man's spirit, of his thoughts, emotions, aspirations; it is the history, and the only history, of the human soul. It is characterized by its artistic, its suggestive, its permanent qualities. Its two tests are its universal interest and its personal style. Its object, aside from the delight it gives us, is to know man, that is, the soul of man rather than his actions; and since it preserves to the race the ideals upon which all our civilization is founded, it is one of the most important and delightful subjects that can occupy the human mind.(9)

Functions of Literature

Srinivasa Iyengar remarks that the heartbeat of a nation is heard in its literature. (30). Literature documents the accumulated conventional wisdom of a community which is transmitted from one generation to the successive generations. Without the knowledge of the way of life of the previous generation, the present generation may be deprived of guidance for its forward movement. In this regard, the role of literature is of most vital significance. For instance, the Epics of India *The Ramayana* and *The Mahabharata* present an all-inclusive delineation of the lives of people living then besides narrating the tales. In addition to the documentation of the life of a generation and the presentation of it to posterity, literature plays the important role of teaching the lessons of life to humanity such as what to do and what not to do, where to go and where not to go and whom to move with and whom not to

move with. To put in nutshell, literature educates people on how to live and how not to live. Regardless of various ages of history, literature has always ensured the prevalence of ethical values and virtues in society by sensitizing the society about the importance of it. For example, *The Ramayana* taught and continues to teach the masses that it is sinful and wicked to become lascivious and lustful towards other men's wives. *The Mahabharata* makes people aware of the sin of hankering for others' land. A great number of literary works in ancient India propagated values and virtues among masses. This role of purifying the minds of the masses through infusion of morals is continuously played by literature.

In English literature, while the readers get to read classical literary pieces, it would do a world of good to them. They not only delight the readers but also make them mature, dignified and unique. For instance, readers' perusal of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* will cheer them up and also get them to realize that when they embark on great ventures, they should not be given to deferring their action. That procrastination of an action will cost people's lives is evident from *Hamlet*. Likewise, when the readers acquaint themselves with other Shakespearean protagonists such as King Lear, Othello and Macbeth, they will have the opportunity of learning the dangerous consequences of misjudgments, suspicion of a genuine lover and overvaulting ambitions respectively. These plays of Shakespeare have continued to be a great source of worldly wisdom and ecstasy for the people of the world. Literature is a repository of deep and great ideas. Many timeless works of literature benefit humanity to a great extent. There are many literary works like the following ones which provide guidance for success and also healing for emotional wounds. Robert Frost's lines "The woods are lovely, dark and deep but I have promises to keep and miles to go before I sleep" will set right the concentration of a person who gets distracted towards the glittering of worldly life by shirking their responsibilities. It makes the wavering mind duty conscious and brings back the attention of the people to the execution of their responsibilities in their profession. When people undergo distraction of attention and diversion of their concentration, if they happen to read these lines, it is certain that they will draw solution and remedy for their emotional disturbances. Likewise, Shelley's lines "Oh, lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud! I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!" will provide healing effect for the emotionally weak. If those who are in affliction happen to read these lines they will feel as if their own pain has been expressed in these lines. Shelley does not stop with this; he concludes the poem by presenting the much needed hope and confidence for the diffident. When he asks "If Winter comes, can the spring be far behind?" the sufferer will get sanguine of overcoming their hurdles and registering triumph. They will emotionally embolden themselves by thinking that when something is lost, not everything is lost and they still have the possibility of success. There is still a glimmer of hope for them.

The range of English literature is so vast and deep that it shows directions and path for people at every stage of their lives. While literature strengthens the confidence of people, instills values and places them on the right path, it cautions and warns the vainglorious by picturing the uncertainty and ephemeral nature of human life. If those who are egoistic

about their strength and success, get to read Dryden's lines "All Human things are subject to decay when Fate summons monarchs must obey" and also Thomas Gray's idea "the paths of glory lead to but to the grave" the possibility of such people repenting their flaw and reforming themselves is always there. The perusal of such literary lines will eliminate the conceit, vanity and arrogance of people. When conceit is taken away from people, their attitude of looking down upon others will also disappear.

Similarly Bacon's essays moralize the minds of the masses. He emphasizes the significance of reading, which according to him will make a man perfect and consummate. His idea, "reading maketh a full man, writing an exact man and conference a ready man" explains the ways for the enhancement of one's personality. Even many centuries ago, Bacon presented ideas for the elevation of the modern concept of communication and soft skills for the learners by his insistence on the four components such as Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing.

Over and above, Wordsworthian literary works stress the significance of man's relationship with nature. Wordsworth's poetry is replete with his views of the eminence and superiority of nature. The burning issue in the present day world is protection of Nature and sustenance of ecology. Way back in nineteenth century, Wordsworth illustrated the essentiality of preserving nature and living in harmony with it. His fascination towards nature can be seen as in many of his poems in his Tintern Abbey as well.

The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion: The tall rocks,
The mountains and deep and gloomy woods,
Their colours and their forms were then to me
An appetite, a feeling and a love
That had no need of a remoter charm
By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye. (45)

The reading of this poem will have a soothing effect on the readers. When the modern world leads its life in harmony with nature by heeding the words of Wordsworth, their mindscape as well as landscape would be safeguarded. It is paradoxical that twenty first century which is educationally and technologically far ahead of previous centuries sees the outbreak of confrontation among people on the lines of region, religion and linguistics. A Sangam Tamil poem which was composed by Kaniyan Poonthundranar seeks to establish universal harmony through the following lines "Yadhum Oore Yaavarum Kelir/Theedum Nandrum Pirar Thara Vara which means as follows: Every Landscape is close to my Heartscape; Good and evil none will bring.

As it has been discussed in the preceding parts, literature is a storehouse of noble, lofty and deep ideas, the gaining of which would certainly make people ethically strong, morally upright, emotionally balanced and culturally ahead. No race or community in the world can afford to shun the shine of literature studies. The external life of one is dependent on one's internal personality and strength. One's success and rise in the outward life is directly proportionate to these inward qualities. Study of literature will purify, solidify and civilize the minds of the masses. What is applicable to individuals is applicable to Nations as well. The external prosperity of a nation banks on the quality of its people who can always be transformed into ideal and empathetic human beings by the reading of good literary works.

Importance of Literature

Art and Literature contribute to build international relations as well. When the literature of one nation is read and enjoyed by the people of other nations, the understanding between them will grow and it will result in the birth of bond between them. Politics and Economics may divide the world but only literature unites the world. In the light of political ideologies, when we look at nations, some are known as democratic, some are with the system of monarchy and some are called communist countries. Likewise, with the spectacles of economics, when we look at the nations of the World, some countries are known as developed countries and many are called underdeveloped countries. But, when the world is viewed through literature all such man-made differences disappear, because wherever literature is created, it speaks about humanity, human feelings, human plight and predicament on account of which the following statement is made "Humanity is one and Literature is one". Literature will not only ease the pressure and stress of individuals but also strengthens the international peace and harmony.

Conclusion

In the life of twenty first century, people's faith in human values appears to decline which, in turn, leads to many illegal and inhuman occurrences such as sexual harassment of women, resorting to violence for the solution of problems which otherwise can be amicably resolved through peaceful means, and so on. Lack of trust and peace in society characterize the life of today's world. In order to avoid this kind of pathetic condition, transformation has to take place right from schools upto universities. Literature can play a very effective and impressive role in bringing about positive transformations among the masses. Educational institutions should create interest among students in literature.

The lover of literature will certainly be a lover of humanity. Such people with passion for and enthusiasm in literature will never allow the decline of human values in society. Whatever they can do on their part to thwart it, they will do. Study of literature will make people positive, optimistic, forward looking, progressive, broad-minded and empathetic. Parents and teachers need to play a very pivotal role in the creation a healthy society which can be created only by the culturally and the ethically strong. For the making

of a war-free, blood-shed free, violence free and confrontation free world, its inhabitants should be made to attain awakening on the sustenance of human relationship and good will for fellow human beings. These values can be infused in people by literature. ■

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Effectiveness of Scaffolding in Teaching Writing

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English language teaching has numerous approaches and methods in teaching the second language. Each approach has its own pros and cons. Some are outdated and some are widely used and accepted among the linguists and teachers of the second language. Out of these approaches, *Scaffolding* is one such technique used to acquire the second language skills, notably, the writing skill. The article, “Effectiveness of scaffolding in teaching writing” imparts the need and necessity of scaffolding in our daily classrooms such that the students gain mastery over the skill in a particular period of time. This paper is based on the theory of Lev Vygotsky’s ‘Theory of constructivism and the Zone of Proximal development’ and it tends to provide a practical example of implementing the scaffolding technique in the classroom and its limitations while implementing the technique.

Introduction

Technology – the powerful word which is replacing almost anything in the world. From dawn to dusk we use technology in all forms. Our current education has a tremendous impact in integrating technology in classrooms like audio-visual aids, podcasts, webinars, online classes, virtual classrooms and augmented reality. Online exams are replacing the traditional writing of exams in many colleges and universities. Most interestingly, AI is now changing the scenario of education making the teaching learning process an interactive and collaborative one. Few schools have started using humanoid robots in their classroom teaching. All these supportive technologies help a student to develop their basic language skills – LSRW to greater extent. Of all these skills, writing is one of the most important productive skill that has to be mastered extensively. May be there are many word processors to write but it is the student who has to give inputs for writing and these inputs should be developed stage by stage only through various classroom strategies. Teachers play a pivotal role in developing the writing skill at this juncture and technology plays a supportive role.

Why develop writing?

The era of technology demands good communicators rather than the students with subject expertise. Writing forms the essential part of communication and it decides the ability of the students in various knowledge areas. A student in 20th century has a very less

exposure and need to write. They write various kinds of articles, books, reviews and write exams for their academics. But now, there are various places where students tend to write, - they write e-mails, blogs, newsletters, and socialmedia etc. and most importantly paper and pen being replaced by word processors. A clear and well written e-mail can flood in the business deals whereas a piece of written text with grammar mistakes, spelling mistakes and disarray of ideas cause a tremendous loss to the firm. Regardless of the profession we choose, there is a need of writing throughout our life time. A good writing increases our self-confidence and fosters linguistic development among the children. Thus writing has become one of the essential skill that the student has to master during his academic career.

Ways to develop writing

Writing can be practiced through various strategies like:

- Copying
- Dictation
- Simulation exercises
- Drilling
- Compositions
- Story chains
- Sequencing
- Blogging
- Writing letters and mails.
- Writing diaries.

Though there are various strategies in developing writing skill, an approach that helps students acquire and retain the process of writing for a long term is the need of the hour. Scaffolding is one such technique which helps students to enhance their writing skills to a greater magnitude.

Instructional Scaffolding

Lev Vygotsky, pioneer of instructional scaffolding defines scaffolding as “*the role of teachers and others in supporting the learner’s development and providing support structures to get to that next stage or level*” (Raymond, 2000, p. 176). An important aspect of scaffolding instruction is that the scaffolds are temporary. As the learner’s abilities increase the scaffolding provided by the more knowledgeable other is progressively withdrawn. Finally the learner is able to complete the task or master the concepts independently (Chang, Sung, & Chen, 2002, p. 7). Therefore the goal of the educator when using the scaffolding teaching strategy is for the student to become an independent and self-regulating learner and problem solver (Hartman, 2002). As the learner’s knowledge and learning competency increases, the educator gradually reduces the supports provided (Ellis, Larkin, Worthington, n.d.).

Scaffolding can come from anyone and anywhere – a teacher, a subject expertise or a well advanced student. This approach is more participatory and more problem-solving.

Before starting a session with scaffolding strategies, a teacher should identify the level of the students in the particular concept which Lev Vygotsky defines as **Zone of Proximal development or ZPD**. It is a necessity to the teacher to identify the ZPD of the students because it depicts the student's prior knowledge about the topic and their cognitive level.

Zone of Proximal Development

As Cole & Cole says that the zone of proximal development is the distance between what a person can do with and without help. The term proximal (nearby) indicates that the assistance provided goes just slightly beyond the learners current competence complementing and building on their existing abilities (Cole & Cole, 2001). ZPD can be better understood by the three concentric circles.

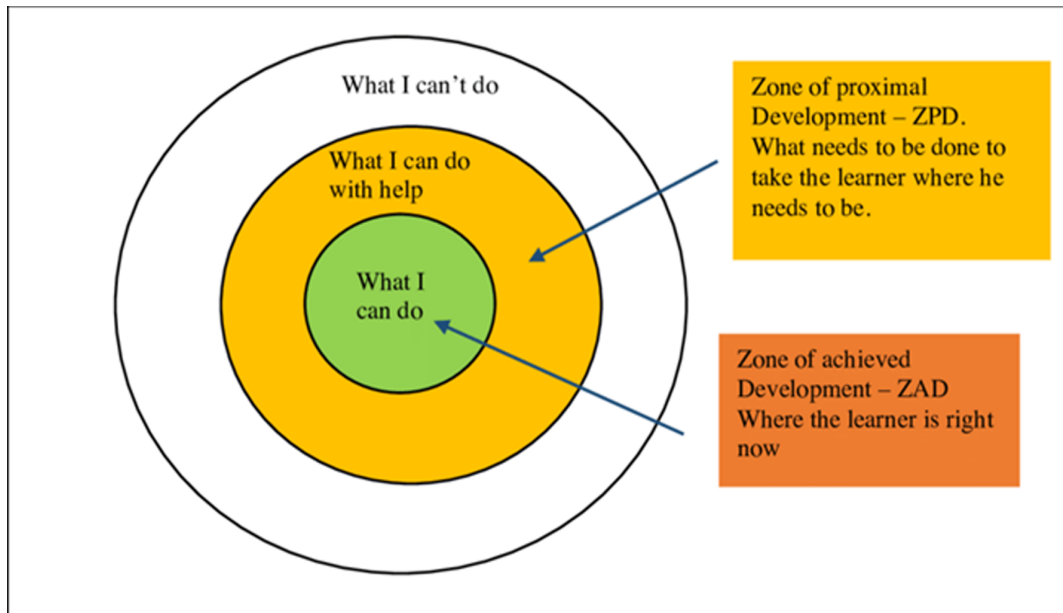


Figure 1: Vygotsky's Model of the Zone of Proximal Development. Source: Mathematics Proficiency of Primary School Students in Trinidad and Tobago - Scientific Figure on Research Gate.

The Innermost circle

The innermost circle represents what a student can do by himself. For example: a third grade student can write the high frequency words without any mistake. The students doesn't need any support in writing those words.

The Middle circle

The middle circle represents what a student can do with the help of a teacher or a competent peer student. For example: a student can write few sentences using those high frequency words.

The outermost circle

The outermost circle represents what a student cannot do at this particular stage. For example: a third grade student cannot write an essay using those high frequency words.

Thus ZPD is a tool to understand the knowledge of students in the target concept and their ability to learn the concepts under guidance.

Ways to scaffold writing among secondary students

- Increase their confidence level
- Eradicating the fear about writing
- Identify the ZPD of the students.
- Motivation about the topic
- Dividing the topic into smaller units
- Eliciting ideas about the topic
- Make students identify the main idea of what they are writing
- Prompting students to discover apt vocabulary
- Discussion session about their ideas
- Group work
- Mind mapping
- Using images and visual aids to construct chunks
- Use of hints like sentence starters
- Encourage them to write sentences with mistakes
- Ignore grammar mistakes initially
- Pointing the mistakes will hinder them from writing
- Finally, make children understand the proper sentence construction

Scaffolding writing among Upper Primary students

Class : VIII

Topic : Writing a travel experience

Step : 1

Make students understand that writing is an easy task.

Step : 2

Describe in a few sentences about your recent travel to some tourist place. Make it interesting. Use simple words and avoid technical jargons while narrating your experience.

Step : 3

Analyze the ZPD of the students. For example, the students may use words to describe their travel. But they struggle in sentence structure and sequencing the events.

Step : 4

If necessary group the children so that they may discuss about their experiences.

Step : 5

Make children express themselves about their travel experience in few words or chunks of sentences.

Step : 6

The teacher may use some visual cues like images and gesture to help them find apt vocabulary.

Step : 7

Let one student in a group, jot down the experiences of others in a paper. The students may write about their mode of travel, accommodation, food, places of visit and returning day.

Step : 8

Let them discuss about the written points and create a mind map of their trip.

Step : 9

When the students struggle to start the essay and create the sentence string, the teacher may help them with the strings like “As we started to Ooty....., The time when we reached the railway station.....It was a bright morning....etc. More phrases can be given to start the next paragraph and if the students find it difficult, the teacher can scaffold them with questions given below.

Step : 10

Let the students try to write about their first day-out. Again the teacher may use cues or prompt questions like

- Where did you have your breakfast?
- How did you travel to reach the tourist spot?
- How was the weather?
- What was the main attraction of the place you visited?
- Did you go to any other places?
- When did you return?
- Did you like your dinner?
- What are the places you wish to visit on next day?

Step : 11

On answering the above questions, the students may find it easy to write a paragraph about their trip.

Step : 12

Ask the students to conclude their write-up and present it before the class.

Step : 13

Ignore spelling mistakes, sentence structure and grammar mistakes.

Step : 14

Examples may be given to correct their sentence structure.

Step : 15

Help students in sequencing the essay and ask them to present it.

The above example is one of the scaffolding technique used to develop descriptive writing among students and it can be used to develop the major skills of the language. If the students are competent enough, scaffolding can be slowly withdrawn by the end of the teaching learning process and on successfully completing the essay, the teacher may withdraw or partially withdraw the help given to the students from next activity.

Limitations in using scaffolding approach

Though scaffolding proves to be a better solution in enhancing writing, there are certain restrictions in using this approach in classrooms.

- It is very much time consuming.
- Proper preparation is required.
- Handling large classes seems to be little difficult.
- The cognitive level of each students are different.
- Identifying the ZPD of each student takes a bit longer time.
- The teacher should stop scaffolding when the children are competent enough to complete the task.
- Sometimes scaffolding may lead the children to be more dependent on teachers or peer students.
- If the teachers are not competent in the particular concept, then the total teaching learning process will be failure.

Conclusion

Besides its limitations, scaffolding has its own benefits. It makes students understand their potential and work independently. There are higher chances of retaining the concept for a long term and it helps students to solve their problems by themselves. This technique helps much better for late bloomers and make the gifted child a facilitator to the other children. Since individual attention is given to the students, it helps them acquire the target skill undoubtedly. This teaching strategy enables the students to identify their strengths and develops an encouraging and participating learning environment and hence supporting student-centered learning inside the classroom.

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A Study of Narrative Types in Harry Potter Films

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The research paper 'A Study of Narrative Types in Harry Potter Films' aims to analyse the narratological aspects of Harry Potter films. The study of narratological aspects of Harry Potter films is a refreshing way of understanding the mechanisms of narratives in Harry Potter films. Harry Potter series is a commercial product and therefore exiled to a status of popular fictional film. Recent studies however suggest that these films can also have the ability to be critically analysed. The surge in gothic, fantasy or children's fiction is a testament to this fact. Thus, this research paper tries to critically analyse Harry Potter series as any other canonical text. Using theories of narratology, the thesis argues that the success of Harry Potter is not just a result of commercialization but in the use of different narrative styles and techniques that enhances the readers' appetite for the series.

Introduction:

The *Harry Potter* films and their success had a significant impact on Hollywood film industry. Harry Potter films are known as having helped redefine the Hollywood blockbuster during 21st century by developing a shift towards established media franchises and mise-en-scene forming the basis of successful films. The novels and the films undergo different types of narratives and techniques in those narrations. The novel is more descriptive in nature than the film. The film uses multiple techniques to give life to those descriptions. The novel evokes the feeling of imagination among the readers whereas the film excites the audience through the use of editing techniques.

Narrative types in Harry Potter film:

Narratives are basically a written account of connected events or story. Narratives explain the story in great detail. Harry Potter novels are descriptive in nature. Harry Potter films connect events through the types of narratives used. The success of the film depends on how the story is narrated. Narrative is a series represented events, process out of which the audience constructs a cause effect world. Narratives and characters help convince the audience to believe in what they visualize. Narratives deal with the history of film style, history of narrative theory and the modes of production. There are five narratives encountered in the films. The five narratives are personal narrative, Mystery narrative, Adventurous narrative, Gothic narrative and Visual narrative.

Personal Narrative:

Personal narrative discusses about the personal life of the protagonist Harry James Potter as an orphan, student and a wizard. Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone engage with the characteristics of personal narrative. This narrative expresses the personal feeling of Harry Potter. Harry Potter films sets up a thematic element common to personal narrative on the very introduction as a conflict between the protagonist and the society. The Dursleys here represent a type of society which is known as muggle society where no magic exists. It metaphorically means that the Dursleys represent society's rejection of nonconformity. Wizards do not obey the rules of muggle society standards so, they are ignored. Harry Potter is an embarrassment to the Dursleys so he has to be relegated to a lesser position within the family. Not only is he literally an orphan, but in the muggle world he always has a lesser position because of his nonconformity.

Personal narrative discusses about the psychological, moral and intellectual growth of the protagonist. There is ordinariness to school life. For example, living in dorms, fraternizing with other students, senior students who are in charge of discipline, tests, subjects are very interesting, the best and the worst teachers, getting into trouble with authorities etc. Harry Potter films portrays the school appear like any other boarding school. However, the school has hidden dungeons and secret ways that not many know of. Curiosity catches the best of Harry and his gang. Their curiosity is innocent and exploratory. Even though Harry and his friends are just eleven years old, their maturity in handling difficult circumstances goes beyond their fragile age.

Harry Potter survived with both good and evil spirits. Harry didn't have any clue that he is one among the seven horcruxes. Harry and his friends search horcruxes and the difficulties they faced is connected to the personal life of Harry Potter. Harry Potter as a personal narrative depicts the longing child for his parents, his friendship, his love, his school life and his victory over the dark lord Voldemort etc. The personal narrative of Harry Potter films majorly discusses about the personal experience of Harry Potter as an orphan, student and a wizard. Harry's friendship and love is closely connected to the personal narrative. Personal narrative studies the psychological, moral and intellectual growth of Harry Potter.

Adventurous Narrative:

Bruno Bettelheim, in his book *The uses of Enchantment* described adventurous narrative as "that a struggle against severe difficulties in life is unavoidable, is an intrinsic part of human existence — but that if one does not shy away, but steadfastly meets unexpected and often unjust hardships, one masters all obstacles and at the end emerges victorious". The adventurous narrative in Harry Potter films discusses the struggle Harry faced in Hogwarts, Harry meeting unexpected thing, he struggles a lot and finally wins against the evil lord, Voldemort. The first three films bring forth different adventures that Harry and his friend experience. But with the fourth and the later films, the story takes up the absent

presence of Voldemort into a different understanding. The adventures after the third part seem more real with respect to the threat of evil. More than anything else, the film proceeds into a mature fiction where lives are at stake and deaths are as common as breathing. Harry Potter films develop the idea of adventure narrative by providing a completely different twist to the story by incorporating elements of adventure, quest as well as revelation.

Mystery Narrative:

Mystery narrative mainly focuses on the mysterious death or the crime to be solved. There are a lot of mystery narratives found in Harry Potter films which makes audience think whether it's true or not. Laurie Beckoff claims Harry Potter series as a perfect mystery. He says that audience are directed to unknown truths through Harry's detective work across the series. The "turn" or middle of the series as well as central scenes in each film reveals elements of the mystery directing us toward essential revelations. The best example of mystery narratives is horcruxes. Harry does detective work to find the horcruxes and the truth behind those horcruxes throughout the series. The six horcruxes are Tom Riddle's diary, Marvolo Gaunt's Ring, Helga Hufflepuff's Cup, Salazar Slytherin's Locket, Rowena Ravenclaw's Diadem, Nagini and Harry Potter himself. Harry in the end of the series destroys all the horcruxes. The deadly hallows also plays a major role in mystery narrative. Horcruxes and the deadly hallows connects the entire film series and this develops the film in terms of situations that has to be solved in the latter part of the film.

Gothic Narrative:

Gothic films often deal with the past in some form. Gothic narrative narrates the major story from the plot that takes place before years using the same setting like castle, graveyard. In Harry Potter films, the settings looked ancient but in a way it brings the idea of modern. The fantasy movie has elements which symbolises those characters. The settings evoke a feeling of ancient history or discusses about major problems that the characters face originated in the past. For example, the curse given to the father would return back and harm the heir. The family members should accept the punishment for the mistake of their ancestors. During olden days, people believe myths and they connected few incidents with that. The old people have few secrets. The later generation will be allowed to accept the agony. The past is not appearing in the movie in a detailed way. Few moments which are more important for the story line are described in the movie. It's impossible to show the entire flashback in a three hours movie. Important incident are shown in the movie using flash back and foreshadows. The movie develops the background information, but that haunt the characters, psychologically, physically, or otherwise at the main time of the story."

The Harry Potter saga could be seen as a narrative which utilizes tropes and elements of the Gothic genre in order to indirectly address a problematic issue of the non-magical world. The relationship between the young protagonist and the main villain of the story could be interpreted as representing the victim's fear of the aggressive and inimical other,

as a projection of threats in various level, fears and other problem refuse coexistence with paradigms and consensual orthodoxies of everyday life.

Digital Narrative:

Harry Potter, a series of fantasy films created by J.K. Rowling has expanded into a worldwide franchise because of the successful use of digital narrative. Harry Potter films and digital narrative are connected to each other. Each and every element used in the film to describe the story is close to the audience. The editing techniques and the vfx used in the films which makes the motion picture popular. Transmedia storytelling “unfolds across multiple platforms, with each creating new text distinctive and valuable contribution to the whole”. Moving stairs, talking pictures and floating candles plays an important role in digital narrative. Gravity techniques are used to represent floating candle. The techniques used in Harry Potter film differentiates the wizard world and the muggle world where no magic exists. Harry Potter film uses multiple styles of digital techniques to give life to the words of J K Rowling. The author uses her intelligence in a very imaginative way to create a series like Harry Potter. Harry Potter film uses digital narrative to bring life to those words.

Harry Potter films focuses on the techniques used to narrate in such a way which maintain a flow in the plot of the film. These narrative types are interconnected with one another. All these narrative styles overlap in the course of the entire series of Harry Potter films. The success of the film depends on how the story is narrated. The interconnection of narratives develops a plot and maintains a perfect story structure. David Bordwell (2008), in his very influential comprehensive study of fiction narrative, *Narration in Fiction Film*, offered a new perspective on how we should understand film narrative. He focused his main arguments in defending that the principal role of narration is to cue the audience’s storyline comprehension. For this reason he summarized narrative to be: “the activity of selecting, arranging, and rendering story material in order to achieve specific time-bound effects on a perceiver” (Bordwell, 2008, p. XI).

Personal narrative of Harry Potter films explains the personal life of Harry Potter and adventurous narrative deals with the adventurous life of Harry. That includes Harry’s life in Hogwarts where he gets courage to stand against the evil and win upon them. The mystical elements and the gothic elements go hand in hand. The scene eventually mixes both mystical and gothic elements. Digital narrative gives life to all the fantasy elements. The film narratives are interconnected with the other narratives. Digital narrative gives life to all the other narrative. The film could be seen as a mix of gothic settings and the mystery incidents which are closely connected to Harry’s personal life. Therefore all the five types of narratives have an impact on other narratives throughout the film.

Conclusion:

Narrative structure helps in clubbing the magic elements with the real. In the Harry Potter film, narrative types are seen as a key for visual representation. The narrative study

serves in five types. The personal narrative majorly discusses about the personal life of the protagonist, Harry James Potter and the other types discusses about his adventurous life in school and the mystical and gothic elements which happened in the film during the appearance of the dark lord, Voldemort. And these narratives transform the normal world into a fantasy world. The digital narrative plays a major role in Harry Potter film. All the other narratives are represented through the digital narrative. This narrative portrays the visual representation of the contemporary world. Thus the mechanism of narrative is the tool to study the Harry Potter films in a more new and refreshing way. The success of Harry Potter is not just a result of commercialization but in the use of different narrative styles and techniques that enhances the readers' appetite for the series. ■

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Treatment of Ecology and Environment in Literature with Special Reference to Women Writings in Maharashtra

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Women play a great role in the conservation and preservation of nature. A woman is a mother and so the earth too. Both of them are known for their love and care for their dear ones. Women are closely related to the earth because of the fact that they are co-sufferers. Man's greed had a direct impact on both of them. This relationship could be analysed at two level, i.e. the physical and the spiritual. Speaking about physical level it is evidenced that both of them are victims of anthropocentric ideology. Both of them are exploited by men for the sake of their physical needs and have direct reciprocal effect of the ills done to them. Women suffer from the deterioration of the natural environment. Today women have conquered almost every field by displaying their ability. A few of them are the best creative minds writing a variety of literature i.e. fiction, poetry, autobiography and autobiographical novel. Indian writings in English have come of an age with a generation of women writers. Apart from writings in English, writings in regional languages particularly Marathi are similarly prolific in their themes and treatment of ecology and environment, Indian culture, tradition and heritage. Marathi literature is known for its richness and splendour for showing deep connections with Nature. The ecofeminist movement in literature and literary criticism represents the coming together of women and environmental feminists. Women's movements, their writings and spirituality, all have a very deep connection with the well being of the earth and all forms of life that our ecology and ecosystem supports.

Keywords: Woman and Nature, Mother Earth, anthropocentric ideology, Marathi women writers, ecofeminist movement, environmental feminists

The present paper seeks to explore the possibility and conditions under which ecoliterature could be explored from Indian writing in English and also from various regional languages particularly Marathi regional language of Maharashtra. It is an attempt to study the treatment of ecology and environment in literature in women writings of Maharashtra having a very deep connection with the wellbeing of the earth and all forms of life that our ecology and ecosystem supports.

Women play a great role in the conservation and preservation of nature. A woman is a mother and so the earth too. Both of them are known for their love and care for their

dear ones. Women are closely related to the earth because of the fact that they are co-sufferers. Man's greed had a direct impact on both of them. This relationship could be analysed on two levels, i.e. the physical and the spiritual or the aesthetic. Speaking about the physical level it is evidenced that both of them are the victims of anthropocentric ideology. Both of them are exploited by men for their physical needs and have a direct reciprocal relationship with the natural environment. The reseedling of natural resources brings an additional strain on women. Women depend for their daily needs on subsidiary forest products such as firewood, wild fruits, fodder and medicinal herbs. These products are the bounty of Nature serving as an eternal source of sustenance and health care in the form of *Ayurveda*, a comprehensive, scientifically proven herbal therapy developed and established by *Rishis* like *Acharya Patanjali*, *Acharya Dhanwantary*, and *Acharya Shakyamuni*. A few of the foremost products serve as a source of livelihood and a cause for the sustenance of the rural growth and economy. Felling of the trees on a large scale for commercial purposes affects the living standards of the village people on the one hand and disturbs the bioregional features of the territory on the other. It causes including the damage to the organisms, the flora and fauna. Women happen to be an inevitable community without whom the idea of social, economic and moral development cannot be conceived at all. Confined to the routine household chores, women could hardly compete with men so long as the literary output was concerned during the 1850s. Looking at the history of social reform in India, it is realised that women responded to the movements launched for their empowerment irrespective of the bitter social criticism of the contemporary orthodox people. The efforts taken in this regard by the great reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and others in Maharashtra, reformers like Phule, Krantijyoti Savitribai Phule, Karmaveer Vitthal Ramji Shinde, Maharshi Dhondo Keshav Karve, Karmaveer Bhaurao Patil and others would be remembered for ever.

Today women have conquered almost every field by displaying their ability. They are holding important portfolios in the government and private establishments, imparting their respective duties effectively. A few of them are the best of creative minds writing a variety of literature i.e. fiction, poetry, autobiography and autobiographical novel. Indian Writings in English have come of age with a generation of women writers like Kamala Das, Kamala Markandeya, Sarojini Naidu, Suniti Namjoshi, Gauri Deshpande and others. Apart from the writings in English, writings in regional languages like Marathi, Hindi, Gujarathi, Punjabi, Bengali, Urdu, Tamil, Kannada, etc. are equally prolific in their themes and treatment of Indian culture, tradition and heritage. They are rich with a variety ranging from short story to novel in prose and other forms such as oral narratives exploring into the ethos of Indian history and culture.

Marathi poetry is known for its richness and splendour in terms of imagery and metaphor. Majority of the classic poetry is based on myths, legends, songs and fables having deep connections with Nature. These writings need to be studied in the light of the premises of ecology and environmental challenges posed by the postmodernist culture which is based

on the principles of utilitarian ideology. Women's writings in English in the initial phase were lured to a great extent by the flavour of British cultural standards. Women who could write during this phase belonged to a specific higher middle class. There were seldom aware of the plight of the majority of the women population who belonged to the lower middle and the lowly class. Their writings dealt with the themes of repression on the level institutions like child marriage, and female child abuse, dowry, prohibition of women's education, personal ambition to attain higher goals, passion for power, politics, arranged marriages and enforced widowhood, etc. Writers like Toru Datta, Kamala Das, Gauri Deshpande, Geeta Mehta, Suniti Namjoshi and Chhitra Narendra could be cited for the sake of an example. They remained confined to the domain of a few women who belonged to upper middle class and could hardly invoke through their writings the discontent and the agony of the lower middle class and the lowly caste women who were victimised by the so called patriarchal hegemony and the plight of women who were trapped in the traditional religious orthodox social order which was essentially based on the philosophy of Manu who treated women on par with an object meant to be utilised, used and thrown away.

Late in the twentieth century i.e. around the 1980s that women from various other communities and castes particularly the middle class and the downtrodden communities started coming up with their writings with an authenticity of emotion, experience and thought. These women focussed on their personal plight like the predicament of a single woman or a spinster, sexual exploitation, physical and psychological repression on account of being a low caste woman, ambition, striving for self-empowerment, etc.

There has been a trend of writing autobiographies during the last four decades. These autobiographies are a kind of explorations made by the concerned women not only into their womanhood but also into their hopes and aspirations as an independent person contributing in the growth and development of that particular caste, community and the society and nation. The autobiographies in Marathi by Dalit woman writers like Kumud Pawde's *Antahsphot* (Self Revelation), Mukta Sarvagaud's *Mitaleli Kawade* (Behind the Closed Doors), Bebi Kamble's *Jeena Amucha* (Our Miserable Lives) and Shantabai Dani's *Ratradin Amhaa* (Our Perennial Worries), (As I have translated the titles into English myself), depict elaborately their grievances, agonies, plight and protest against their victimization pertaining to the biased Hindu social order based on caste discrimination. When women from various strata of society and the Dalit women were writing about their plight, on the other front there was an intense reaction against the victimization of women in the form of feminist activism that was reflected on various levels such as education, literature, religion, and politics. This resulted in the outbreak of women's movements for the attainment of their identity as an independent and an inevitable part of the mainstream social hierarchy based on the principle of equality and the constitutional rights. As a consequence of it the image of a woman as it appears in the contemporary literature has undergone a drastic change. Women writers have moved away from the stereotype and traditional portrayals of women in fiction, women enduring and self-sacrificing, characters

searching for identity in the traditional male dominated hierarchy. The ecofeminist movement in literature and literary criticism represents the coming together of women and environmental feminists. Women's movements, their writings and spirituality, all have a very deep connection with the wellbeing of the earth and all forms of life that our ecology and ecosystem supports.

There are specific implications that convey the similarity between the two movements i.e. environmentalism and ecofeminism. Both imply overexploitation and over utilization, suppression and oppression. The ecofeminist literature in the West lays emphasis on the aspects of repression and exploitation and tries to conceptualise woman's relationship with environment on the basis of it. Feminist environmentalism strives to reconstruct and redefine the identity of a nurturing mother which implies the mechanism of dominance in terms of the patriarchal hegemony.

While pointing out the common thread between the degradation of environment and the suppression of women Vandana Shiva observes,

"Both have their origins in patriarchal power coupled with capitalist greed with disastrous consequences" (Hindustan Times, 18.11.04)

Shiva believes that it is the woman who happens to be the immediate sufferer of the consequences pertaining to all kinds of ecological imbalances such as scarcity of water, energy resources like firewood, food, fodder and the amenities of daily use. Emergence of feminist environmentalism is attributed to women's awareness and their relationship with environment. While commenting on this relationship Bina Agarwal observes,

"The ancient identity of Nature as a nurturing mother links women's history with the history of the environment and ecological change. In investigating the roots of our current environmental dilemma and its connections to science, technology and the economy, we must re-examine the relationship of women with nature as living organism rather than a medicine" (Agarwal: 1992:122)

According to Khoshoo,

"Indian women no matter whether they are literate or illiterate belong to higher or lower social groups are generally more educated than men so far as environment is concerned." (Khoshoo: 1992:119)

Literature in the West tries to relate the repression of women to nature in terms of exploitation of labour, mind and body. As Nature is exploited of her resources, the women too are exploited of their labour. As a body of woman is treated as an object meant to be enjoyed so the earth also is treated as an object and exploited of her resources just for the sake of physical comfort.

In Indian context the term ecofeminist environmentalism does not stand for the exploitative strand only. It connotes the gesture of sacrifice in every act of giving, the

giving which is not always looked at as an exploitation by both the giver and the receiver. Indian literature has got a very deep affinity with the land, the culture, its religion and tradition which is thousands of years old. As it has been pointed out earlier, Indian culture and literary tradition are as old as the scriptures like *Vedas* and *Upanishadas*. In this tradition there has been a tremendous emphasis on Nature and environment in terms of its bounty, beauty and spirituality. The bounty was never meant to be over-exploited and beauty was never meant to be over enjoyed. Nature for Indian literary culture serves as an everlasting source for spiritual enlightenment. In this regard the literature written by Indian Saints like Sant Dyananeshwar, Tukaram Maharaj, Namdeo Maharaj, Sant ChokhaMela and women ascetics like Muktabai, Janabai are treated as critique on the relationship between not only God and man, man and man but also man and his environment and the Nature. Indian folk literature is written, read and dramatized to a greater extent in various of its genres such as *Owee*, *Bharud*, *Bhedic* and songs sung on different occasions are a rich treasure that could be studied for restructuring and strengthening the bond between man and Nature.

Folk literary tradition in Maharashtra is rich in variety and form of expression. It has got a close relationship with myths and archetypes during back to Gunadhaya and Shalivahana. Tribal literary tradition in Maharashtra is also equally rich in its variety and heritage. Folktale in Marathi are broadly categorised into three categories, i.e. mythical tales about deities and saints, fairy tales, and legends, fables, parables, and the stories about creation. The reason for the survival of these tales was that its purpose was twofold i.e. entertainment and wisdom for which they were told by one generation to the next with uncommon vigour and interest. Scholars like N. G. Chapekar, Kamala Deshpande, AnusayaLimaye, ShridharKetkar, Sarojini Babar have rendered the authentic interpretations of some of the best folksongs in different forms and modes. Some of them depict various seasons like Spring, Monsoon, etc., under different categorical names like *Varshagite* (Songs marking the arrival of Monsoon), *Shravangite* (songs marking the arrival of Varsha) and songs on special festive occasions such as *Bhondolyachi Gani*, *Bhulabai Gauri Geete*, etc. Scholars like V. K. Ranade, Dura Bhagwat, Anuradga Potdar, C. S. Karve have made valuable contribution to the study of these in the tradition of Marathi Folk Literature.

To conclude, the entire folk literary tradition with its panoramic variety could be undertaken for a study like this i.e. Ecocritical study with a major focus on the aesthetics of ecology and environment. On the contrary the Western attitude to Nature was purely based on the utilitarian ideology having least concern for the other aspect of it. Nature for them has always remained as a subject of material fulfilment whereas for us it was more than it. For it was a source of aesthetic pleasure and spiritual joy with deep feeling for the otherness in it. It is this otherness or the concern for others that happens to be major theme of Ecocritical study in general and the Nature studies in particular.

The writings of women in English and other regional languages could be brought under the discipline and studied from this perspective. The poetry of Bahinabai Chaudhari for example is rich in the imagery of Nature. Nature in her poetry serves as major metaphor

for life and the ways in living and thinking. A poem like 'Aare Sansaar, Sansaar' is a critique on man's relationship with nature and the kind of attitude man must cherish while facing the challenges in his life. Majority of these writings particularly poetry and fiction are loaded with values we need today to make ourselves morally upright, emotionally balanced and intellectually invincible. Apart from the regional folk literature and the literature of the Saints (Sant Sahitya), the Nature poetry in Marathi written in the early fifteens by poets like Balkavi Thombre, Yashwant Manohar, Kndwilkar, Khandekar, V. V. Shirwadkar, Mahav Julien and other could be explored for its poetic beauty and bounty with relevance to the environmental aesthetics. The stories, fables, myths and mythologies and stories based religious scriptures also could be treated as a source of ecoliterature. Thus, the sources as above could be exploited for restructuring the syllabi at all levels of education in order to create respect for Nature and shape the creative imagination of the students. As it has been stated earlier, they are the pillars of the future of our country. Advanced studies in ecology and environment should not remain under academic rigor of the departments of Natural Sciences only. Studies related to these and for that matter every other discipline related to the aspect of our ecosphere should be made open for study under the departments of languages, literatures and the departments of comparative literatures under interdisciplinary mode of education. ■

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A Collage of Colorful and Glittering Natural Elements in the Poems of Pablo Neruda

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Shukla Banerjee

Twentieth century witnessed a bunch of extraordinary poets in Latin America. Pablo Neruda, the mostly read across the globe, widely translated into almost all official languages throughout the continents, recipient of the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1971, is one amongst the laurels who was born in Parral, Chile. Neruda was an ardent lover of the nature and one of the segments of his poetic contribution is entirely dedicated to the natural elements ranging from tomato to lemon, from river to ocean, from earth to sky and from dawn to twilight. The vivid and vibrant natural imageries used by the poet connect every aspect of human life with Mother Nature. Neruda is apparently known as ‘Love Poet’ among his readers and his love extends from personal to universal echelon. Lots of natural imageries have been used by him to define human love and relationship. This article deals with poet’s interest of such beautiful imageries of flora and fauna in his creation which indicates the poet’s intention to create consciousness about nature among his readers.

Key Words: Nature, Natural imageries, Love, Human relationship, Flora and Fauna

Pablo Neruda is regarded as the greatest Spanish-language poet of the twentieth century. He was a very prolific and creative poet. His poems range from erotically charged love poems, historical epics and overtly political poems, and one of his special contributions is Nature poetry. He composed several poems on very common natural things; various natural elements are positioned in such a way in his poetry as it seems a very glittering collage. Besides, he is the most widely read Spanish American poets. Neruda was an international diplomat and a political activist, because his life combined his passion for politics and poetry, enabling him to change his society, socially and politically.

Pablo Neruda was born with his real name Elieicer Neftali Reyes Basoalto on July 12, 1904 in Parral which is known as central Chile’s wine state where ‘the vines curled their green heads of hair’ (‘Nacimiento’ in Memorial de Isla Negra Losada, Buenos Aires, 1964). Rosa, Neruda’s mother was a school teacher. She was thirty eight years old when Neruda came to this earth but unfortunately she died just two months two days

later of Neruda's birth possibly due to puerperal fever. Neruda could never remember or imagine the image of his mother's face in his life but he composed a beautiful poem on "The Birth":

And that's where I'm from, that Parral of the trembling earth,
a land laden with grapes which came to life
out of my dead mother. (2-6)

The Birth

This article focuses on some of his selected poems written on different natural objects. One of his very popular poems is 'Ode to Bird Watching' in which Neruda states that he is going to search for birds, and depicts the lavish, dew trickling woodland where he is looking. Each drop of dew is a small planet among the leaves. It is a new day. The air scents of rosemary. There is an insane melody above a winged bird singing. How can such a little bird make so much of commotion?

The morning time
mother earth
is cool.
The air
is like a river
which shakes
the silence.
It smells of rosemary,
of space
and roots.
Overhead,
a crazy song.
It's a bird.
How
out of its throat
smaller than a finger
can there fall the waters
of its song?

Ode to Bird Watching

It is a sacred conversation, a well off bursting forth of sound. He travels further into the timberland and loses the sound of flying creatures. He ponders where they went. He calls them "invisible little critters," since he realizes they are all near, simply keeping quiet. The delightful polished plume of the feathered creatures call to him and bother him.

In a similar kind of poem, "Bird", Neruda explores the sights and feelings that a bird experiences as it flies over the earth. The poet composes the poem partially from the bird's point of view and the poem is only of two stanzas. There is not any rhyming done, he

is just describing a story and trying to bring his readers into the mind of a bird. The subject of the poem is how a bird feels when it is flying, and how it relates to other birds. The thought that Neruda creates is romanticized and worry free, and focusing on things like “the tiny, shining water of the small bird on fire”.

It was passed from one bird to another,
the whole gift of the day.
The day went from flute to flute,
went dressed in vegetation,
in flights which opened a tunnel
through the wind would pass
to where birds were breaking open
the dense blue air -
and there, night came in.

Bird

In another poem of different taste, ‘The Wide Ocean’, the poet aware his readers with the warning, ‘Don’t underestimate the ocean’. The poem is basically portraying the greatness of the ocean in a nutshell. The very words “your whole force heads for its origin” explains that the whole ocean is heading for its destination which could be your town. The mood of the poem is eerie because it seems like a hidden voice recites the poem and the tone is serious. There is an undertone to sensitize the readers regarding the effect of environment pollution.

Ocean, if you were to give, a measure, a ferment, a fruit
of your gifts and destructions, into my hand,
I would choose your far-off repose, your contour of steel,
your vigilant spaces of air and darkness,
and the power of your white tongue,
that shatters and overthrows columns,
breaking them down to your proper purity.

The Wide Ocean

The first stanza of the same poem contains lots of metaphors that give the poem its tone. One of them is the power of the ocean’s ‘white tongue’ that shadows and overthrows columns. These metaphors give the poem a conceited tone as it tells the reader about the features and strength of the ocean.

‘A Lemon’ is a wonderful poem composed by the poet is of special taste and diverse message. The poem expresses love and emotion through a lemon. Metaphorically he showed the passion he has for life that sounds philosophical and romantic too. The poem starts with a natural and rich image of “lemon flowers/ loosed/ on the moonlight.” In the following lines, the sense of aroma dominates; the lemon blossoms become “love’s/ lashed and insatiable/ essences, / sodden with fragrance.” As the poem shifts from the sense of smell to

sight, the blossoming flowers are swiftly altered into yellow lemons. Ongoing the stanza's upright association (from moonlight to the tree to the earth), the lemons drop from their twigs which are likened to a planetarium to the underneath soil.

Once the lemons plunge into the earth, they are no longer described in romantic terms but rather in realistic terms; they turn into the "Delicate merchandise!" referred to in the opening line of the second stanza. Thus the images of moonlight, love, and lemon blossoms alluded to in the previous stanza are outmoded by images of busy harbors and bazaars where lemon becomes "barbarous gold," a product to be bought and sold. The velocity of the poem quickens.

Next the poet focuses his concentration upon the individual consumer of the lemon. This person cuts the fruit and opens it, finding "the halves/ of a miracle" within. The plain fruit becomes lofty to the height of the astonishing. Comparing the juice that emerges from the cut lemon to blood flowing from a cut vein, the poet describes the fluid as "a clotting of acids." Alluding to the first stanza, in which the lemons are fixed like stars in the firmament, the second stanza describes how the juice of the lemon "brims/ into the starry/ divisions"—that is, the symmetrical divisions of the pulp of the cut lemon. Next the poet conjures up imagery of the conception of the world and the Garden of Eden, referring to lemon juice as one of the essences of life, one of "creation's/ original juices." In the concluding lines of this stanza, the lemon's peel is compared to a home, the sizes of which are both "arcane and acerb," secret and bitter.

In another poem "River", Neruda starts with an introductory passage, portraying the waterway as a giver of life, of a goddess; the stream is in the image of Mother Nature. The force of the river is mighty. The mother river mapped the geology of these terrains, cutting out the stone to make the waterway beds. These lines are loaded up with birth symbolism; the river is the provider of life.

Beloved of the rivers, beset
By azure water and transparent drops,
Like a tree of veins your specter
Of dark goddess biting apples:
And then awakening naked
To be tattooed by the rivers,
And in the wet heights your head
Filled the world with new dew.

River

In "My Sky at Twilight" is a poem that appears to commend the inebriating feelings of new love. It is likewise a lyric about Neruda's country, Chile, which was going to enter some tempestuous occasions.

In my sky at twilight you are like a cloud
and your form and color are the way I love them.
You are mine, mine, woman with sweet lips
and in your life my infinite dreams live.

My Sky at Twilight

In Neruda's poem "Lost in the Forest," Neruda employs a great deal of imagery from nature.

Lost in the forest, I broke off a dark twig
and lifted its whisper to my thirsty lips:
maybe it was the voice of the rain crying,
a cracked bell, or a torn heart.

Lost in the Forest.

In the above stanza, the poet speaks almost cryptically, though we are assailed with sensory images: *dark twig*, *whisper*, *thirsty lips*, *rain crying*, *cracked bell* and *torn heart*. All of these set a mood of unease. The last three images point out pain, perhaps over something broken: *rain crying*, *cracked bell* and *torn heart*—all images have been introduced with the line "Lost in the Forest." In some way, we can sense that the speaker has perhaps lost his way; but the forest may well be *metaphorical* rather than literal.

Pablo Neruda has long been celebrated as a poet of love, of the nature, of the people, of the rain, the stones and the birds always keeping his formidable centre through his transmigrations from one book to the next. Neruda grows even stronger as a poet of the hand, the hand that joins the hammer and the nail, the minerals and the grinder, the threads of the fresh shirt and the bread of the street. Pablo's hands integrate experience, intellect, intuition and feeling into a poetry that unites people of different languages and cultures by giving voice to his longing and to theirs. His poems are extensive, exciting and vibrant and yet each poem is refreshing, compelling and new. ■

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Interpretation of Eco-Feminism in Indian Context

Sanghamitra Swain

Women's movements in India emerged in the context of anti-colonial struggle until then women's participation in the debates of environmental and social rights was nil. Struggles aroused against resource exploitation, forest, and water depredation, in regard to large scale development projects, that had solemn consequences. Indian social movements managed to combine gender and environmental problems by supporting the idea of oneness that all human beings are part of. Man and woman are part of a dialectical concord which is at the base of ecological ideologies and action. Feminine principle is based on the perception of nature as a living being and woman as active and productive as nature. Nature as an embodiment of the feminine principle is a connection among all living things at equal terms, and endurance of what is human and what is natural. In the Western believe, nature's is completely misinterpreted; it is inactive, submissive, and incomplete, an inferior entity as compared to man. The representation of creative and protecting mother earth is at the base an alternative to Western economic prototype.

Key words: Ecofeminist movements, Environmental problems, Women domination.

Nature is represented as the feminine principle Prakriti, hence it is the creator of life and sustenance. The innate connection between men and nature is conceptually far from the man who dominates it. There cannot be a separation between man and nature, as well as between man and women, because every form of life originates from the same feminine principle. In the Indian belief, man and woman are part of a dialectical concord which is at the base of ecological ideologies and action. Nature as an embodiment of the feminine principle is creative, active, productive and diverse; a connection at equal terms among all living things, and endurance of what is human and what is natural. It is altogether a different concept in respect to see nature as resource separate from man. In the Western believe, nature's is completely misinterpreted; it is inactive, submissive, and incomplete, an inferior entity as compared to man.

Rustic communities have always embodied the feminine principle, they structured their life conferring to life reproduction. When such communities have been colonized, and industrial development drove men to the cities in need of labour, women continued to deal with resource management, domestic duties and productive tasks such as agriculture. Subsistence production has nothing to do with industrial production, since the former is a creative force while the latter is harsh to nature. In the capitalistic structure, women and nature are unproductive and for this reason they are demoted to the margins of industrialized societies. Devaluation of nature's productivity led to ecological crisis, while devaluation of

women's efficiency led to disparities between men and women. Subsistence productivity, that embodies the feminine principle, respects and sustains on nature's ability to reproduce. It depends on local knowledge and on local resource consumption. The alteration of economy destroys natural cycles, it reduces the environment to just a segment of the productive process. Western development has fragmented and overlooked ecological interdependency that is at the foundation of natural and human survival. The environment degradation was felt worldwide in 1970's. In 1972, the United Nations Conference on the human environment held at Stockholm, looked for a new conservational political agenda which called forth the Brundt land Commission's idea that a sustainable development should meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability to meet the needs future generations.

Women's movements in India emerged in the context of anti-colonial struggle until then women's participation in the debates of environmental and social rights was nil. With the emergence of Indian nationalism in the second half of nineteenth century, women united with the civil disobedience and non-violence movement led by Gandhi for liberation of India. In the anti-colonial struggle, women's movements for lands rights have set a legacy of strong commitment to the postcolonial campaigns. Struggles aroused against resource exploitation, forest, and water depredation, in regard to large scale development projects, that had solemn consequences on most disadvantageous groups such as farmers, Dalits, Adivasis, and women. Twentieth century opposition originated from group amassing against colonial policies of resource exploitation. The Drainage Committee of 1907 or the Flood Committee of 1928 demonstrated the overwhelming impact of projects on the populace. Such conditions led to the construction of groups and ventures such as the Chipko Movement, opposing forest destruction; Save the Bhagirathi, opposed the execution of hydro-power projects on river Bhagirathi; the Narmada Bachao Andolan, raised against huge displacement instigated by damming the Narmada river; the Appiko Movement in the Southern India, stirred by Chipko to save their forests; the opposition to the Silent Valley Project against the dam construction on river Kuntipuzha in Kerala's Palghat district, to preserve adjacent rain forests; Teheri Dam Conflict, and so on. Indian social movements managed to combine gender and environmental problems by supporting the idea of oneness that all human beings are part of.

The representation of creative and protecting mother earth is at the base an alternative to Western economic prototype. Joseph Chelladurai Kumarappa an economist and Gandhian collaborator developed an economic thought grounded on Gandhian principle of self-sufficiency of villages. A local economy that would make man to live in harmony with a sense of collective responsibility. It was possible only by respecting the feminine principle and the environment against profits, and valuing cooperation against unchecked competition. Subsistence economy based on the feminine principle, gives a chance to a far-sighted economic model of durability. Industrialization underrated the feminine principle, undermined nature's power and women's work in the village economy, since it cannot be turned into profits. Kumarappa, as well as Vandana Shiva, opposed the development design proposed by the West, which would cause destruction of nature. The retrieval of feminine

principle is the only resolution to ecological crisis and women's marginalization. Disaster caused by mal-development cannot be solved through the same mindset that created them, but through principles of life conservation. Third World Women, with their knowledge and determination represented ecological and intellectual groups. Ecology and feminism met to recover the feminine principle, and to stop advancement of mal-development imposed by the West. Ecological crisis and social disparities are consequences of the prevalent archetype which place man above nature and woman. Vandana Shiva criticized feminism stuck in the gender ideology based solely on attaining equality with men, but excluding the recovery of feminine principle of the nature. Vandana Shiva's proposed subsistence perception based on interdependence, which could solve crisis caused by exploitation and destructive thoughts of Western capitalistic system. She believed science, technology, and world knowledge must be revisited through a non-patriarchal paradigm. Subsistence must compete against forms of privatization and commercialization of resources, to guarantee survival of earth, human, as well as social justice. Recovery of feminine principle is not only a solution to the domination over women, but also to the domination over the environment. Feminine principle is based on the perception of nature as a living being and woman as active and productive as nature.

Bina Agarwal, claimed eco-feminist movements to be exclusively focusing on ideological issues instead of considering power and economic distribution which lay behind men to women and women to women discrepancies. She focused on issues like land rights, environmental protection, sustainable development, collective interdependence and the political economy of gender. She further insisted on the fact that women-nature relations are designed by a given gender, class, caste, race, organization of production, reproduction and distribution. In her *"The Gender and Environmental Debate: Lessons from India,"* she reflects on how Western literature about relations between nature and women is specifically ideology based. However, in different context such as in developing countries, material constraints moulded and continued to mould this type of relations providing the context for an alternative interpretation that she called feminist environmentalism.

Agarwal's feminist environmentalism proposed to find men's and women's attitudes to nature in material reality. She asserted that rural women, who are accountable for subsistence economy of their groups, are specialists of nature renewal processes. As a consequence, she recognized, women as victims of environmental deprivation, could provide the chance for resistance compared to destructive development models. Women, as experts with knowledge of nature, could offer alternative methods for a sustainable development. Agarwal's references to gender, class effects of environmental change, are largely hinting at the fact that it mostly affects the poor people of the society for their dependency on communal resources. Limitations for property rights, makes communal resources source of livelihood for women without depending on male members. Hence it becomes very important in regions where women are highly marginalised and dependent on their male counterparts.

Carolyn Merchant, as well as Vandana Shiva, mentioned the roots of patriarchal

hierarchy dates back to the scientific inventions and to early capitalist society of the sixteenth or seventeenth century. The organic nature has been transformed and controlled mechanically by men. Bina Agarwal found some issues in such theoretical framework that needed to be revised. She asserted women are given a homogeneous category, but experiences of domination are not just gendered rather vary in terms of class, culture, education, etc. She further added concerns such as, woman and nature domination are described just on a conceptual basis, ignoring material factors. Gendered hierarchy has not been contextualized according to cultural, political, economic undercurrents from which it springs. Argument on woman's and nature's biological closeness has given female a fixed character. It is irrefutable that such arguments show the effect of patriarchal ideology on women and nature domination. In addition to this, women's closeness to nature must be analysed at concrete terms than just the biological ones, as for instance class or culture could determine environmental exploitation. Vandana Shiva furthered the analysis; she recognized the historical roots that brought about violence against female nature by industrial development models established through colonization, due to the perception of women and environment. Shiva stated, in traditional Indian cosmology from which everything is formed, the Prakriti or the feminine principle has been replaced by the perception of human beings as separate from nature. Shiva also realised the material causes of women and nature dichotomy. Indeed, Third World Women are depended on nature for their livings. Violence against nature results in violence against women.

Simone De Beauvoir argued, women's biological functions condemned them to only reproduction of life while men lacking natural creativity, expressed it through non-natural creations through technology and discourses. To explain women's association with nature, two facts are useful; firstly, women's capacity to reproduce, which is connected to the natural processes of reproduction. Secondly, women's position in society is closer to nature, due to their procreative functions they are confined to a specific domestic sphere. The domestic domains are unified producing a society that is a more complex than domestic unit and is placed at a higher level. Not having natural orientation for domestic responsibilities as women have like nurturing and child care in general, men acts at the society level, where culture is determined. The culture-nature contradiction is a product of culture itself to quote Ortner:

“Woman is not in reality any closer to (or further from) nature than man – both have consciousness, both are mortal. [...] various aspects of woman's situation (physical, social, psychological) contribute to her being seen as closer to nature, while the view of her as closer to nature is in turn embodied in institutional forms that reproduce her situation. The implications for social change are similarly circular: a different cultural view can only grow out of a different social actuality; a different social actuality can only grow out of a different cultural view”. (20)

Women's domination and nature's exploitation are interwoven; in a gender hierarchy based on patriarchal structures, women are linked to nature and men to culture; due to such

construction and familiarity between women and nature, the former have an interest in halting the nature exploitation; both feminist and environmental movements aim at the abolition of disparities and sustainable growth. Eco-feminism identifies the fundamental patriarchal discourses that have gained impetus in the last centuries. It represents how the existing system does not reflect the multiplicity of nature and of human world but interprets it in an illogical and univocal way for its own sake. When a society is created on terms of supremacy, the abolition of women's subjugation and nature's control turn out to be the same target to strive for. Such structure of supremacy legitimates a patriarchal idea of the world that produces discourses from economic, political, and cultural ideologies. These ideologies rationalize the prevailing hierarchical order by putting men above on the scale having the science, technology and economy laws on their side letting them to make profits and feel they stand over nature and every living being. The worth of such discourses is not about their truth but about their efficacy. The most fundamental criticism that women committed to ecology is against scientific knowledge originated from scientific revolution. It has been acknowledged as universal objective; thus, it is necessary to discover and realize nature's mysteries. Taking science for granted led to the consolidation of nature-culture contradiction, according to which women are associated with nature while men with culture; a false paradigm, disapproved by Carolyn Merchant and Sherry B. Ortner, since it is legitimized by a patriarchal ideology. Universality of men's superiority on nature established the universality of women's subordination. Sherry B. Ortner insisted, it is crucial to go beyond the biological differences that give men genetical superior features which is lacks in women. Indeed, every human being lives in a society that creates standards and customs which form part of the culture, and it is in such cultural perceptions that women and nature devaluation exists. ■

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A Study on Portraiture of Men in the Fictional World of Kavery Nambisan

Jenniffer. L

K. Lavanya

Considering the cultural setup of any community in the society, it is interpreted that the differing ideas of personal thinking are usually influenced by universal thinking. The balance and the connectivity between the subjective opinions and the objective decisions lead to a complete understanding of one's self. The first proposal of the present study is to analyse the life and behavioural patterns of men in the novels of Kavery Nambisan, the South Indian novelist-surgeon. Though most of her novels have women as protagonists, the second aim is to portray that her characterisation of men are evidently influenced by external situations and internal conflicts leading to identity crisis, prejudiced attitudes, tragic flaws, progressive virtues, manipulated deeds and recollected memories through narrative techniques. The paper focuses on underlying interpretations and desires which complicate the relationship of male characters.

Keywords: Attitude, identity, Kavery Nambisan, memories, men characterization, relationships.

Introduction

Kavery Nambisan is a South Indian writer known for her realistic novels. In the ever changing mode of literature, she has achieved a great impression for her challenging plots. Though Nambisan's protagonists are mostly women, the men of her novels also pose different traits. The male characters in the novels of Kavery Nambisan are interpreted for their individualities and personality traits.

Character is a recognisable fictional being which acquires the ability to think and act. Characters can be described as fictional personalities or imaginary counterparts to human beings. "Most importantly, characters themselves can be signs in a number of ways: they can be instances of exemplary behaviour, they can be symbols or in other ways representative of feelings, attitudes, problems and the like. In addition to that, characters are an important part of the emotional structure of literary texts, films, etc. They influence the feelings, moods and emotions of the audience to a considerable degree" (Eder et al 15).

The present study is the analysis of unique disposition of male characters in the seven novels of Nambisan. This shows the versatility of the author in constructing varied personalities influenced by external conditions and inner psyche. She delves deep in to their mind to depict their anguish, pain and morality. It is decoded that Nambisan's male characters are usually affected by the past memories, character flaws, manipulative behaviour, ideal virtues, identity crisis and prejudices.

Men with haunted past

The past of one's life has serious impact in the future. The people wounded in their first phase of life can either be optimistic to confront life or shattered completely pushing to the levels of depression. The past makes the people lodged in the crucial pain encapsulated in the form of flashing memories. Simon of *The Story That Must Not Be Told*, Bharat of *The Truth Almost about Bharat* and Sampath of *The Town like Ours* suffer thinking of their past incidents. Simon is affected with guilt as his conscience has instructed his developed hatred in the long phase of his subservient married life. Bharat tries to escape his haunted past of attacking Shaffrudin with a stone. Being suspended, he is on his bike rides just to forget the guilt of hurting someone physically. He even dreams that he would be arrested for his death. Sampathu, a noble man who walked out of the house with his dead sister's daughter lives as a lovable father to Rukmini.

Jean Paul Bedard, the writer and runner says, "Our story is our past, and our past is our story. Much of the hurt we carry around with us is a stowaway from our past—our inability to let go of what once was in order to grasp hold of what now is"(Bubany). Simon carries his little secret of losing his wife's manuscript and his deep hidden hatred for his wife before her death. Though it was a love marriage, Simon gradually develops a mixed kind of anger and hatred for Harini. He even wished Harini to be dead and unfortunately she met with a fatal accident on the same day. He holds this guilt in his inner mind and at the same time he realised that he actually experienced a sense of freedom in her absence. His personal life was always conditioned according to Harini's thinking pattern. When his desires were rejected out of no reason, he could not take it easily. Their couple goals never worked out and the saddest part was that Harini never realized that she has been the reason of rift in Simon's life.

Bharat never thought his involvement in strike would lead to a person to Intensive Care Unit. He is worried whether Shaffrudin knows the truth that the stone was hit by him. He could not share this with anyone and guards this little secret like Simon's intolerance towards Harini. Sampathu witnessed the cruel murder of her sister by her husband for begetting the girl child again. With the blood trails left, he gets away with his sister's daughter. He was genuinely compassionate to save the life of the new born, which is neglected for its gender. He reaches Pingakshipura with her and later forms a family with abandoned Saroja and Gundu. Simon, Bharat and Sampathu are influenced by the incidents of the past leading them to the sense of guilt, sorrow, fear and depression.

The author presents the focus of these characters after the tragic incidents in their life. Simon involves himself in helping the slum and thus exercises his choices without any forced limitation. Though he is a loner, he is a happy widower spending time with Thangu, the cat. Initially, Bharat travels to various places just to escape from the haunting incident but later he grows strong enough to confront the bitter reality. Hiding the sorrowful incident, Sampathu looks after Rukmini with great concern and never had he tried to disclose the truth to her.

Men with character flaws

Nambisan employs the heroic flaw which ranges like alcohol addiction, inferiority complex and personality disorders. The flaws of these characters not only affect them but also their relationships. Every father, husband or son is afflicted with imperfection which sometimes distorts the happy life. Manohar of *A Town like Ours* is an English professor but with a serious personality disorder. He longs for children and his sterility pushes him to be shameful. "I am seedless" (TLO 21). He has never shared this with his wife Kripa and gradually this longing turns him to be a kidnapper. He ends up in imprisonment for his confinement of Rukmini and other children.

His emotional stressor blinds his moral instincts. He is insensible to the social ethics and is depressed of his childlessness. "All I want to do is care for children. I want to see them eat, play and quarrel. I want to see them laugh" (TLO 216). His pain is deep with the anguish to possess children calling him father. He works out this fantasy by kidnapping five children and the recent addition Rukmini assists him to look after the younger ones. Filled with tears, he nervously shares his inability to have children with Kripa. He very much wants to keep the children with him justifying that he spends three hours playing with them. He is content with the parenthood delights and at the same time he realises his unnatural behaviour.

Shari of *Mango-coloured Fish* adores Paru Uncle, the husband of Parvathi Aunty as her second father. Paru uncle is a dreamer and a drunkard which is later known to Shari. He resigned his job setting up an own factory and creates home gadgets. Shari is revealed of his serious addiction to alcohol only later. She is shocked to find that his uncle is actually drinking inside the factory. The uncle is depressed saying, "I am a fool and an idiot and very wicked" (MCF 185). His liver is rotting and he is under medication taking only ginger tea, curds and milk. He could never come out of his addiction which leads to serious fights and this prevailing weakness reels out him of the home and he never returned.

Rao Bahadur and Baliyanna of *The Scent of Pepper* are the victims of mental depression. Out of no reason, Rao Bahadur segregated himself from the social circle. He lost his massive weight and confined to the study room. He refused to eat and bathe. The family strove hard to maintain the dignity but he committed suicide by swallowing his diamond ring. The same depression was contagiously passed on to his son Baliyanna, the veterinary doctor after the departure of Clara, the British born. Nanji, his wife understood

the sadness of his eyes portraying his restlessness, annoying silence and gloomy nature.

Baliyanna failed to find his inner peace in the embrace of his wife. His melancholy and displeasure with the visits to gypsy women grew day by day. He very much missed Clara and sought his solace in alcohol. "He felt the passive contentment of partial living and he did not fight it" (SOP 98). As he loved Nanji deeply he just wanted to pass on, leaving least trouble to her. Eventually, he waited for his mother's death to perform the last rites. After that happened, he shot with his always loaded gun kept beneath his pillow. He was glowing as he knew his death would be the only solution to his unknown depression. Like his father, he took his life with meticulous planning of writing wills for children. He left his last breath on the bed where his wife has given birth to all the thirteen children.

Chellam of *The Story That Must Not Be Told* is more handsome than his friend Ponnuraj. With the great dream of becoming a film star, Chellam reached Chennai but he ended up becoming a menial in construction work. He accommodated himself a home in Sitara, the slum and a happy marriage with not-so-pretty Valli. Growing jealous, Ponnuraj tried many situations to arouse fight between the couple. He was not attracted to Valli as he wondered, "...how Chellam could remain faithful to this simple woman with her horse face and big teeth" (STM 70). He even tempted Chellam to visit brothels and lied about a fictitious affair between the tailor boy and Valli but their bonding was strong to be shaken. At last, he avenged Chellam by seducing Senthamarai, the teenage daughter of Chellam.

Men of Manipulation

Machiavelli says, "Men are so simple of mind, and so much dominated by their immediate needs, that a deceitful man will always find plenty who are ready to be deceived" (Carver 121). Manipulating someone exhibits one's power or influence on the other. The manipulators are superior in their status or wealth so that the ordinary people with needs become victims. These feeble sufferers are laid in trap and are sometimes exploited or persuaded to fulfil the needs of the dominant. They are convinced to be subjugated by force, by relationship or by obtaining something in return. The few motivating factors behind the psychological manipulation in the novels of Kavery Nambisan are lust and power.

Saroja, the wife of Sampathu in *A Town like Ours* allows herself to be seduced by Devarayya, the vice president of the Panchayat owing to her desperate ambition to possess a home with a door and bolt. Living inside a car, she became the prey of Devarayya's lust and thus ruining her chastity. At present, this vice president aimed at the post of Panchayat President utilising the popularity of his wife in politics. "He is a frustrated man, an angry and jealous man who must watch helplessly while his wife rises to giddy heights" (TLO 166). His neglect and delay made his younger daughter to be paralysed and bedridden. He finds chances to deceive his wife for power; uses Saroja for his physical pleasure and spends money lavishly to hide the shameful mistake of his daughter's sickness.

Ghulambhai, the handsome guy was attracted to the dark, hardworking Saroja. Though he had many women in life, he could not bear her rejection of him in spite of his indirect approaches to become intimate. Neither the offer of bike rides nor the gifts to children moved Saroja's will power. She held her head high and remained true to Sampathu and her two children. His rage increased when he found her secret affair with Devarayya and he attempted to disclose this to Sampathu.

Periyavar and Dhaya are Machiavellian politicians in *The Story That Must Not Be Told*. To instigate a blackmark against the existing government, this opposite party plans to create a revolt in the slum Sitara by reducing the time of water supply. They attempted to kindle the public in order to obtain many votes in the forthcoming election. They are least bothered that the thirty thousand people of three acres suffer due to less water. His idea was to indict people in to a revolt against the government and later his opposite party would bring the solution. He says, "After the water scam, we will quietly readjust everything back to normal and take the credit" (SMT 251).

Patrick of *The Scent of Pepper* is the son of Appachu and Marjorie, the British lady. His cunning attitude incited him to safeguard his future. He was irritated of his father's foolishness of marrying a British woman discarding the rich fortune of rich Kodavas. He was jealous of Subbu, the other grandson enjoying the royalty and instigated his smoking habit. He was also angry on the Kodava mob that refused to accept his father's marriage to a white woman. In spite of Appachu's effort to attach himself to the native, none welcomed it except Nanji. "Patrick, who had his mother's cunning and his father's brains, has decided never to make such mistakes"(SOP 148).

Men of Idealism

Ideal principles make a person respectful and Nambisan has constructed strong supreme characters exhibiting their morality through their gentle and humane behaviour. Subbu of *The Scent of Pepper* is the faithful son of Nanji never touching alcohol in his life just for his mother. Though he had been in to the military, he quits the job and the city life. He returns to his native to spend the rest of the days with his aging mother. Nanji, his mother is always the idol of strength, empathy and humanity. Krishna of *Mango-coloured Fish* is the intellectual brother of Shari helping her to decide about her marriage fixed with Gautam. He frankly discloses that Gautam resembles more like the mother with a domineering attitude. It is Krishna who revealed her to live her life without any inhibitions. It is the mother who controlled Shari and her love for Naren. Unlike the mother and the elder sister, Krishna respected Shari and wished a happy life for her.

Stanley of *Hills of Angheri* is an ambulance driver and a gentle friend of Nalli in London. Though they were fond of each other, he was genuine in his relationship respecting the feelings of Nalli. He was more a like a stress buster to whom Nalli shared her low moods in spite of the rumour about their affair. Hiten Pushpa Chand, the husband of Pushpa in *On Wings of Butterflies* is the embodiment of ideal husband who lives with the principles

of equality. He shares all the household chores and even encourages Pushpa to be a part of WOW, the new political movement. This husband holds a huge respect for his wife and stands for her in all situations.

Jai of *Hills of Angheri* decides to be a doctor to alter his lifestyle. His poor childhood and abusive father drives him to Mumbai. He was diligent, responsible and successful as he knew he has to set his future comfortable which is the contrary of his past life. Swamy of *The Story That Must Not Be Told* is the teacher and a butcher. Belonging to Sitara, the world of slum, Swamy thinks education would definitely change the society. Dadiwala Gaffur offered him a job saving him from beggary. This meatseller taught him the lesson of honesty when Swamy cheated the customers in order to impress Gaffur. Gaffur educated him and his hardwork for many days in library paid him with a teacher's job. He balanced both the jobs with ease and forever he was grateful to Gaffur, "defender of values" (SMT 62).

Chandran was a physically challenged potter fell in love with Senthamarai, the daughter of Chellam. He gifted her a pot but doubted how she would convince her parents about their marriage. "He was lame and beautiful; she ugly and agile" (SMT 236-237). He volunteered to bail her father out of prison even when her mother refused his proposal. Though the humble shack and tarpaulin became the home after the demolition of slum, Chandran survived with the job of sign painting.

George of *Mango-coloured Fish* is one of the friends whom Shari encountered in University hostel after the engagement with Gautam. This oldman from Goa visits Delhi in the memory of his dead wife. In solitude, he celebrated his thirtieth anniversary ordering a special cake. His love story was with a honest purpose. He feels their love was unique and only death tore them apart. "I sing her name, touch her with my mind" (MCF 64).

Tejus, the doctor in *Hills of Angheri* criticised that the medical profession is slowly turning in to swindling business. More money was spent on purchase of equipments than the vast degree of malnourishment. He showed his disgust of how food is wasted at big parties while the other section of the society thrived on poverty. He changed religions every five to six years. He was Gonzales before embracing Hinduism as Dharma Tejus. He had plans to convert himself to a Muslim and has reserved Buddhism for oldage. Clinging to a particular faith hurts him. He voiced out that humans are the ones who defend as well as violate animal rights. He was straightforward pointing out Nalli's physical weakness to reset bones.

Men with Identity Crisis

Erik Erikson, the psychological theorist says, " that a crisis of a self-identity is a normal part of development and can be a growth experience that leads to the formation of clear and consistent beliefs and direction in life or life role" (Nevid 208). Acquiring and sustaining an identity makes the life of a person more meaningful. Few of Nambisan's characters have shattered identities with a haunting past and blurred future.

Subbu of *The Scent of Pepper* was depressed when he found he could not walk like others. When his mother's efforts healed him, he pushed all his strength to tread his feet. He became the favourite child of Nanji and he retained his identity to hold the trust she had on him. Though he moved to city to please the delights of his wife Mallige, he returned to the native to be with his old mother. Thatkan of *The Story That Must Not Be Told* has an ambition of becoming a police officer living in the world of Sitara. Being the son of sewage cleaner, he was forced to clean with his father and later had a fatal death falling in to the sewage. All he wanted was a decent life for survival but it never happened.

Gundumani in his teens remained a confused son of Saroja, as he could recall the past life of his old home. He was sure that Sampathu was not his father and Rukma was not his sister. This mystery of past creates a miserable identity crisis, which pushes Gundu to dream a lot. He calls himself as "fatherless, rootless" (TLO 110). Affected by the unlocked secrets, Gundu was frustrated over his inability to interpret his blurred identity. His other worry was that his love for Rukmini, his almost-sister was a taboo in the eyes of the society. The author explicates the adversities of life by pointing out its consequences in a person's life. The right relationships are built on the meanings and experiences shared through interactions and interpretations. "The only stable state of being is instability—openness to change, revolutionary transformation and catastrophic discontinuity" (Frosh 6).

Men with Prejudices

Brown says, "Because prejudice involves judgement of some groups made by others, and because it can be shown to be affected by the objective relationships between these groups, prejudice is appropriately regarded as a phenomenon originating in group processes"(12). Gautam, the fiancé of Shari in *Mango-coloured Fish* is a selfish controlling spouse. To the dismay of Shari, he justifies his deliberate intentions of authority in seeking a flexible partner. He boasts of his intelligence and falls for flattery. He is self-centered and expects Shari to mould her attitude. Naren, the visually challenged lover of Shari is happy with his compelled voluntary solitude. Having been insulted by others throughout his life, he never expects others to please him. He exposes his balanced personality even when Shari's mother criticised his blindness.

Madhavan of *The Story That Must Not Be Told*, the president of Vaibhav Apartments influences the residents to act against the people of the slum. He instigates the elite class not to believe the slum workers. Feeling superior, he framed them menacing and violent. Judith Light, the American activist quotes, "Bigotry or prejudice in any form is more than a problem; it is a deep seated evil within our society" (Wise old sayings). Thus this kind of prejudiced community mistreats the downtrodden just because of their birth and status. It is a pity that the empathy of human behaviour differs person to person. With complications and unresolved conflicts, they lack privilege.

Conclusion

The research paper brings out the significant inclination towards the construction of male characters in the novels of Kavery Nambisan. The life of the male protagonists echo the varied experiences, haunting memories and engrossed observations. The author is very particular in showcasing the truth she has been witnessing since her childhood. She never pressurises herself to satisfy the demands of the society but puts her conscious mind in to writing. Bringing out high awareness of the struggle between the person and the mind, the characters of Nambisan communicate the challenging dimensions of emotional dilemmas. ■

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Displacement and Search for Identity: An Analysis of Asif Currimbhoy's *The Refugee*

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Saugata Kumar Nath

The word 'Space' has both physical and mental connotations interdependent. While in physical terms it refers to an expanse which is free, available or unoccupied, it also refers to the mental "dimensions of height, depth and width within which all things exist and move" (lexico.com). Both these dimensions together make the idea of space so important for our existence. We exist because we occupy a certain space and loss of this space is equivalent to loss of existence. In fact, our identity gets closely associated with our sense of belonging to a particular space we are fond of. This attachment is so deep rooted in our psyche that a loss of this space can lead to a permanent loss of identity and rootlessness. Asif Currimbhoy's one act play '*The Refugee*' very aptly deals with the theme of loss of space caused by the Bangladesh liberation war of 1971 which exposes the wounds of partition that caused a much greater mass migration of people, desperate to save their existence. In the struggle for survival, though many of them could save their lives, their migration caused a permanent loss of space. This crisis made their existence hollow from within. This paper will analyse how the loss of space can create an existential crisis with reference to Asif Currimbhoy's '*The Refugee*'.

Key words: Space, migration, identity, rootlessness, home, survival, existence, crisis.

Asif Currimbhoy is one of the chief exponents of Indian English Drama. He has often taken themes from the significant episodes of history and recreated them in his plays. But, his intention was not just retelling the known tales; rather, analysing them and raise certain vital questions related to our life, society, existence, freedom and liberty. While in *Goa* (1964), he talks about India's annexation of Portuguese Goa, in *Om Mane Padme Hum!* (1972), he talks about the Chinese occupation of Tibet. But, in both these plays, we get to see not just the force of the occupier, but the resistance of the occupied also to retain their freedom and existence. Similarly, in *Inquilab* (1970), he talks about the tenets of the Naxalite movement of 1970s and its destructive consequences in West Bengal; while in *Sonar Bangla* (1972), he gives a realistic account of East Pakistan's freedom movement to gain liberty from West Pakistan hegemony. He shows us how religion alone is not sufficient

to keep together two linguistically and culturally different groups under the idea of one nation. In the play *The Refugee* (1971), he discusses in detail the issues related to forced migration when people are drastically uprooted from their lands and forced to find an abode elsewhere. Here, he depicts not just the impact of the refugee influx on the social, economic and political condition of India but also raises some fundamental questions about existence and the importance of space for the existence.

What makes this play so relevant is the theme of 'loss of space leading to loss of existence in reference to Partition'. Indeed, all the refugee characters portrayed in the play can be considered as real life representations of the refugees who have been uprooted from their home, their inherent space and left in desperation to create a new space for themselves in an unknown land. Out of them, one group like Mr. Sen Gupta has been able to occupy a space in this country and that space has helped them to establish a new identity and existence here. While the other group like Yassin has not been able to occupy a space and chooses to return to their devastated but known space, their homeland to re-establish their lost identity and existence there.

First of all, the irrefutable reason behind the 'Operation Searchlight' and the ethnic cleansing of the Bengalis in East Pakistan was West Pakistan's desperate desire to retain their control over this space called East Pakistan. It was important not only for economic and political reasons, but also they wanted to exert their superiority over the East Pakistani Bengalis by dominating their space. So, in one hand, while West Pakistan was creating a blank space to exert their authority by obliterating the East Pakistani Bengalis, the Bengalis on the other hand started their counter offensive to recapture the lost space to reassert their existence. For them, the reclaiming of their lost space was their fight for existence.

Our identity is closely associated with the space we belong to and we get attached to. This space becomes so much a part of our psyche that in case of any displacement, we always try to recreate that space at the new place we occupy. As we see the case of Mr. Sen Gupta in this play. Though he left Comilla 24 years ago, here at his new house in India, he has recreated his study as a reminiscence of his house in Comilla. When he takes Yassin to his study, he tells him, "It overlooks the pond and green fields and palm trees. Reminds me ofComilla....." (*The Refugee*, 10). When they enter the study, the playwright specifically mentions, "This is Sengupta's dream world" (10). And, Mr. Sen Gupta continues his speech to Yassin as if in a dream like stance himself. He says, "On a clear night, heavy with the scent of the mahua flowers and my own loneliness, I can feel the presence....of the past" (10). This reminiscence of the past is very important, not just as a mere nostalgia but as an effective strategy to fill the vacuum of our existence with something concrete. Here, this space called his study gives him the comfort of his old, known space and makes him feel at home. This feeling adds meaning to his existence and that is why, he clings onto this space. As the play proceeds, we see Yassin also getting close to this space where he spends most of his time. Perhaps like Mr. Sen Gupta, he also associates this study to his home and this

space gives comfort to his shattered existence as a refugee in a foreign land. So, this space becomes important for Yassin's existence too.

Though the destitute refugee Ramul appears to be a bit of an eccentric character in the play, he understands the importance of space in life. That is why, he has quickly occupied a space for himself, doesn't matter though it's a hume pipe and he tells his fellow refugees to do the same. He cautions other refugees saying, "Food, clothing, shelter – our urgent need. Take all the help we get now. As our numbers grow, the warmth and welcome will cease. The hearth and home will grow cold. And, they will want the refugees to move on and on, out of sight, out of mind. But, where can millions go.... (laughing queerly)....I ask you...where can millions go?" (19). He understands that those who are not able to occupy any space would eventually get wiped out. Hence, he asks other refugees, "Let us make a good clean start by occupying....." (19). It is the space that they occupy makes the refugees visible to the world. Through this space, slowly and gradually they become a part of the society in the new land, get their citizenship and fight for their rights as Mr. Sen Gupta is doing today. Though he himself had been a refugee 24 years back, he has now become a part of the society here in this unknown town of West Bengal, takes part in active politics, talks of his rights and social responsibilities as a lawful citizen and wants to become a Minister himself in future. So, Currimbhoy makes Mr. Sen Gupta a live example of all those people who migrated as a refugee but instead of getting obliterated in the face of sheer desperation, they have been able to make a space for themselves and this space is now making their existence meaningful to them as well as others.

Currimbhoy also gives a moving description of how the tension of losing one's space can raise existential questions when Mr. Sen Gupta and Professor Mosin fear of losing their space due to the heavy influx of refugees. Mr. Sen Gupta's initial message to Yassin and other refugees was, "As friends and neighbours, you're welcome. As long as there's enough room to live in and food to share, I promise you there will always be shelter in this town for those who need help." (14). But, his reaction changes dramatically when the refugees capture his garage and the open field that he used to watch and enjoy from his study once. Now he exclaims, "... Where's my open field and coconut palms and pond? They.... they're encroaching. How long are they going to stay there? When will they turnanti-social? And, they're growing in numbers all the time.... This can't go on. We'll seal the borders" (20). This had been the attitude of most of the Indians who had to compromise their spaces for the refugees. On top of that, there was a lingering fear of these refugees turning to anti-social activities; what if they start snatching what they are not getting normally and start making space for them by exterminating the citizens. It has taken his entire lifetime to build this house and he is now scared of losing this space at the hands of the desperate refugees because, this space is now closely associated to his existence. At any cost, he cannot afford to lose this space which he calls his home now.

Not just the Hindus, the Muslims also suffered from similar fear as we see the case with Professor Mosin. He too was initially warm towards the refugees. He proactively

arranged a job for Yassin at the local university. But, he too gets scared looking at the millions of hungry, desolate, gloomy mass of refugees occupying their town every day. He fears not just for his own space in this society, but also for his community, the community of Indian Muslims. He fears since majority of the Refugees are Hindus who are most likely to be absorbed gradually in this society, they will change the demographic balance of the society. He says to Yassin, “There is a natural...deliberate balance in society. The Indian Muslim as a minority has learnt to co-exist, sometimes precariously. Along come the refugees, mostly persecuted Hindus, and throw off the balance” (42). So, the fear of the loss of space looms deep not only in the hearts of the Hindus like Mr. Sen Gupta but also, the Muslims like Professor Mosin. Nobody wants to disturb the balance of space. Which is why, none of them object when Yassin decides to leave. But, at the same time, Mr. Sen Gupta’s son Ashok and daughter Mita are not bothered by these insecurities since they have been born and brought up here in India which gives them an inherent confidence about the security of their space.

As far as the case of Yassin is concerned, he tries hard to create a meaningful existence here by taking up a job at the local university and making an offer to pay Mr. Sen Gupta for his stay at their household as an attempt not to be considered an unwanted usurper of their space, but a beneficial part of it. However, he realizes his inability to create a space here. Like Ramul, he can neither occupy a space by force, nor like Professor Mosin, he can spend a life of submissive minority. In his exit though lies his failure to create a space for himself in this country, but a thin hope to create a meaningful existence in his homeland. Again, if we turn the table, what apparently seems to be Yassin’s failure can be perceived as his victory, as he has dared to face the unknown by choosing to reclaim his home in Comilla instead of living like Mr. Sen Gupta in constant yearning for his home. Even though Mr. Sen Gupta has seemingly created a space for himself here successfully, there is a deep lack in his existence – it is his constant yearning for Comilla and his childhood love Rukaiya. It is this lack which makes his existence somewhat incomplete, hollow. Though hope is thin, we can still assume that Yassin would at least be able to make his existence more fulfilling than Mr. Sen Gupta if at all he survives. ■

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Primary ‘Knowledge-Sources’ to ‘Feasible-Facilitators’ in the Learning Process : An Assessment of the Modified Functionality of Modern Indian Teachers.

Soumyashree Sarkar

This article attempts to examine the paradigm shift in the role of the teachers in the modern education process. In a fast moving world, the teachers must be very strategic in their practices. Today’s students need shorter chunks of educational materials and more of hands-on experiences coupled with technology, introduced at the right time by their respective teachers so that the students understand, learn and retain it. The shift of the performance of the teachers in terms of ‘source of knowledge’ into a ‘conductor of informational flow’ has come up with a huge range of psychological and habitual (mal)-adjustments for both the teacher and the student community over the years. The study has objectives as: to find out whether there is any improvement in the basic learning process of the students across 2016-2019 by the pedagogical modifications; to find out the extent of psychological acceptance and job satisfaction of the teachers embracing the new system. For the purpose of investigation, four English medium schools of Kolkata were taken up. To observe the noticeable changes in the learning process of the student community, a longitudinal survey was conducted on three students from each school, followed by an interview session and a checklist for them. The language, social science and science teachers of all the four school were also chosen as samples. To know the current thought process of the teachers an interview session was conducted followed by the administration of a questionnaire. The task of the teacher in the 21st century is not to let students sink in the vast array of information but rather to help them cope up with the changing situation, teach them how to manage and tackle information and help them analyse the situation so that the students could develop his/her own views or opinions. The current study will seek to illuminate some of the changing dimensions in the student-learning process and their impact on both the teacher and the student community at large.

Key words: pedagogy, knowledge-source, feasible-facilitator, AVT

INTRODUCTION

Is there anything more satisfying than making something creative? It is often agreed upon that the best teachers are those, who show their students where to look but does not tell them what to see. Good teaching is as much about passion as it is about reason. It is not

only motivating students to learn but teaching them how to learn, and in doing so in a manner that is relevant, meaningful and memorable. It is about caring for your craft, having a general passion for it and conveying that passion to the students in the most organised, systematic and structured form. The biggest challenge for any teacher is capturing each student's attention and conveying ideas effectively enough to create a lasting impression. Secondary school learners fall in the age group of 10-14 years and they are naturally restless, with very less attention span. As a teacher, in order to tackle this challenge effectively, the teacher should implement innovative ideas that make the classroom ideas much more remarkable and lovable for the students. This much we know to be true that people empower people. Teachers empower people to follow their passions. To be creative, productive people, and to learn new things that they never knew they could, there is always the selfless contribution of some great teachers. In the modern day education system, teachers have become facilitators. It is no longer enough for a teacher to outburst on the podium and spout their knowledge in the sheer hope that all or some of their precious wisdom will be relished and taken back home by their students. A teacher on the contrary should be engaging, relentlessly dedicated and adjustable to the existing system and instead of handing out well-crafted notes to be mugged up and vomited in the exam sheets, the teacher must guide them for their own realisations and understandings of the subject matter, which would help the students deal real life situations instead. These teachers therefore should be feasible facilitators, more flexible and more personal and the learners more active, aware, engaging and independent. Teachers need to be engaged with over increasing skills and competencies to manage a class of hyper-connected knowledge environment in order to best prepare the students of the twenty-first Century, a world where the only constant they know is change. Students, themselves, are capable of finding and accessing information anytime, anywhere and about anything. They are thoroughly connected to the cyber world through blogs, Facebook, cell phones, Twitter, Wikipedia, You Tube, Bing and everything that come their way. They reside in a world of limitless information. Teachers are no longer the primary source of information. In this changing context, what the teachers can do is act as a quality and quantity filter for the huge amount of information available on the internet, instead of trying to monopolise on them and obstruct the direct flow. Today's teachers should be strategic in their practices. Students, today, need shorter chunks of educational materials due to their shrinking attention span. Passively processing significant amount of information in each class does not only translate to successful learning and retention rates. That's the reason why everything a teacher does in the classroom- holding a debate, making the children watch a video or presentation, using an educational app or another- must be diagnostically and prescriptively strategic. Each activity, no matter whether it is for fun or seriousness must be introduced at the right time in the learning matrix so that the children absorb, articulate, assimilate and retain it in their own capacity. A great teacher promotes innovation in all shapes and sizes, constantly upgrades himself or herself and embrace the new and adopt pedagogical modifications across all layers of the learning process to create an everlasting and lifelong impact on the student community.

OBJECTIVES

1. To find out whether there is any improvement in the basic learning process of the students across 2016-2019 by implementing the pedagogical modifications.
2. To find out the extent of psychological acceptance and job satisfaction of the teachers embracing the new system.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is a longitudinal survey type research.

Population: - The population comprises of all teachers and the students of the private English medium schools of West Bengal.

Sample:- Four English medium private schools were chosen purposively as samples. Three students from each school (one class topper, one mediocre and one attention deficit disturbing low-scorer) were taken as samples. The total number of students resulted in twelve, and they were first studied in 2016 when they were in class V, and the observation process continued till 2019, when they finally reached Class VIII. The language teachers, social science teachers and science teachers of class V to VIII were also selected as samples.

Method:- The teachers were asked to gradually change their process of teaching and convert the classroom into a student-centric one. The teachers were advised to take the aid of educational technology and resort to different creative concepts, where the classroom would become essentially student-centric. Brainstorming sessions with problem-solving topics for the students were advised to the teachers. Students got to have a general idea first, about what they were learning, and then they would get themselves involved in the process of learning. The methodology of teaching changed from sheer accumulation of stray concepts in a teacher-centric lecture-oriented classroom context. The students were gradually introduced to a cyber world alongwith various students' workshops organised for them, where the students got to work with their peers, discover new things and sharpen their intellectual or communication skill. Teachers were also directed to think, create and circulate colourful, useful and interesting teaching-learning materials, which the students can use on their own and learn new things.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES

The researcher used the qualitative as well as the quantitative techniques to investigate their research problem. An observation schedule and a questionnaire were developed as an instrument to collect data from the teachers. An interview question and a check list were prepared for the students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. It is noted that there has been radical change in the performance of the students in 2019 as compared to 2016 and 2017. The academic score cards showed graphical fluctuation and the low scoring students of the four schools were reported to have gained

sustainable knowledge base with clearer concepts, improving their academic scores. Class VIII students of 2019 have also confessed about their engaging minds in discovering or learning something new, themselves, each day, which have made up for their attention deficit syndrome.

2. On being administered a checklist, about their achievements and failures, by the introduction of the new modalities, 9 out of 12 students agreed that the individualised, self-paced, action-paced units of instruction allowed them to learn independently. In the comment section, 5 of them summed up something like that the modular approach provided students with problems and activities that encouraged them to use critical, higher-level thinking skills to solve problems, make value decisions and sustain their interest for an enjoyable learning.

3. On taking 2019 into account, the mean scores of the male students seemed to be on an increased scale than the female students of the sample. They were reportedly more inclined towards the innovations introduced.

4. One A-grade student of a particular school reportedly had problems as he was too systematic with the rote learning process and found the self-help method as a wastage of time, sowing seeds to more than one wrong concepts in the students' mind and a hazard in the systematic completion of the syllabus. His score card also revealed a minor fall in percentage as compared to the previous years, because he also thinks that with higher grades one needs to be more focussed, accept teachers' dictatorship instead of mere experimentation with serious concepts. He was also of the opinion that audio-visual aids and innovative techniques could not help him sufficiently in answering his answer script with perfection as too many concepts entered unfiltered, creating a problem.

5. Tracing back to 2016, when the teachers were served a questionnaire about the bane and boon of student-centric teaching, 73% of the teachers seemed overtly enthusiastic about the project. 8% of them stuck on the benefits of lecture method as an ideal mode, as they stressed on the experience and the expertise. 6% teachers were new comers, inexperienced to go for any drastic comment. The rest of the teaching community were apprehensive of the change in the scenario that was going to occur and did not want to make any sort of positive or negative comment in advance.

6. In the following year, in 2017, several structured observations were performed by the researcher at an interval of two months. 55% of the teachers were seen to use audio-visual aids in some of the language and science classrooms. Some of the social science teachers resorted to flashcards, mnemonics and workshops in case of requirement to get along with the basic concepts.

The rest of the teaching population, though in writing on the questionnaire, supported student-centric learning, but unfortunately their teaching modalities could not reflect the same.

7. 2018 saw a minor change in the teaching process of the teachers and a slight modification in the acceptance level. Majority were seen to be acclimatising and belonging to the sentiments of the new system whole heartedly for the first time and started implementing student-centred pedagogy in the actual sense of the term. 13% of the teaching population, still, were observed to be stiff in their moves and could not acclimatise to the new system.

8. According to the reports of an open-ended questionnaire served in 2019 (April), the teachers expressed their opinions and thoughts about the introduction of the new system.

Some teachers found their self-designed pedagogy consistent with the pre-existing identities and embraced it without any radical change, because they found teaching with the system much easier. They had opined that the stress factor involved in teaching had been reduced, a simple projector worked much better as well as captured the students' attention in a much better way.

A handful of teachers, who contributed testimonials, in favour of student-centric classroom, and were expected to be pioneering the system, practically, had more difficult experiences adjusting to a student centred instruction system. There is a case of a particular science teacher, noted towards the early part of 2019 that he resisted change finally, and made her exit from the system, decided to restore her identity, which the student-centric classrooms were not being able to provide.

Although, there are few, who could not acclimatise with the system or did not feel the necessary of such an implementation as they had to contribute much more to the system technically by teaching the students how to self-learn, other participating teachers were seen to make dramatic shifts in their identities in order to implement the program. The student community in general voiced significant learning curves with their shared responsibility as student learners.

CONCLUSION

In the modern scenario, it is very important to keep one thing in mind that, the students aren't customers of facts. They are active creators of knowledge, and has been found to significantly act as a major contributing factor to the existing knowledge. Schools are not brick and cement structures, but are centres of lifelong learning. Teaching is considered as one of the vital and challenging career choices where they have to adopt new practices that acknowledge both the art and science of learning. Teachers, their books and knowledge were information oracles, spreading knowledge to a population with few other ways to receive it, previously. But, today's teachers should accept the change and stop aback. Since the best policy is to flow with the system, so modern teachers can teach their students how to handle resources such as to validate information, synthesize the information, leverage the information, communicate and collaborate with the information, solve problem with it and proceed independently in discovering new cues. On contrary to the traditional teacher-centric method, the modern student-centric method claims involvement of the students into the teaching process by active questioning and by fruitful interaction. Once

the students are involved mentally, physically and socially, then it also helps in better retention. Pupils remember 50% of what they hear, but can remember 80% of what they hear, see and do, a study stated. While teaching, the teachers' oral language should be complemented by the use of smart boards, power points and cue cards. It is not always technology, but a sudden shift like role plays and demonstrations will also have far reaching effects towards better teaching. Story-telling is also an art to capture attention and deliver theme based teaching. Socratic Method as a tool of teaching is very interesting for the students. When students pose any questions, the teachers should teach them by providing answers usually generated from their own questions. It just can make teaching interesting and substantive.

In a fast paced world, the teacher's role is not only imparting mere knowledge to the students. He should require passion, endurance, expertise, proper teaching style, strategy and methodology combined with the ability to study the psychology of the students and motivate them, as and when needed. "Today I shall teach English grammar" will always tend to have a less impact than "Today, we shall learn some bits of English grammar together". Such strategies can really bridge the social distancing between the teacher and the student and can smoothen communication. It has really become time for the teachers to step out of their tagline of knowledge distributors and get involved as knowledge contributors or student facilitators to be intrinsically involved in the learning process. The modern world needs a constantly upgraded curriculum for its student community and along with the students, the teachers too should be continuous learners and excellent listener. Perhaps this is in sync with the age old proverb that teachers are lifelong learners from cradle to grave.

The findings of the present study has made it clear that student centred learning might seem inconsistent with basic educational goals to both teachers and the students in the beginning, but the overall benefits are far reaching. Many teachers still feel that the unique status that the teachers enjoyed in the society are gradually being eroded, but there are teachers in the list too who have said that their professional identity are in no way hampered and instead they find it innovative, invigorating and helpful. The current research also found out that there was not an 100% wholeheartedness among the student community in accepting the new system in the beginning or even towards the end, but tracking down their score cards, assessing their cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of knowledge, their marked progression in standards can in no way be underestimated. ■

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The 12th Century Sharanas of the South India : A Study

Ishwarappa Hali

Hinduism is primarily more a devotional religion than a religion known for its enlightening knowledge systems. The Vedas, Upanishads and epic traditions abound more in bhakti than in Jnana or work-ethics. Hinduism advocates karma theory, varna system and ritualism. It upholds the elite culture, and only the elites, accordingly, live happily. The downtrodden suffer perennially. The two heterogeneous religions, namely Buddhism and Jainism, rebelled against the dominance of this superstructure. This paper basically brings forth how the 7th century Tamil Saivas (even Vaishnavas) reacted against the dominance of religion in all walks of life. They practised pure bhakti for personal happiness and fulfilment. But the Alvars and Nayanars were not revolutionary enough. On the other hand the 12th century Kalyan sharanas filled up this need, this gap, and created a sort of history for the entire world, though the West is unaware of that. *Keywords: Hinduism, bhakti, Jnana, work-ethics, Saivas, Alvars and Nayanars*

The Kalyani Chalukyas under Vikramaditya VI expanded their empire from the South to the north. Their branches ruled as Vengi Chalukyas in coastal Andhra, and Gujarati Chalukyas in Sourashtra. The Kalchuri Bijjala usurped the Chalukyas throne in the 1160s. His empire existed for the next 20 years. Bijjala's ablest prime minister was Basavanna. This Basavanna or Basava was a political thinker, social reformer, a sort of economist, language patriot and mystic philosopher.

Like the Alvars and Nayanars of Tamil Nadu, the sharanas under Basava established an alternative way of life. Basava continued his social revolution that he had begun in Mangalavede in the 1130s and 40s. He did a wonderful administration, and reformed the fields of economy, society, and countryside. He rejected karma theory, varna system and ritualism. He heard of Devara Dasimayya for insights. He read Dasimayya's great social awakening about god, society and the individual. Madar Chennayya inspired him too. Basava knew the spiritual work of older spiritualists like Kondaguli Kesiraj and others. In fact, Basava's revolutionary ideology inspired these older people, and Basava called them as sharanas.

Basava rejected temple culture, and established ishtalinga-worship. Unlike the worship in the temple which was 1) inaccessible for all and 2) costly, the worship of istalinga

was accessible for all. This led to the concept of body-churching. He writes,

The width of the world, the width of the sky still
greater width is your width. Below the nether
world are your holy feet, beyond the universe is
your holy crown.

Oh, impenetrable, invisible, incomparable linga

Oh, lord Koodalasangama

You appeared so tiny in the hollow of my palm.

(Vachana 62)

The lower people particularly the shudras found it the most beneficial one. Basava said one must worship his guru and jangam too, as he writes,

Offering the body to guru,
offering the mind to linga,
offering wealth to jangama,
offering three to three

I became pure Koodalasangamadeva. (Vachana 188)

The sincere worship of isthalinga made the worshippers' body one with the linga, the visible sign of the invisible God.

Basava and the other sharanas, including his sister Akkanagamma and her son Chennabasava, did a revolution in Kalyana. Great sharanas like Allam, Siddharama and Akkamahadevi were with him actively advocating their ideologies. If Allam and Akkamahadevi insisted on bhakti for redemption, Siddharama as well as Basava insisted on work. Chennabasava had a mixed approach making use of jnana, bhakti and kayaka. After learning about the sharanas' revolution in Kalyana (Kalyana also means the good), the like-minded people from all over the Indian subcontinent arrived at Kalyana.

Basava advocated good character, freedom, equality, fraternity, kayaka, dasoh, bhakti and istalinga worship as means of everyone's emancipation and empowerment. He said purity and sincerity of choice; and thought, action and responsibility are instrumental in both self-uplift and public welfare. Basava writes,

Do not steal, do not kill,
do not lie, do not rage,
do not loathe the other,
do not brag of yourself,

do not revile the opponent.

This itself is inner purity,

this itself is outer purity.

This alone is the way to win

our Koodalasangamadeva. (Vachana 150)

Basava's doctrines are kayaka and dasoha. According to him, kayaka or action is nothing but good action, involving sanctity. Basava said caste is based on craft; and craft is just a means for earning a livelihood. As John Ruskin and Mahatma Gandhi say all occupations are occupations without any sense of superiority in so far (1) they are essential for society; (2) they are done with proper expertise, sincerity and human touch; (3) they are done with proper wages - neither being lowly paid, nor involving extortion and taking bribe; and (4) this noble work is to be treated as kayaka and dasoh.

Basava elaborates on how this dasoh is to be executed: 1) The rich must help those who are helpless (say because of body defect), and poor and these people are generally good. 2) The people who help others must help it with love and respect, and should not expect anything in return. 3) Then the helpless and poor who accept this dasoh from the ones who give it, should be good; should not entirely depend on it for ever; and they must believe in self-reliance; they can also do dasoh when possible.

Basava rejected both caste distinctions and gender-differentiation. The sharanas devised the concept of other asthavaranas (padodaka, prasada, vibhuti, rudrakshi and mantra). They devised the concept of Panchachars (Lingachara, Sadachara, Shivachara, Ganachara and Brityachara) and shatasthalas (Bhakta, Maheshvara, Prasadi, Pranalingi, Sharana and Ikya). All these served them as aids of faith.

Basava did a socio-political revolution in Kalyana. Certain things went wrong. For example, the Brahmin Madhuvarasa's son Sheelavant married the cobbler Haralaya's daughter Lavanya which enraged the fundamentalists and created bloodshed. Already, because of Bijjala's order Basava had gone to Kudalasangama where he merged with God in 1168.

Allam: If Basava made the sharana revolution, Allam (Allayya) guided him as much as others. Allam was a great metaphysical and mystic thinker. His thoughts are yet as obscure and eccentric as his own life. Harihar was the first to write *Prabhudevara Ragale* in 338 lines. Chamarasa wrote *Prabhulingaleele* (which is translated into Tamil, Marathi and Sanskrit) around 1430. Later came Goluru Siddhvirannodeya's *SimyaSampadcmc* (1480c), Elandur Hariswara's *Prabhudevara Purana* (1600c), Marirachottesha's *Prabhunatana Taravali* (1650 c) and Merigeya Shantavir's *Prabhulinga* (1530c). Even all the other sharanas, including Basava, have written about Allam's life.

Allam was born in Balligavi, in Shikaripur taluk, Shimoga district. Seethasani was his mother, and Nagajja brought up and educated him. Chamarasa says Nirahankari and Sujnani were his parents. Allam, the great ascetic met Goggayya, who got blessed too; Allam visited Mukhtayakka (at Muttige), a Jain lady, who was mourning the demise of Ajaganna, her brother. Allam advised her against excessive mourning. Allam visited Siddharama at Sonnalige, and counseled him against the uselessness of an extreme attachment with material culture. Allam accompanied by Siddharama, met Basava and Akkamahadevi and many other sharanas at Kalyana, and debated about the right and wrong of life. Basava made him the first pontiff of Anubhava Mantapa whereby Allam running great discourses about the phenomenal world. He was a supreme deconstructionist of life. His one vachana is as follows,

From the beginning, in all the three ages,
gods, men and demons born in Maya
suffer and struggle.

What matters which attire?

All are robed in passion.

Impersonators of various kinds

none renouncing desire, anger or greed,

who can treat a sore that doesn't heal?

Guheshwara, who are these elders?

They are but mere bottlegourds. (Vachana 462)

Finally, after another visit to Kalyana, Allam traveled to Srishail where, after blessing Goraksa, he merged with God. Allam speaks of the importance of self-knowledge.

Akkamahadevi: Akkamahadevi is a great sharane of the 12th century India. She aimed high at marrying God Himself and succeeded. She has spoken of the importance of bhakti and lyrical gaiety for the ages. The great Kannada poet Dr. Siddhayya Puranik is of the opinion that the ideals, the attitudes and the achievements of both Allam and Akkamahadevi are the same.

Akkamahadevi (meaning senior sister) is a later appellation to Mahadevi as she became a senior to everyone in wisdom. Mahadevi means a great divine figure in Kannada literature. It is just another name for goddess Parvati. The parents most well-known for their virtues brought up her carefully. Udatadi was a chieftain-dom. The chief was a Jain called Kausik. The town had a math. The guru enlightened Akkamahadevi in Shaivism. He spoke to her about Basava and other sharanas of Kalyana and Srishail. She naturally dreamt of Chenna (better) Mallikarjun to become her bridegroom. She thought of God Himself as

her almighty force. She speaks of Him beautifully in the vachana ‘Akka Kelavva.’

Listen sister elder,

I had a dream.

I saw rice, areca, palm leaf and coconut

I saw at the door

The short-plaited gorava with sparkling teeth
asking for alms, sister.

As he was trying to get away

I went after him and caught his hand
and seeing Chennamallikarjun

I woke up.

(Vachana 360)

Akkamahadevi left Kausika walking nakedly. Vijaya Ramaswami of New Delhi has brought out a book on Akkamahadevi entitled *Walking Naked* (IIAS, Shimla, 2007). Akkamahadevi stayed in Kalyana for a couple of years. Then as per Allam’s advice, she decided to walk to Kadali in Srishail for her blissful end. Akkamahadevi was to depart. Even Basava was helpless. Akkamahadevi thanked them profusely. A sharana called Chikkadannayaka said Akkamahadevi’s one vachana was equal to Allam’s one hundred vachanas.

Chennabasava: Basava stands for bhakti and Chennabasava stands for jnana and these two are the noble ways for happy life. Of course, the sharanas, including Basava, spoke of kayakamarga as the best. Chennabasava, Basava’s nephew was born to Shivaswamy and Basava’s sister Akkanagamma in Kudaiasangama. Basava himself was his guru. Chennabasava says Basava as the lamp of knowledge in his life initiated him into the gracious path. The two did much spadework in Shivayoga at Mangalavada itself.

Chennabasava speaks of Guru, Linga and Jangama:

O father, save me by showing the door of the true devotees

who say they have served guru,

linga and jangama in many and various ways,

and say they have been united with them. (Vachana 211)

Chennabasava was a minister of Bijjala a few months after Basava left. He managed the emperor’s affairs carefully. He asked the emperor not to punish Haralayya and Madhuvayya. When the bloodbath took place, the entire body of the sharanas was in trouble. Chennabasava was their leader. But the bad people killed the emperor. The king’s son Soyideva ordered

the army to kill the sharanas. The soldiers tried to burn vachana writings. Already Basava was in Kudalasangama, and Allam and Akkamahadevi in Srishail. Then Chennabasava and others, like his mother, Madival Machayya, Rudramuni, Kinnari Bommayya, and Rechayya protected the sharanas and their writings. They left Kalyana for Uluvi.

Siddharama: Siddarama was a great sharana from Sollapura. The women in Sollapur sing of Siddharama's public welfare programmes. In fact, Siddharama was a sort of Mayor and PWD minister. When he began the construction of a temple for Shiva, all the folks helped him. They raised a lake, now a 'noble pond' wherein a temple is raised for Siddharama.

The Other Sharanas: Basava enriched Kalyan, the capital of Kalachuri Empire. Basava's founding of Lingayat religion and his social service, economic reforms, vachana writing, mysticism, all attracted thousands of intellectuals to Kalyan. These spiritualists that came to Kalyan were called the sharanas. They came from Tamil Nadu (Madar Chennayya), Kerala, Andra, Sourashtra, Kalinga (Orissa country), Kashmire and Afghanistan. Great number of Sharanas did the Kalyana revolution. Basava's social revolution included a) great number of the downtrodden and b) women. His family members were sister Akkanagamma, wives Gangambike and Neelambike, and others were a big list.

■

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Indian English Poetry and its Richness : A Study

Prashant Mandre

Indian English poetry is a curious phenomenon, for English is not our mother tongue. At the same time speaking English is not our oral tradition. Still our people think that learning a foreign language is not a difficult task. Even our writers have written the best kind of writing in English. Some of the best Indian English poets are Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu, Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, and many of the new poets including Nissim Ezekiel, A. K. Ramanujan and Jayant Mahapatra. Kamala Das's name is equally remarkable.

Keywords: Indian English poetry, oral tradition, speaking English, genre

The story of Indian English poetry is as good as the story of India's originality in lifestyles. The Englishmen ruled over us and introduced us to both English language, and western culture and civilization. We acquired the most unheard things like the novel, the genre of prose, and several forms of poetry like the sonnet and ode. The East India Company ruled India firmly from 1818. The company rule of 1830s introduced English as a medium of higher education thanks to Lord Macaulay and Raja Rammohun Roy. The Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 changed the power from the Company to the British monarchy. Queen Victoria became India's Empress.

The British Govt started three universities in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. "The Govt appointed Indians as clerks and soldiers, creating a healthy mimicking middle-class," as Homi Bhaba feels. Calcutta had its own awakening, creating such intelligentsia as Keshav Chandra Sen, the Tagores, the Dutt, Henry Derozio, Sri Ramkrishna and his disciple Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya and others. This renaissance created the best ever intelligentsia in Asia.

One net result of this was writing literature in English. If Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya wrote the first ever Indian English novel *Rajmohan's Wife* in 1864, Toru Dutt produced the best kind of English poetry, comparable to the Romantic poets Keats and Shelley.

The first Indian English poet of note, Henry Louis Vivian Derozio (1809-31) was the son of an Indo-Portuguese father and an English mother. A precocious child, he had already taken to writing in his teens. In his all too brief poetic career lasting hardly half a dozen years, Derozio published two volumes of poetry: *Poems* (1827) and *The Fakeer of Jungheera* (1828). The shorter poems show a strong influence of British romantic poets in

theme (e.g. 'Sonnet: To the Moon'; 'The Golden Vase'; 'Sonnet: Death, My Best Friend'), sentiment, imagery and diction, with some traces of neo-classicism. Kashiprasad Ghose (1809-73) published a significant collection *The Shair* (1830). As he says, he also 'continued reading the best poetry in a regular and measured tone which soon accustomed my ear to English rhythm.' (Ghose 173) Michael Madhusudan Datt's (1824-73) *The Captive Ladie* (1849) narrates the story of the Rajput King Prithviraj. The first period of Indian English literature may be said to end in the 1850s, a few years before the Indian Revolt of 1857—that great watershed in the relationship between India and Britain.

The period from 1857 to 1920 called as "the winds of change" quickened the pace of Bengal renaissance. The Evangelical revival in England, the social and educational reforms of the 1830s, the advent of the steamships during the 1840s, and the changes made in the system of recruitment to Company service in the 1850s ushered in totally changed attitudes. *The Dutt Family Album*, the only instance of a family anthology in Indian English poetry, is a collection of 187 poems by three Dutt brothers—Govin Chunder, Hur Chunder and Greece Chunder, and their cousin, Omesh Chunder. Then Toru Dutt (1856-77) appeared on the scene. Toru had, with her sister Aru, her education in Paris and London. She was well-read in English, French and later in Sanskrit. She returned to India in 1873 and she died four years later. Toru Dutt's tragedy is that she died just when her talent was maturing with her discovery of her roots. Of her two collections, only one appeared in her own life time and that was not in the nature of original work. *A Sheaf Gleaned in French Fields* (1876) comprises 165 lyrics by about a hundred French poets, translated into English mostly by herself. Edmund Gosse's description of the volume as 'a wonderful mixture of strength and weakness' (Gosse xv) is a just evaluation. Toru Dutt's poetic technique shows a sure grasp of more than one poetic mode. Her poems 'Savitri,' the sonnet 'Baugmaree' and 'Our Casuarina Tree' are most anthologized.

The minor poets of the period were Behramji Malabari (1853-1912), 'Chili Chutnee' fame Cawasji Nowrosi Vesuvala, and Ramesh Chunder Dutt. R.C. Dutt did much translation of the two Indian epics. On the other hand, Sri Aurobindo's brother Manmohan Ghose (1869-1924) could not develop his full poetic potentiality.

Sri Aurobindo (1872-1950), a younger brother of Manmohan Ghose, provides a striking contrast. After a brief, quiet spell in Baroda State Service (1893-1906) and a much shorter but far more hectic one as a political radical (1906-10), which landed him in jail for a year, Sri Aurobindo escaped to Pondicherry (then a French possession) in 1910, and made it his permanent home thereafter.

Continuing his yoga at Pondicherry, he was joined in 1914 by a French lady, Madame Mirra Richard (later known as the 'Mother'), who recognised in him the *guru* of her own quest. After another significant spiritual experience characterized by him as the descent of a new power of consciousness, on 24 November 1926, Sri Aurobindo withdrew into complete seclusion for some time. He continued his spiritual quest and his literary work comprising

poetry, drama, philosophical, religious, cultural and critical writings unceasingly till his death on 5 December 1950.

We have two kinds of poetic output from Sri Aurobindo: one, his shorter poems that include *Short Poems* (1896-1900), *The Short Poems* (1895-1908), and *Short Poems*, 1902-1950. Among the longer poems of the early period are three complete narratives: 'Urvashi', 'Love and Death' and 'Baji Prabhau' and six fragments including four with an Indian background — 'The Rishi', 'Chitrangada', 'Uloupie' and 'The Tale of Nala', while of the remaining two, 'The Vigil of Thaliard' has the setting of a medieval *chanson* and 'Khaled of the Sea: An Arabian Romance' is an Eastern tale with Keatsian opulence. In fact, the entire poetic career of Sri Aurobindo may be seen as a long and arduous preparation for the writing of his *magnum opus*, 'Savitri' (1954). *Savitri* is a retelling of the well-known legend of prince Satyavan and Savitri, his devoted wife, who rescues him from Death, narrated in about 700 lines in the *Mahabharata*, and is a story of pure love conquering death.

Rabindranath Tagore, poet, dramatist, novelist, short story writer, composer, painter, thinker, educationist, nationalist and internationalist—such were the various roles that Tagore played with uniform distinction during his long and fruitful career. In his poetry, as in his work in the forms of drama and short story, Tagore presents a case of literary bilingualism which is perhaps without a parallel in literary history. Tagore's career as an Indian English poet began by sheer accident. In 1912, on the eve of his departure to England for medical treatment, he tried his hand at translating some of his Bengali poems into English. The manuscript lost and found came later to be rapturously hailed by William Rothenstein and W.B. Yeats. The rest is history. *Gitanjali* (1912) took the literary world by storm and was followed in quick succession by *The Gardener* (1913) and *The Crescent Moon* (1913). The award of the Nobel Prize came in 1913. More collections followed *Fruit-Gathering* (1916), *Stray Birds* (1916), *Lover's Gift and Crossing* (1918) and *The Fugitive* (1921). The later collections show a distinct decline in quality. Tagore's style, at its very best, skilfully controls the pliant rhythms of free verse combining 'the feminine grace of poetry with the virile power of prose.' (Hjarne 102)

Sarojini Naidu (1879-1947), younger than both Sri Aurobindo and Tagore, won recognition for her poetry in England early. She was of Bengali stock, born and brought up in Hyderabad, and had studied at Cambridge for three years. Here her poetic talent developed under the influence of the Rhymers' Club and the encouragement given by Arthur Symonds and Edmund Gosse. Her first volume of poetry, *The Golden Threshold* (1905) was followed by *The Bird of Time* (1912) and *The Broken Wing* (1917). Meanwhile, social reform and the freedom struggle had begun increasingly claiming her energies, and thereafter she wrote poetry only sporadically. She retired from active life as the Governor of Uttar Pradesh later. Sarojini Naidu's lyrical art has been strongly influenced both by British romanticism—especially of *The fin de siècle* variety, and Persian and Urdu poetic modes, with their characteristic opulence.

Sarojini Naidu's younger brother, Harindranath Chattopadhyaya (1898—1990) was a poet also cast, though somewhat less rigidly, in the romantic mould. Far more prolific than his better-known sister, he during the half-century between 1918 when his first collection of lyrics—*The Feast of Youth*—appeared and *Virgins and Vineyards* (1967), published numerous volumes of verse, the more significant of which are *The Magic Tree* (1922), *Poems and Plays* (1927) and *Spring in Winter* (1955).

There were more than a dozen minor poets, most of them a tribe of Sri Aurobindo, and they are not heard now.

The age from 1920 to 1947 is Gandhian Age. Gandhi was a powerful leader of the age, leading to India's independence in 1947. Even in this great period of Indian history, English poetry did not flourish except the Aurobindovian followers, and the Romantics. Mention may be made of K.D. Sethna, G.K. Chettur, Humanyun Kabir, V.K. Gokak, and others.

The second part of this article treats the post – 1947 poetry. It is in poetry that the post-Independence period witnessed the most crucial developments. In the 1950s arose a school of poets who tried to turn their backs on the romantic tradition and write a verse more in tune with the age, its general temper and its literary ethos.

By the 1950s, the 'new poetry' had already made its appearance. In 1958, P. Lal and his associates founded the Writers Workshop in Calcutta which soon became an effective forum for modernist poetry. The Workshop manifesto described the school as consisting of 'a group' of writers who agreed in principle that English had proved its ability, as a language, to play a creative role in Indian literature, through original writings and transcreation. The first modernist anthology was *Modern Indo-Anglian Poetry* (1958) edited by P. Lal and K. Raghavendra Rao. In a somewhat brash Introduction the editors condemned greasy, weak-spined and purple-adjectived "spiritual poetry", and 'the blurred and rubbery sentiments of... Sri Aurobindo' and declared that 'the phase of Indo-Anglian romanticism ended with Sarojini Naidu.'

The first of the 'new poets' to publish a collection was Nissim Ezekiel (1924—2004), easily one of the most notable post-Independence Indian English writers of verse. His *A Time to Change* appeared in 1952, to be followed by *Sixty Poems* (1953), *The Third* (1959), *The Unfinished Man* (1960), *The Exact Name* (1965) and *Hymns in Darkness* (1976).

Towards the end of the fifties, Dom Moraes (1938—2004), the first of the 'new' poets to win recognition in England, appeared on the scene (His first book won the Hawthornden Prize in 1958). His collections are *Poems 1955-1965*, *John Nobody* and others.

During the 1960s, several prominent 'new' poets appeared, the earliest of whom was P. Lal (1929—2010). Born in the Punjab, Purushottam Lal migrated to Calcutta with his parents when he was just one year old. Educated in this city, Lal taught English there. His verse collections include *The Parrot's Death and Other Poems* (1960), "*Change!*" *They Said* (1966), *Draupadi* and *Jayadratha* (1967), *Yakshi from Didarganj* (1969), *The*

Man of Dharma and the Rasa of Silence (1974) and *Calcutta: A Long Poem* (1977).

Adil Jussawalla's (1940—) first book of verse, *Land's End* (1962) contains poems written in England and some parts of Europe. Unlike Dom Moraes, however, Jussawalla chose to return to India after a sojourn of more than a dozen years in England and has since published another collection, *Missing Person* (1974). Jussawalla's usual strategy in *Land's End* is to project a clearly visualized situation and then comment on it, bringing out either the personal or social or existential significance latent in it.

A.K. Ramanujan (1929-1993) is one of the best new poets. His first volume, *The Striders* (1966) won a Poetry Book Society recommendation. *Relations* followed in 1971. He has also translated into English poetry in Tamil and Kannada in *The Interior Landscape* (1967) and *Speaking of Siva* (1972) respectively. Ramanujan has said, 'English and my disciplines (linguistics, anthropology) give me my "outer" forms—linguistic, metrical, logical and other such ways of shaping experience, and my first thirty years in India, my frequent visits and field trips, my personal and professional preoccupations with Kannada, Tamil, the classics and Folklore give me my substance, my "inner" forms, images, symbols.' (Ramanujan 95)

R. Parthasarathy (1934 -) is a minor voice. Gieve Patel's (1940—) first book, *Poems* appeared in 1966, and his second, *How Do you Withstand, Body* in 1976. A member of the small Parsi community, Patel is an 'outsider' like Ezekiel and is equally conscious of the fact (e.g., 'The ambiguous Fate of Gieve Patel, he being neither Muslim nor Hindu in India'), but this has not produced a feeling of rootlessness in his case.

In contrast with Patel, Arvind Krishna Mehrotra (1947—) writes a poetry in which the image is all-dominant. He is the author of *Bharatmata: a Prayer (sic)* (1966), *Woodcuts on Papes* (1967), *Pomes/Poems/Poemas* (1971), and *Nine Enclosures* (1976). Mehrotra has described himself as 'not an Indian poet but a poet writing a universal language of poetry, of feeling, of love, and hate and sex.'

Another poet in whom Whitmanism and surrealism appear to meet (with Tagore forming a third ingredient) is Pritish Nandy (1947—), a prolific writer who has produced more than a dozen collections including *Of Gods and Olivess* (1967), *The Poetry of Pritish Nandy* (1973) and *Tonight this Savage Rite* (1977).

The 1970s witnessed the arrival of K.N. Daruwalla, Shiv K. Kumar, Jayanta Mahapatra and Arun Kolatkar. Keki N. Daruwalla (1937—), one of the most substantial of modern Indian English poets, has so far published *Under Orion* (1970), *Apparition in April* (1971) and *Crossing of Rivers* (1976). He is a police officer by profession and this fact is not without significance in understanding his response to men and matters. Shiv K. Kumar (1921—) is a senior academic who published his first volume *Articulate Silences* (1970) when on the threshold of fifty. This was followed by *Cobwebs in the Sun* (1974), *Subterfuges* (1976) and *Woodpeckers* (1979). His work reveals a mastery of both the confessional mode and ironic comment.

Jayanta Mahapatra (1928—), another academic, began his career with *Close the Sky, Ten by Ten* (1971) and has since published *Svayamvara* (1971), *A Rain of Rites* (1976), *Waiting* (1979), *Relationship* (1980, Sahitya Akademi Award, 1981) and *The False Start* (1980). Mahapatra's poetry is redolent of the Odisha scene and the Jagannatha temple at Puri figures quite often in it.

Arun Kolatkar (1932—) is that rare phenomenon among modern Indian English poets—a bilingual poet, writing both in English and in his mother tongue Marathi. His shorter poems in English are still uncollected, but his long poem, *Jejuri* appeared in 1976 and won the Commonwealth Poetry Prize.

Women poets form a sizable school in modern Indian English literature and the most outstanding work, expressive of what Mary Erulkar has trenchantly called 'the bitter service of womanhood,' is by Kamala Das (1934—), a bilingual writer. A distinguished author in her mother tongue, Malayalam, Kamala Das has published three books of verse in English: *Summer in Calcutta* (1965), *The Descendants* (1967) and *The Old Playhouse and Other Poems* (1973). The most obvious (and to the casual reader colourful) feature of Kamala Das's poetry is the uninhibited frankness with which she talks about sex.

Now Indian English poetry has come of age. Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu, Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, the so called new poets, and Kamala Das are equally read abroad as that of Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh and other novelists. ■

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The Evolution of Short Stories: A Study of Indian English Writing

Soumya S.

The Indian English short story is a strange phenomenon. It began its innings after the British rule started. Some of the pre-independence Indian English short story writers are Rabindranath Tagore and Manjeri Iswaran. Such eminent writers like Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan, and Raja Rao wrote the finest short stories. The post-independence Indian English short story is, as usual, a by-product of the novel. Of the novelists, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Khushwant Singh, Manohar Malgonkar, Chaman Nahal and Arun Joshi have produced short story collections, while among the women writers, apart from Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Anita Desai, Nergis Dalai and Attiah Hosain, the number of the practitioners of this form is not very large.

Key words: *short story, novel, anecdote, post-independence, women writers*

M.H. Abrams writes “Short Stories is a short work of prose fiction.” (P-364) Whatever is applicable to the novel (except size) is applicable to the short story. It is different from anecdote (the unelaborated narration of a single incident). The plot and characterization is directed towards a particular effect on the readers. This plot may be comic, tragic, romantic or otherwise.

The works may be classified as tales, short story, short short story, novelette / or novella and frame story. In the tale (in fact, the old folkloric work for story) the focus of interest is on the course and outcome of the events as in Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Gold Bag”. The modern ‘short’ short story looks like an anecdote. Small novels like Herman Melville’s *Billy Budd* are novellas/novelettes. Geoffrey Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* is a frame story. Sean O’ Falolain’s *The Short Story* (1948), Ian Reid’s *The Short Story* (1971) and R.L. Pattee’s *The Development of the American Short Story* (1966) may be read fruitfully in this regard. Prof. C. V. Venugopal’s book *The Indian Short Story* may be referred to for an understanding of Indian short story.

Indian English short story is dubbed with Indian English fiction. It is too natural. Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya wrote the first Indian English novel called *Rajmohun’s Wife* in 1864. Then there appeared a steady flow of novels, as many as a dozen, up to 1900.

Two observations are to be made. One, the so called Indian English story was not much valued and it is much a 20th century phenomenon. Two: Most of the novelists have written the English short stories.

At the beginning of the 20th century we have the first Indian English short story writer with a considerable literary output. Cornelia Sorabji, a Parsi lady educated in Britain, became the first woman advocate in Calcutta in 1924. All her four collections were published in London: *Love and Life Behind the Purdah* (1901); *Sunbabies: Studies in the Child Life of India* (1904); *Between the Twilights: Being Studies of Indian Women by One of Themselves* (1908); and *Indian Tales of the Great Ones among Men, Women and Bird-People* (1916). The titles are strange too. Cornelia Sorabji's short stories are partly anecdotes and character-sketches. M.K. Naik asserts, "They are generally sympathetic in tone, with an undercurrent of social reform and are narrated in a leisurely, Victorian manner." (Naik 115) Sorabji's reminiscences of her life appear in *India Calling* (1934) and *India Recalled* (1936).

Among other short story collections of the period are S.S. Bose's *Humorous Sketches* (Allahabad, 1903); S.M. Natesa Sastri's *Indian Folk Tales* (Madras, 1908), S.B. Banerjea's *Tales of Bengal* (London, 1910) and *Indian Detective Stories* (London, 1911); Prabhat Chandra Mukherji's *Stories of Bengali Life* (translated by the author and Miriam S. Knight, 1912); Shovona Devi's *The Oriental Pearls: Indian Folk-lore* (London, 1915); Dwijendra Nath Neogi's *Sacred Tales of India* (London, 1916); A. Madhaviah's *Short Stories by 'Kusika'* (1916); and Sunity Devee's *Bengal Dacoits and Tigers* (1916), *The Beautiful Moghul Princesses* (London, 1918), and *The Rajput Princesses* (London, n.d.). Many of these books were published abroad.

None of the novels of Rabindranath Tagore was translated by the author himself into English, and of his short stories only 'The Victory', 'Giribala' and 'The Patriot' were done into English by Tagore, who also helped in the translation of about half a dozen other stories. Sri Aurobindo did not write short stories, nor did other prominent Bengali writers.

The genre of short story continued in the Gandhian Whirlwind: 1920-1947. The old short story writers like T.L. Natesan continued to write. Most of the short stories (with the exception of Mulk Raj Anand) appeared from the south, because the South used English: more than the north. A.S. P. Ayyar published three collections, *Indian After-Dinner* (1927), *Sense in Sex* (1929) and *The Finger of Destiny* (1932). Ayyar lays stress on social reform (and the plight of women).

Many of S.K. Chettur's stories in *Muffled Drums* (1917), *The Cobras of Dhermashevi* (1937), *The Spell of Aphrodite* (1957) and *Mango Seed* (1974) seem to be based on material collected during his official tours as a member of the Indian Civil Service. Village feuds, murders and local legends about serpents, ghosts and omens are his staple themes, and he seems to have a special fascination for fantasy and the supernatural as in 'The Spell of Aphrodite.' Two other writers who have a single collection each to their credit are the novelists K.S. Venkataramani and K. Nagarajan. In his preface to *Jatadharan*

(1937), Venkataramani characterises his work as sketches rather than short stories. Of the dozen tales in Nagarajan's *Cold Rice* (1945), some obviously draw upon the author's experiences as a Government pleader and read like court cases dressed up for narration.

The most productive of Indian English short story writers, Manjeri Isvaran, the poet, has not yet received the recognition due to him, since most of his books are now out of print. He is the author of *The Naked Shingles* (1941), *Siva Ratri* (1943), *Angry Dust* (1944), *Rickshawallah* (1946), *Fancy Tales* (1947), *No Anklet bells for her* (1949), *Immersion* (1951), *Painted Tigers* (1956) and *A Madras Admiral* (1959). Isvaran's keen interest in the form is revealed in his attempt to discuss the theory of short story in some of his prefaces. In the preface to *A Madras Admiral*, he says, 'A short story can be a fable or a parable, real or fantasy, a true presentation or a parody, sentimental or satirical; serious in intent or a light-hearted diversion; it can be any of these, but to be memorable it must catch the eternal in the casual, invest a moment with the immensity of time.' (Isvarana 110) Isvaran, like S.K. Chettur, employs a variety of narrative strategies, including the observer's point of view and the use of journals and letters. Apart from Isvaran, the most signal contribution to the short story of this period came from the three major novelists—Anand, Narayan and Raja Rao. Copious in output like Isvaran, Mulk Raj Anand has brought out seven collections of short stories so far. *The Lost Child* (1934); *The Barber's Trade Union* (1944); *The Tractor and the Corn Goddess* (1947); *Reflections on the Golden Bed* (1953); *The Power of Darkness* (1959); *Lajwanti* (1966); and *Between Tears and Laughter* (1973). Anand has also retold traditional Indian tales in his *Indian Fairy Tales* (1946) and *More Indian Fairy Tales* (1961). A representative selection is *Selected Short Stories of Mulk Raj Anand* edited by M.K. Naik (1977). *The Selected Stories* (Moscow, 1955) is now out of print. Anand's aims and methods are explained at length in his prefaces. In the preface to *Indian Fairy Tales*, he observes: 'Although I have taken in much new psychology into my writing of the short story, I have always tried to approximate to the technique of the folk tale and the influence of these fairy stories has always been very deep on my short fiction.' In his preface to *Selected Stories*, he adds, 'While accepting the form of the folk tale, specially in its fabulous character, I took in the individual and group psychology of the European *conte* and tried to synthesize the two styles.' (Anand Qt Naik, 189)

R.K. Narayan's career as a short story writer began almost a decade after Anand's, with *Cyclone and Other Stories* (1943), *Dodu and Other Stories* (1943) and *Malgudi Days* (1943). His subsequent collections are *An Astrologer's Day and Other Stories* (1947), *Lawley Road and Other Stories* (1956), and *A Horse and Two Goats* (1970). *Gods, Demons and Others* (1964) is a retelling of well-known ancient Hindu legends. Narayan's stories are uniformly compact and are told in his usual seemingly artless style. True to his characteristic lack of fecundity, Raja Rao has published only a dozen stories which are collected in *The Cow of the Barricades and Other Stories* (1947) and *The Policeman and the Rose* (1978), which is actually only a revised version of the earlier collection, containing all but two of its stories and adding three more. Nevertheless, these dozen stories exhibit

considerable thematic and formal variety.

Of K.A. Abbas's four short story collections, the first appeared in the year of Indian Independence: *Rice and Other Stories* (1947), the others being *Cages of Freedom and Other Stories* (1952), *One Thousand Nights on a Bed of Stones and Other Stories* (1957) and *The Black Sun and Other Stories* (1963). Most of these stories are strongly coloured by Abbas's militant Leftism.

Some of the other story collections of the period are: Santa and Sita Chatterjee's *Tales of Bengal* (1922), M.V. Venkataswami's *Heeramma and Venkataswami* (1923); Shyam Shanker's *Wit and Wisdom of India* (1924); P. Padmanabha Iyer's *Indian Tales* (1924); Muhammad Habib's *The Desecrated Bones* (1925); G. Shiva Rao's (pseud. S. V. Gulwadi) *The Optimist* (1925); M.P. Sharma's *Awakening* (1932); N. Ramabhadran's *Kettle Drums* (1933); Ramabai Trikanad's *Victory of Faith* (1935); Dewan Sharar's *Hindu Fairy Tales* (1936) and *Eastern Tales* (1944); A.V. Rao's *The Man in the Red Tie* (1942); T.K. Venugopal's *Tales of Kerala* (1943); Ela Sen's *Darkening Days: Being Narratives of Famine-Stricken Bengal* (1944), and Humayun Kabir's *Three Stories* (1947).

The post-independence Indian English short story is, as usual, a by-product of the novel. Of the novelists, Bhattacharya, Khushwant Singh, Malgonkar, Nahal and Joshi have produced short story collections, while among the women writers, apart from Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Anita Desai, Nergis Dalai and Attiah Hosain, the number of the practitioners of this form is not very large.

Of Bhattacharya's two collections of short stories, *Indian Cavalcade* (1948), an early work, is a re-telling of striking incidents from Indian history. *Steel Hawk* (1968) contains very few stories with psychological interest, the rest being either anecdotes or static character-sketches, while there is a strong whiff of sentimentality around many of them.

Khushwant Singh is the author of four volumes of short stories—*The Mark of Vishnu* (1950); *The Voice of God* (1957); *A Bride For the Sahib* (1967) and *Black Jasmine* (1971). Manohar Malgonkar's stories have been collected in *A Toast in Warm Wine* (1974), *Bombay Beware* (1975) and *Rumble Tumble* (1977). They provide diverting glimpses of the world of activism including several areas such as army life, espionage, hunting, mining, smuggling, treasure-seeking and film making.

Chaman Nahal and Arun Joshi have so far produced a solitary short story collection each, neither of which is a major work. In Nahal's *The Weird Dance* (1965) middle-class match-making in North-Indian families and all its ironies is a recurrent theme, and the Partition and its aftermath are a strong presence. Ruskin Bond has published a number of collections: *Neighbour's Wife* (1966); *My First Love* (1968); *The Man-eater of Manjari* (1972) and *The Girl From Copenhagen* (1977). His favourite subjects are pets, animals and a variety of have-nots, including waifs, orphans, abnormal children, restless adolescents and frustrated old men, whom he portrays with genuine compassion. Manoj Das, winner of

the Sahitya Akademi award for his Odia writings, has published many collections of short stories: *Song for Sunday* (1967), *Short Stories* (1969), *The Crocodile's Lady* (1975), *Fables and Fantasies For Adults* (1977), *The Submerged Valley and Other Stories* (1986), *Farewell to a Ghost: Short Stories and a Novelette* (1994), *Legend of the Golden Valley* (1996), and *Chasing the Rainbow: growing up in an Indian village* (2004).

The short stories of Ruth Prawer Jhabvala show substantially the same attitude and response that characterize her novels. Her four short story collections are: *Like Birds, Like Fishes* (1963), *An Experience of India* (1966), *A Stronger Climate* (1968) and *How I Became a Holy Mother* (1976). In the stories dealing with life in Indian joint families, Jhabvala once again shows her understanding of complex personal relationships. Anita Desai's solitary collection, *Games at Twilight and Other Stories* (1978) again underscores her fascination for the country of the mind in preference to what happens in the world of men and matters.

The other short story writers, both men and women, are Susthi Brata, Krishna Hutheesing, Attiah Hosain, Jai Nimbkar, Sujatha Balasubramanian, Peru Mehta, Rajkumari Singh, Usha John, Padma Hejmadi, Margaret Chatterji, Raji Narasimhan and Shashi Deshpande. Mention may also be made of such writers as K.N. Daruwalla, Shiv K. Kumar, Basavaraj Naikar and Mallikarjun Patil. ■

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Other Histories: Mapping Indian-Nepali Feminist Epistemology

Rosy Chamling

The paper is an attempt to analyse Indian-Nepali Feminist discourse by rethinking boundaries, to see the nature of historical representation and to find out the influence of western epistemological framework upon Indian-Nepali women's writing. It aims to find out the 'difference' that are implicit in Indian-Nepali feminist writing and criticism since feminist epistemology is concerned not only with what constitutes knowledge and how we consciously and unconsciously understand, construct, apply, critique, and justify this knowledge. However, the homogeneity and universality of Western feminist theorizations give little space to alternative epistemologies which are different by virtue of racial, ethnic, religious, cultural and historical traditions; and more in case of Indian-Nepali feminist criticism because there can be tendencies to further not recognize the difference between writings from India and those coming from its closest neighbour country Nepal, which is culturally and linguistically similar.

Key words: *Indian-Nepali Feminist Epistemology, Third World, race, gender.*

Nepali, being seeped in the Hindu tradition, the earliest writings on women by women can be traced to the ancient tradition of women as co-writers of the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads*. The actual start of feminine writing in Nepali literature can be located in 1882 with Lalit Tripur Sundari's prose composition on statecraft *Rajdharm*. The early writings by Nepali women had religious motifs and devotional themes as their subjects. Although there is a dearth of Nepali women's literary historiography, it was after the publication of Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949) that the influence of western feminism can be felt in modern Indian-Nepali feminist literature. Reasons like socio-cultural changes, political changes, women's education, legal awareness, led to the emancipation of these women. Modern women writers like Parijaat, Prema Shah, Maya Thakuri, Benju Sharma, Banira Giri, led to the burgeoning of Nepali modernist feminist movement. The Indian-Nepali feminist writings were strongly influenced by the other side of the border country, Nepal. Many Indian-Nepali women writers like Parijat, Banira Giri, Maya Thakuri, Indira Prasai had migrated to Nepal to pursue their writing career as the writers from both countries today share certain common traits. This could be due to the use of a common linguistic script, similar cultural, religious and traditional ties. Many prominent Nepali writers writing

out of the repression of the Rana Regime like Laxmi Prasad Devkota and Bisweshwar Prasad Koirala made Benares in India as the centre point of their writing. In 1886, *Gorkha Bharat Jeevan*, a literary magazine, was published from Benares which was edited by Motiram Bhatt. The place also produced other such literary magazines like *Sundari* (1906), *Madhavi* (1908), *Gorkhali* (1947) which gave space to the voices of Nepali women writers. In the Darjeeling Hills, Sikkim and North East India much poetic works were produced by women during 1883-1934. It is generally agreed that the edited work of Krishna Singh Pradhan called *Sajha Samalochana* (1968) marks the beginning of Nepali Literary Criticism. The major critics working during this period were all men like Dayram Shreshtha, Mohan Raj Sharma, Bhanu Bhakt Pokhrel, Rajendra Subedi, Rabi Lal Adhikari, Kumar Bhahdur Joshi, Thakur Prasad Parajuli, Ghanashyam Kadel and others. It was from 1999 that the Modernist wave in the history of Nepali criticism can be felt under the influence of West. The Nepali critic Sudha Tripathi traces the trajectory of Indian-Nepali Feminist Literary Criticism in her edited work called *Mahila Samlochak ra Nepali Samlochana* (1996) where she has analysed fifty five feminist critics. It is perhaps the first organized effort to trace Nepali feminist historiography. It is also generally agreed that Nepali feminist literary criticism started with the publication of the magazine called *Sharda* which was being edited by Devi Sharma from 1996 onwards. It was in this path-breaking journal that gave a platform to the literary effort of Prabha Devi Upadhaya. The publication of Prabha Devi's *Pida Ko Sadhna* (1943) in the journal *Sharda* can be taken as one of the first work where feminist concerns are strongly marked. The modern day Indian-Nepali feminist movement saw new beginnings not only in terms of subject matter and also in their treatment post 1994. Most of the writings that were produced during this period focused on the identity of women and their personal narratives. They no longer required to be inspired by men literary critics and theorists; and by now they seemed to have formed their own literary tradition. One of the primary engagements of modern Nepali feminist literature is also to explore how women have been portrayed by men in their writings. It has been generally agreed that compared to western feminist discourse, Nepali feminist discourse is still a poor sister. There is still an immense dearth of qualitative and quantitative feminist literary production and criticism.

One cannot be sure as to exactly how and when did the Indian-Nepali feminist literary begin but it is generally agreed that Indian-Nepali feminist literary criticism is said to have begun with Kamala Sankritayan from Darjeeling, who in the journal *Diyalo* wrote *Kala ra Jeevan* in 1959. Writing throughout the 1960s, she has also contributed to translation by translating *Rajasthani Sahitya ko Itihas*; *Boudhdarshan*; and *Mahapandit Rahul Sankritayan* into the Nepali language. Recognizing her contribution to literary studies, Kamala Sankratayan has won numerous awards not only from the Government of India but from Nepal too. Similarly Lakhi Devi Sundas is another powerful Indian-Nepali feminist critic from Darjeeling. She marks her foray into literary criticism by writing *Thulo Manche* in the journal *Gorkha* in 1947. If Modern Nepali literature is said to have begun in 1973; Nepali women writing is said to have begun from 1983. Much was being written by many women writers but it did not have the literariness to challenge the normative male standards

of writing. Sudha Tripathi considers the writings before 1933 by Nepali women writers as only in a very formative stage. A modern Nepali woman writing is supposed to have rapidly developed only from the 1960s. But if the Nepali woman poet Pran Manjari is taken as the first woman writer with works *Sudarshan Tika* and *Tripur Sundari Padatti* written in around approximately 1813, it would imply, as Sudha Tripathi observes, that women started to write around 200 years ago. In the year 1831 Lalit Tripur Sundari wrote a part translation of Mahabharata as *Rajdharm* and *Rani Vachan* which can be considered as important works dealing with politico-religious and ethical issues. The major landmark work was *Rajput Ramani* by Ambalika Devi in 1932 which brought a new distinct tradition of Nepali women writing. A women writing on statecraft and politics as opposed to religious and traditional theme was ground breaking.

The start of the journal *Sharada* in the year 1934 felicitated in the flowering of several women writers, particularly through the medium of poetry. Radical new feminist poets like Banira Giri were known popularly on both sides of the border. Feminist poetry did bring about a cultural transformation in the Nepali speaking society. They were able to expose the constraints of a male dominated society and helped them understand the various ways in which marginalizing and exclusionary politics were built in a society. These poems no doubt performed its function of consciousness-raising, but Nepali women poets also used poetry as a means to express their private selves. Women poets preferred writing poems as it exacted less time in writing and getting published; it was an art that could be performed among the multi-tasking lives of women writers. Poetry as a feminist practice also flourished because of its mass circulation and easy popularity. Analyzing the poems of Indian Nepali poet Sudha Rai, one can see a strength very rarely found in woman's poetry. Indian-Nepali critic Kavita Lama elaborates in *Nari Vimarsh Bhitra Sudha M. Rai Krit Bhumigeet*: "the anthology has been rightly named *Bhumigeet* as it is possible for us to find an analogy between the earth and the lives of women. Like the Earth as a giver, a woman is forever expected to be giving, soft, tender, patient and silent." (p. 299). Following the French feminists, Kavita Lama also writes of the need to have a distinct language of women writers. Sudha Rai's second poetic collection *Bhumigeet* (2013), meaning "Song of the Earth" makes use of the Hindu mythology Ramayana by revealing the plight of Sita, who having suffered disgrace after abduction by Ravana, wishes to go back to the womb of the earth:

O Mother earth!
like you endure
everyday I endure too
immense agony.
In your infinite love
raised was I as a woman
proven though myself
through the ordeals of fire

but this last ordeal
proved to be the greatest.
Immensely am I
tired and tossed
for which I wish to return
back to your womb

this is the only shelter
this the only solve. (Trans. Rosy Chamling)

Similar strain can be found in one of the most formidable Indian-Nepali poet Parijat.

Manushi (Wife)

What you can do
So can I do
So can I toil
So can I sweat
Your aspirations
Are my aspirations too
But history today
Has brought me to a stage
Which has left me far far behind you. (Trans. Rosy Chamling)

The very title of this poem “Manushi” (1997) is chosen with great care by Parijat to suggest a woman, in the sense of an antonym to the Nepali word ‘Manush’ and its synonym ‘manche’ meaning ‘man’. There is no feminine equivalence word for ‘manche’ in the Nepali parlance and the word ‘swasnee manche’ is used as a feminine term for a wife. Being hugely critical of this play of words, Parijat attacks the patriarchal Nepali society by creating a word ‘manushi’ for women, with no additional qualifying ‘male’ word needed to support a woman’s identity. Directing this poem towards a man, Parijat seeks out reasons which have caused women to lag behind men. Born in Darjeeling, Parijat is the pen name of Bishnu Kumari Waiba. She is one of the most prolific and formidable feminist Nepali woman writers. Her literary works are known for their psychoanalytic and Marxist tenor. She has written four novels *Sangarsh*, *Manav Antaryami*, *Sharda* and *Birpipal* all of which she destroyed herself. *Shirish ko Phul* (The Blue Mimosa) is a landmark Nepali novel revealing her brilliant mind. In the year 1958, her family moved to Kathmandu from Darjeeling and despite suffering from depression, her literary acumen remains formidable. Partially paralyzed since her youth, unmarried and childless, Parijat is a writer who seldom ventured out. Her writings convey a gloomy outlook, bordering on neurosis, atheism and existentialism. Her cynicism is brought in lines like “love does not die, you have to kill it,” from her famous poem *Lahurelai Ek Rogi Premikako Patra* (A Sick Lover’s Letter to her Soldier). Bordering on cynicism and morbidity, Parijat sees Death as a final release:

Mrityuka Angalama (In the Arms of Death)

How eager this flower is to fall,
How it longs to cut short the winter day,
To pass in a half-conscious night;
Death returns, defeated,
From the hands of Life-
Alas, man does not die.”

(Trans. Michael James Hutt)

Following Parijat, Banira Giri’s feisty poem on womanhood is voiced in her controversial poem *Aimai* (Woman) which was published to mark the International Women’s Day in 1986:

Aimai (Woman)

Unclothed, unrestricted,
Undoubting, unhesitant,
a woman stands at the crossroad
in her pure primordial form.

A crowd of blind men are eager
to discover the nature of woman;
the first strokes her smooth, flowing hair
and mutters, “Woman is a waterfall. She is the Ganga,
flowing down from Shiva’s head.”

A second feels her arm, her fingers,
And happily declares,
“Woman is the lotus of Saraswati’s hand.”
A third grasps her shapely thigh and jabbars,
“Woman is the soft bamboo of the marriage pavilion.”
A fourth feels her lips,
Which hum the sweet song of Creation;
“Woman is a ripened raspberry.”
A fifth strokes her breasts,
Motherhood’s undying boon:
“Woman is a pot filled with Lakshmi’s gifts.”
The sixth discovers the half-secret
Of the inaccessible place of Creation:
He leaps up and cries out,
“Woman is just a contemptible hole!”
Her eyes grow wet
At the blind men’s revelation;

A seventh feels her tear-filled eyes:
“You evil fools! Woman is not just a hole!
She is also Gosainkunda
She is also Mansarovar!”

(Trans. Michael James Hutt)

Banira Giri has published three volumes of poems and two novels *Karagar* (1985) and *Nirbandh* (1986). Banira Giri was born in Kurseong, near Darjeeling but moved to Nepal at a young age. Although she owes much to Nepal, she expresses a sense of nostalgic displacement in one of her poems “Kathmandu”:

I have come to live in Kathmandu,
But Kathmandu does not live in me.”

Similarly when a patriarchal structure had repressed the voice of women for long, the novel became a “voice” and “agency” of the middle-class women. Novel-writing became a form of cultural power, the power to control one’s body and sexuality. Yadu Nath Khanal has rightly described it as “a product of an unwritten, silent compromise, allowed and accepted as an experiment, between the authorities and the rising impatient intellectuals” (1977, 236). If the first Nepali novel by a woman was Ambalika Devi’s *Rajput Ramani* (1932), the next novel by a Nepali woman is Pawan Kumari Devi’s *Pratigya* (1959). After around three decades, the publication of *Pratigya* as a love story, interspersed with Hindi and Sanskrit. The 1960s saw a rapid growth of novel as a popular genre among Nepali women writers. In 1963 Maya Devi Subba’s *Pashchatap* is set against the Darjeeling and Nepal background. Shanti Pradhan’s *Karuna* (1965) was one of the earliest novels from an Indian-Nepali woman writer. This novel was strongly Christian in tenor with a didactic theme of forgiveness and love for God. But with Indian-Nepali women novelists like Bindiya Subba and Pushpa Rai, feminist writings became a formidable force in Nepali literary landscape. Bindiya Subba’s four novels *Phoolharu*, *Pahadharu*, *Dharsaharu* (1986); *Ataha* (1998); *Nirgaman* (2006) and *Simanta* (2016) are all intensely psychoanalytical in nature. Similarly it is Pushpa Rai who again makes a mark with two great novels *Bholi ko Pratiksha* (1990) and *Madhyantar* (2007). *Bholi ko Pratiksha* is absurdist in nature, questioning the true identity of a woman and *Madhyantar* is about breaking the shackles of a patriarchal society. Although female sexuality and female paranoia has been favourite subjects of Pushpa Rai and Bindiya Subba, what prevails is only a constructionist heteronormative view of sexuality. The Nepali society is a closed society with no acceptance of the LGBT community. As opposed to the west where queer is no longer a nomenclature of sexual deviancy, the Nepali woman novelists have seldom displayed the courage to deal with this issue. Just two writings by Nepali women writers on same sex sexuality are Anamika’s poetic collection *Antardwandh* (2000) and *Nilkantha* (2001) and Usha Sherchan’s *Tesro Rang* (2016) Mohan Raj Sharma’s novel *Salijo*, Sharda Sharma *Taap* (2012) reflect a closeted Nepali society. From Darjeeling it was Norjen Syangden’s poetic collection *Kavita Jastai Kavita* (1989), Manoj Bogati *Life, a Butterfly* (2018) and Mahesh Dahal have spoken on this sensitive issue through his

poems. If the West has seen a rich literature of the queer, the strength of accepting the virtues of non-conformity, the courage of defiance and recalcitrance, there is very little treatment of subject of this nature in Nepali feminist writings. There is also very little subversive or resilient reading of existing literature.

Thus, we can see that feminist movement in Nepali literary criticism was an offshoot of various political and women's emancipation movements. A new desire to write for themselves as opposed to being written by male writers; their subject being extremely personal female experiences and re-writing their histories have made Indian-Nepali women writers more visible.

Conclusion

Feminist epistemology stems from the belief that a woman's location in this world leads us to perceive and comprehend the world in a way that is distinctly different from a male perspective. Uma Narayan problematizes the non-western feminist perspective (Indian context) by showing how the non-western feminist discourses are bound up within the "double struggle" of traditional discourse and mainstream western feminist discourse. She explores the danger of feminism as a movement which can only primarily affect the upper-class white woman and neglect the 'other'. It is imperative to bring to fore the diversity of women from all classes, race, and ethnicity. Indian-Nepali feminist literary movement is still in the process of development, both in terms of theory and practice. They have been able to represent the realities of their day to day lives playing the role of a mother, wife, sister, homemaker, caretaker, and a professional too. The institution as a family as a source of oppression is seldom brought to the fore as a Nepali family is primarily steeped with a traditional Hindu regime which considers family and serving the family as a primary duty of women. This kind of traditional discourse leads to the naturalization of gender roles, dependence upon men, with limited right to self determination. However, there is a need to expand the boundaries of their sisterhood by being more inclusive of class, gender and sexuality. It is time to reconstruct their own history through mobilization of women from all classes and seek their public participation. India and Nepal with their interconnected histories do share a common terrain. Nepali women writers from India and Nepal primarily belong to the educated middle class and as such their writings follow the methodological, conceptual and theoretical models of the west. We have seen how most of these feminist writers used the biographical approach or did biographical studies of feminist women. In spite of the tremendous growth of feminist writings from the post-1980s, there is still more serious engagement to come with reference to the major literary practices. The West is in a post-feminist moment where it has realized that one interpretative paradigm for all cannot work. Under such a historical positioning, it is time Nepali women wrote their own histories by breaking the shackles of patriarchy. The Nepali patriarchal set-up naturalizes the subordination of women within the family through myths of feminine passivity and normative heterosexuality. Women are seldom regarded a sites of/for interrogation which can challenge the masculinity ideologies. Much of the works produced by Nepali feminist writers have

been academic and research oriented, displaying a certain literary scholarship. Most women writers belong to the educated middle class and their writings are a reflection of an essentialist view of women belonging to the same class from the academia. Chandra Mohanty derides this kind of feminism breeding from within the University boundaries, “whereby the boundaries of the academy stand in for the entire world and feminism becomes a way to advance academic careers rather than a call for fundamental and collective social and economic transformations” (*Feminism Without Borders*, p. 6). She reads this retreat to the boundaries of the university as a symptom of a “predominantly class-based gap between a vital women’s movement and feminist theorizing in the U.S. academy” (p.6). There is a need to understand that there is a need to accept the “intersectional” quality of every woman’s location. As in the West, the origin of the novel in Nepali literature too was masculine. The rise of women novelists can be linked to women’s lack of economic and political control over their lives. The Nepali modernist phase gave women the access to higher education, jobs, political voice, and public participation. In her essay “Under western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses”, Chandra Mohanty deconstructs the Western feminist discourse by producing a singular, homogenized “third world woman”, and in the process constructing an image that subsumes “the material and historical heterogeneities of the lives of women in the third world” (53). But in the process of trying to include this third world “difference” within one political framework, it has the effect of replicating the imperial history whereby this third world “otherness” sustains the first world as the norm: “Without the overdetermined discourse that creates the third world, there would be no (singular and privileged) first world”(74). Indian-Nepali women writers are slowing transgressing genres and in the process garnering both visibility and audibility. There is an increasing self-consciousness among women as Indian-Nepali women writers are attempting growth both in terms of literary quantity and quality. ■

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Contribution of R.N. Tagore to Indian English Literature: An Analytical Study

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Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) is a great Indian and the Nobel Prize awardee. He served the country in several capacities, as a poet, playwright, fiction-writer, painter, singer, thinker and also as a nationalist. As a poet he got the Nobel Prize for Literature for his book *Geetanjali* in 1913. Tagore's plays like *Sanyasi* and *The Cycle of Spring* embody the Indian heritage. Tagore, not anything less than V.S. Naipaul and Salman Rushdie, travelled all over the world. As an educationist, he established Viswabharati University. In fact, there are several universities in Bengal and Bangladesh in his name now. He wrote the state anthem of West Bengal and the national anthems of both India and Bangladesh. Indeed, he is our Gurudeva Tagore.

Key words: *Indian heritage, Gandhian Age, literary bilingualism. Poet, dramatist, novelist, short story writer*

Mahatma Gandhi called Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) as 'the Great Sentinel.' Tagore was the most versatile man of the Gandhian Age. He touched and enriched Indian life. Poet, dramatist, novelist, short story writer, composer, painter, thinker, educationist, nationalist and internationalist—such were the various roles that Tagore played with uniform distinction during his long and fruitful career. In his poetry, as in his work in the forms of drama and the short story, Tagore presents a case of literary bilingualism which is perhaps without a parallel in literary history. He wrote most of his poetry in Bengali and translated them into English either himself or with others, and he won the Nobel Prize for Literature for his *Geetanjali* in 1913.

Grandson of Prince Dwarkanath Tagore, who was an associate of Raja Rammohun Roy, and son of Maharshi Debendranath, a saintly Brahmo Samaj leader, Rabindranath, born in a rich and cultured family, had little formal schooling, but his sharp poetic sensibility manifested itself very early. Tagore's poetry hinges upon man's relationship with God. As a young man, Tagore looked upon the family estates at Shildah (now in Bangladesh). This brought him in close relation with nature and countryside, and his entire works, mainly poetry, fiction and drama, embody that heritage.

Tagore's career as an Indian English poet began by sheer accident. In 1912, on the eve of his departure to England for medical treatment, he tried his hand at translating some of his Bengali poems into English. The manuscript, taken to England, was lost in the Tube Railway, retrieved by Tagore's son Rathindranath, and came later to be rapturously hailed by William Rothenstein and W.B. Yeats. The rest is history. *Gitanjali* (1912) took the literary world of London by storm and was followed in quick succession by *The Gardener* (1913) and *The Crescent Moon* (1913). The award of the Nobel Prize came in the same year. More collections followed *Fruit-Gathering* (1916), *Stray Birds* (1916), *Lover's Gift and Crossing* (1918) and *The Fugitive* (1921). By this time Tagore's reputation in the English-speaking world had already suffered a disastrous decline. Only two more volumes in English appeared: *Fireflies* (1928) and the posthumously published *Poems* (1942) of which all but the last nine were translated by Tagore himself.

Tagore's poetry saw both admiration and condemnation, even by W.B. Yeats and Ezra Pound, his great admirers. Tagore once wrote to his niece that he translated his poetry into English just for pleasure. Tagore's own critics declare his English poetry inferior to his Bengali poetry. So now we need to understand and judge Tagore's English poetry both in terms of content and form, solely on the strength of the English texts. M.K. Naik thinks,

“The central theme of *Gitanjali*, Tagore's finest achievement in English verse, is devotion and its motto is, ‘I am here to sing thee songs.’ (Poem No. XV). These songs, firmly rooted in the ancient tradition of Indian saint poetry, yet reveal a highly personal quest for the Divine, characterized by a great variety of moods and approaches.” (Naik 63)

The hundred and odd pieces in *Gitanjali*, bound by the central thread of the devotional quest, exhibit a great variety of form also—a feature surprisingly ignored by those who have hastened to accuse Tagore of monotony. Apart from the fact that they vary substantially in length, according to idea and mood, they also range from a brief lyric cry (No. XLV) to dramatic episode (No. L); and from allegory (No. LXIV) to rhetorical flourish (No. XXXV). The style too shows a corresponding variety of expression. In moments of lyrical intensity it takes wing, propelled by rhythmical repetition, alliteration and assonance, as in ‘Have you not heard his silent steps? He comes, comes, ever comes’; and ‘Light, my light, the world-filling light, the eye-kissing light, heart-sweetening light.’ It, however, can also move appropriately nearer to the no man's land of poetic prose, when a strong narrative element demands it, as in: I had gone a-begging from door to door in the village path, when thy golden chariot appeared in the distance like a gorgeous dream and I wondered who was this King of all kings.’

M. K. Bhatnagar asserts, “Tagore's *Geetanjali* lets us compare it to Finnish's epic *Kalevala* where the protagonist sings on flute about his devotion to God.” (Bhatnagar 231) Walt Whitman's world spanning poems like “Passage to India” also bear a resemblance. It is really a great poetry.

As for Tagore's other collections, *Gardener* represents him most. This is his love poetry, most Browningsque in manner and complexity. The first poem, the dialogue between the Servant and the Queen is a fine example. Tagore presents both the male and female points of view in love. Here the lover has many facets. The experience is both debilitating and fulfilling one. Love has many moods and voices.

The Crescent Moon, the next best collection speaks of childhood. It is of two kinds – the outsider's view of childhood and child's own. Tagore's is a romantic view of the child. The poem 'On the Seashore' speaks of the cosmic view of the child as if Wordsworthian child as the father of man. In form the poems are more varied than in *The Gardener*.

The later collections—*Fruit-Gathering*, *Lover's Gift and Crossing* and *The Fugitive* show a distinct decline in quality. Each, with its mixed fare, lacks the unity of theme of the earlier works. It is also clear that Tagore has, by now, become not only repetitive but stale and has very little new to offer by way of thought, mood or technique.

Tagore's verse in English (as that in his mother tongue) is essentially lyrical in quality, though unlike in Bengali, it is not the song-lyric that he attempts here. (But at least one of the *Gitanjali* pieces has successfully been set to music—No. LXV was once sung by Dame Isabella Thorndike. (Gupta 47) His subjects are the elemental subjects of all lyrical poetry—God, Nature, Love, the Child, Life and Death, and he brings to his treatment of them the born lyric poet's simplicity, sensuousness and passion. Harald Hjarne observes,

Tagore's style, at its very best, skilfully controls the pliant rhythms of free verse combining 'the feminine grace of poetry with the virile power of prose.'
(Hjarne 102)

Tagore, Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo, the trio from Bengal, created the best kind of Indian English prose for fifty years up to the 1950s.

Rabindranath Tagore's career as a writer of English prose began years after he had already established a name in his mother tongue. The earliest was *Sadhana* (1913). In these lectures delivered at Harvard University in the year in which he was to win the Nobel Prize for literature, we have a clear formulation of Tagore's philosophical position. Tagore begins with a consideration of the relation of the individual to the universe; discusses the age-old problem of evil, and indicates the way to the realization of the Infinite, through intermediate stages such as realization in love, in action and realization of beauty.

A conducted lecture-tour in the U.S.A. in 1916 yielded two more collections of speeches: *Personality* (1917) and *Nationalism* (1917). *Personality* touches on various subjects including the relationship between Man and Art, Man and Woman, Man and Nature and Man and God; and Tagore's educational ideas are expressed in the lecture, 'My School'.

The ten lectures collected in *Creative Unity* (1922) do not add much by way of subject-matter or ideas, with the exception of a perceptive analysis of the East-West

relationship in the essay, 'East and West'. Tagore argues that the real reason why 'the twain' do not meet is because the West 'has not sent out its humanity to meet the man in the East, but only its machine.'

The Religion of Man (1930) comprises the Hibbert lectures delivered in Oxford at Manchester College in May 1930. The chief theme here is 'the idea of the humanity of our God or the divinity of Man, the Eternal'.

The Religion of Man comprises two lectures delivered at the Andhra University, Waltair in 1937. These somewhat loosely argued discourses by the ageing writer touch upon various issues including the basic duality of man's nature, the essential unity of all religions, the *advaita* doctrine and the distinct hope of the arrival of the Supreme Man.

Tagore's prose in English reveals him as an internationalist and a humanist preaching the gospel of universal harmony between Man and Man, Man and Nature, and Man and the Divine.

In examining the plays of Rabindranath Tagore, a distinction has once again to be made, as in the case of his verse, between translations done by the author himself and those produced by others. This unfortunately excludes the better-known plays such as *The Post Office* (translated by Devabrata Mukherjee) and *The King of the Dark Chamber* (translated by K.C. Sen). Nevertheless, there remain almost a dozen plays done into English by Tagore himself. These include *Chitra* (1913), *The Cycle of Spring* (1917: translated with assistance from C.F. Andrews and Nishikanta Sen), and *Sacrifice and Other Plays* (1917). All these appear in the *Collected Poems and Plays* (1936). *Red Oleanders*, translated by Tagore himself from his *Raktakarabi* in Bengali was first published in the *Visva-Bharati Quarterly* in 1924. Tagore's own translation of his *Natir Puja* appeared in the same journal in 1927. Marjorie Sykes also translated it into English in 1950.

Thematically, Tagore's plays fall into two broad groups: thesis plays and psychological dramas. In the first group may be included *Sanyasi*, *The Cycle of Spring*, *Chitra*, *Malini*. *Sacrifice*, *Natir Puja* and *Red Oleanders*. To the second belong *The King and the Queen*, *Kacha and Devayani*, *Kama and Kunti* and *The Mother's Prayer*.

In *Sanyasi* and *The Cycle of Spring*, the central thesis is the celebration of life. The ascetic in *Sanyasi* runs away from the orphaned girl who clings to him, in the fear that she will ensnare him into attachment to this world. At the end, he realizes when it is too late, that his affection for her cannot be footed out; when he returns, she is dead. In *The Cycle of Spring*, the middle-aged king, afraid of the approach of old age, is convinced by the poet, who stages a symbolic play before him, that change being the law of life, the secret of happiness is joyous acceptance. *Chitra* is a dramatic sermon on the theme of true love. Arjuna, the Pandava prince, spurns the homely Chitra, daughter of the king of Manipur. Two contrasted manifestations of maternal love are presented in *Kama and Kunti* and *The Mother's Prayer*.

Tagore's English plays have a compact and neat structure, though their originals in Bengali often followed the loose Elizabethan model. This is so, because in his translations, Tagore subjected his texts to rigorous condensation, as a result of which the English versions possess an economy which the originals mostly lack, though experts have noted that much complexity and richness have been lost in the process.

The list of Tagore's novels (which is not chronologically found) is quite big and interesting: nine of Tagore's thirteen novels translated into English are *Binodini*, *The Wreck*, *Gora*, *The Home and the World*, *Chaturanga*, *Farewell My Friend*, *Two Sisters*, *The Garden* and *Four Chapters*. His four other novels still not available in English, are *Bau-Thakuranir Hat*, *Rajarshi*, *Prajapatir Nirbandha* and *Yogayoga*.

Some of Tagore's novels deal with the modern problems of our society and the interest in them centres round the psychological development of characters under the compelling stress of circumstances. Tagore does not adhere to the conventional narrative method, nor does he use the principles of an organic, consequential plot-structure. He tries, through his novels, to focus the attention on some of the bitter truths and cruel customs of the lives and society. ■

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Processes in the Classroom of Kids: An Experiential Analysis of Stories in ICSE Course Book-II

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Since a literary text is mediated through language and language is a carrier of a value system, point of view, ideology, the ways of thinking, looking, processing and interpreting, the present paper is in its endeavour to discover the worldview which the young learners are introduced with analyses the processes in the stories in ICSE English Course Book 2 through their experiential analysis as discussed by M.A.K. Halliday in his Systemic Functional theory of language.

Introduction

There has been a good deal of debate on the relevance of literature in language teaching programmes. Some consider literature quite valuable and indispensable in building up and enhancing the learner's competence in comprehension and communication skills. For example, Tomlinson (1985:9) suggests, "Poems, stories and extracts from plays, novels and autobiographies can involve students as individual human beings who can gain rich exposure to authentic English as well as opportunities to develop communication skills as a result of motivated interaction with texts and with their fellow students." Similarly, Carter (1982:12) states, "Literature is an example of language in use, and is a context for language use. Studying the language of literary text as language can, therefore, enhance our appreciation of aspects of the different language systems of language organisation." However, there is another view that stands in complete contradiction. According to this view, the teaching of literary texts to the second language learners amounts to a gap between demand and supply as the demand of the learners is to acquire proficiency in the listening, speaking, reading and writing of the target language, whereas they are burdened with stories, poems, novels and essays. Bassnett and Grundy (1993:1) state, "We have encountered language teachers who think literature is irrelevant, who argue that what students need are texts that are 'practical' and 'rooted in everyday experience', not works of art. And we have encountered literature teachers who look down on 'merelanguage' work, as though literary texts were made from some ethereal matter and not constructed out of language at all." But despite this contradiction and confusion, the scales in the language teaching programmes have more or less remained tilted in favour of the inclusion of literature. Gurupadesh (1994: 45) observes, "Literature teaching is an obsession with Indian teachers of English. No matter at what level they teach, school, college, or university; for what purpose they teach,

English for general use, professional use, or creative use: a proportion of literary material must be included in the syllabi". It is because of this obsession that Children in India are exposed to literature at the very early stages of their schooling. It is a well-established fact that literature brings with it not only the language, but also a value system, point of view, ideology, the ways of thinking, looking, processing and interpreting. Because of this reason, it becomes quite significant to find out what is being served to the learners through literature. The present paper is a very preliminary and minor attempt in this regard. It makes an experiential analysis of the stories in ICSE English Course Book 2 in order to locate the processes which are introduced into the world of children through literature.

Data and Research Methodology

The data for the present research comes from the English Course Book 2 prescribed for the students of 2nd class of ICSE. The five stories have been selected out of this book for the purpose of analysis. These stories are titled as "The Pine Tree's Wish", "The Story of Tom Thumb", "A Puppet's Tale", "The Greedy Lord" and "The Little Steam Engine". Each of these stories is divided into clauses and in each clause the process is noted down and is shown in a table in the column designated to the category it belongs to. On the basis of this analysis and its representation, conclusions are drawn in the last section of this paper.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for the study is Systemic Functional linguistics as developed by M.A.K. Halliday (Halliday and Matthieson 2004). Being a social and functional theory of language, SFL takes into account the context in which language is used and also how it functions and what it means. Broadly speaking, it recognizes three metafunctions of language viz. the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual. "The three metafunctional lines are unified within the structure of the clause; textual, interpersonal and experiential functions are conflated with one another" (Halliday 2014: 211). The ideational function is the 'content function of language' (Halliday 2007: 183). It deals with the representation of what is happening. The interpersonal refers to the 'participatory function of language' (Halliday 2007: 184). It deals with the exchange of attitudes, value judgements, feelings, power-relations and positions in the course of interaction. The textual metafunction deals with the construction of coherent and meaningful texts. So far as the ideational metafunction is concerned, it is subdivided into the experiential and the logical. The experiential function is realized by the transitivity system. The transitivity system is the configuration of participants, processes and circumstances. There are six types of processes recognized in SFL viz. material, mental, behavioural, verbal, relational and existential. The following table adapted from Halliday (1985: 131) illustrates the idea in a graphic way:

Process type	Category Meaning	Participants
material:	'doing'	Actor, Goal
action	'doing'	
event	'happening'	

behavioral	‘behaving’	Behaver
mental:	‘sensing’	Senser, Phenomenon
perception	‘seeing’	
affection	‘feeling’	
cognition	‘thinking’	
Verbal	‘saying’	Sayer, Target
relational	‘being’	Token, Value
attributio	‘attributing’	Carrier, Attribute
nidentification	‘identifying’	Identified, Identifier
Existential	‘existing’	Existent

To begin with, material processes encode the experiences of the external world. More specifically, they are processes of doing or happening and answer the questions ‘What did he/she do?’ or ‘What happened?’ (Butt et al 2000). The italic words in the following texts from the data exemplify material processes:

*A fairy **came** by and **gave** it gold leaves.*

(From “The Pine Tree’s Wish”, p. 17)

*At last, she **left** the train behind and **chugged up** the track to look for help.*

(From “The Little Steam Engine”, p. 35)

Besides living a life in the external world, human beings live a life in their inner worlds too. Mental processes signify all that happens within human consciousness. Specifically speaking, they are the processes of cognition, of thinking and feeling. They are answer to the question, *what do you think/know/feel about x?* They involve two participants:

1. Sensor – The sensor is a conscious being who feels, thinks and perceives.
2. Phenomenon – It is that emotion, thought or idea which is felt, thought about, or perceived by a conscious being.

Basically, the mental processes are concerned with affection, cognition, perception, or desideration, and that is why, they are subdivided into processes of emotion, cognition, perception, and desideration. The italic words in the following texts from the data exemplify mental processes:

*The cooks were **surprised** to see the tiny boy.*

(From “The Story of Tom Thumb”, p. 72)

*So one day, he **decided** to play a trick on Nasruddin.*

(From “The Greedy Lord”, p. 80)

Next, behavioral processes realize meanings that are “mid-way between the materials on the one hand and mentals on the other. They are in part about action, but it is action that has to be experienced by a conscious being. Behaviorals are typical processes of physiological and psychological behavior” (Egins 2004: 233). They are mainly physical behaviour like yawning,

coughing and dreaming which betray an inner state such as tiredness, boredom and sickness (Melrose, 1995). Thus, a behavioural process is a hybrid process, a material-mental process, to a large extent physical and yet at the same time psychological. The italic words in the following texts from the data exemplify behavioural processes:

*The little tree **woke up** in the morning....*

(From “The Pine Tree’s Wish”, p. 18)

*Barkatullah looked around the table and **smiled**.*

(From “The Greedy Lord”, p. 81)

Further, verbal processes signify verbal actions. More precisely, these are processes of saying which relate “any kind of symbolic exchange of meaning” (Halliday 1985:129). The typical participants in verbal processes are sayer and verbiage. Sayer is the participant who speaks and verbiage is the content or what is being said by the sayer. Here it is to be taken into consideration that often verbal processes project direct or indirect speech and use a whole separate clause as verbiage. The italic words in the following texts from the data exemplify verbal processes:

*This steam engine **replied** even more angrily.*

(From “The Little Steam Engine”, p. 36)

*He **told** them about his magical powers and all the places he had gone.*

(From “The Story of Tom Thumb”, p. 73)

Furthermore, existential processes signify that something exists. They can easily be identified as the structure involves the use of the dummy or empty subject *there*. The most typical verb that accompanies the existential process is the “be” verb or any other verb that expresses *existence* such as *exist*, *arise*, *stand*, etc. Here is an example from the data:

*Very soon, they **were** over the hill and then down the other side.*

(From “The Little Steam Engine”, p. 37)

And at last in the SFL list of processes is the relational process. It establishes a relationship between two terms. This relationship can be of two types:

1. *Attributive*
2. *Identifying*

In the *attributive* relational process, a *carrier* is assigned an *attribute* which specifies its quality, classification, or description. The italic words in the following texts from the data exemplify *attributive* relational process:

*And it **was** the happiest little tree in the forest!*

(From “The Pine Tree’s Wish”, p. 18)

*The king **was** very happy to receive the tiny gift.*

(From “The Story of Tom Thumb”, p. 73)

In the *identifying* relational process, one participant termed as token serves to define the identity

of the other participant called value. Here is an example from the data:

Geppetto was a carpenter.

(From “A Puppet’s Tale”, p. 90)

Analysis

The processes in the story “The Pine Tree’s Wish” have been listed below:

Material Processes		
Lived	Put	Broke
Came	Came	Came
Came	Gave	Reach
Gave	Came	Ate
Came	Blew and blew	Gave
Took	Fell	

Mental Processes		
Like (Affection)	Want (Affection)	Want (Affection)
Want (Affection)	Saw (Perception)	Want (Affection)
Want (Affection)Want	(Affection)	Like (Affection)
Surprised (Affection)	Want (Affection)	Wanted (Affection)
Saw (Perception)		

Behavioural Processes		
Went to Sleep	Wake up	Wake up
Wake up	Went to Sleep	Went to sleep
Went to Sleep		

Relational Processes

Had (Attributive)	Will Have (Attributive)	Had (Attributive)
Have (Attributive)	(How pretty they) Look (Attr.)	Was (Attributive)
Havs (Attributive)	Is (Attributive)	Were (Attributive)
Will have (Attributive)	Had (Attributive)	Will not have (Attributive)
I am (Identifying)	Was (Attributive)	Had (Attributive)
Has (Attributive)	Was (Attributive)	Was (Attributive)

Verbal Processes		
Said	Cried	Cried
Said	Said	

There is no existential process in the story.

Next, here is the list of the processes in “The Story of Tom Thumb”:

Material Processes		
Came	Dropped	Came
Mixing	Swallowed	Come
Running	Were fishing	Flew out
Fell	Caught	Going
Kicked	Swallowed	Lived
Gave	Gave	Gave
Sent	Cut	Returned
Picked	Managed	Gone
Playing	Given	Helped
Carried	Made	Made

Mental Processes		
Saw (Perception)	Found (Perception)	Thought (Cognition)
Got (Scared) (Affection)	Surprised(Affection)	Knew (Cognition)
Found (Perception)		

Behavioural Processes	
Hear	Loved

Relational Processes		
Had	Was	Had
Was	Was	Was

Verbal Processes		
Named	Said	Said
Shouted	Asked	Told

There is no existential process in the story.

Further, the processes in the story “A Puppet’s Tale” are given in the following tables:

Material Processes			
Lived	Give	Happened	Jumped
Made	Met	Began	Swallowed
Made	Buried	Grew	Met
Came	Get	Stop	Began (to tickle)
Started	Put	Grow	Opened
Go	Went off	Make	Slipped out
Sent	Tied	Vanished	Reached
Stopped	Took	Stuck	Gave
Began	Ran away	Went	Lived
Gave	Set	Swallowed	

Mental Processes		
Want (Affection)	Felt(Affection)	Saw (Perception)
Planned (Cognition)	Knew (Cognition)	Made a plan (Cognition)
Saw (Perception)		

Relational Processes		
Was (identifying)	Will be (Attributive)	Was (Attributive)
Was (Attributive)	Was (Attributive)	Were (Attributive)
Are (Attributive)	Was (Attributive)	Was (Attributive)

Verbal Processes		
Cried out	Scolded	Said
Call	Told	Lie
Said	Told	Said
Said	Lied	Promise

There are no behavioural and existential processes in the story.

Furthermore, the story “The Greedy Lord” contains the following processes:

Material Processes		
Lived	Eat	Began
Wore	Started	Stopped
Tried	Kept	Eaten

Lived	Piled up	Left
Sent out	Eaten	Eaten
Seated	Slipped	Hung
Brought	Goes	Stopped

Mental Processes		
Was Thinking (Cognition)	Decided (Cognition)	Looked (Perception)
Like (Affection)	Look (Perception)	Look (Perception)
Wanted (Affection)	Planning (Cognition)	

Behavioural Processes
Smiled

Relational Processes		
Was (Identifying)	Was (Attributive)	Am (Attributive)
Had (Attributive)	Were (Attributive)	Had (Attributive)
Was (Attributive)	Looked (Attributive)	
Was (Attributive)	Is (Attributive)	

Verbal Processes		
Invited	Said	Teaches
Invited	Invited	Said
Requested	Cried	

There is no existential process in the story.

And finally, the processes in the story “The Little Steam Engine” are as follows:

Material Processes			
Chugged along	Chugging up	Done	Stood
Came	Standing	Help	Pulled
Pulled	Help	Moved	Climbed
Puffed	Pull	Came	Reached
Couldn't pull	Passed	Moved	Helped

Left Chugged up Find Went	Went on Came Ran Help	Help Started back Standing Went to	Pulled
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Mental Processes		
Thought (Cognition)	Saw (Perception)	Looked (Perception)

Relational Processes		
Had (Attributive) Is (Identifying)	Was (Attributive) Am (Attributive)	`Had (Attributive)

Existential Processes
Were

Verbal Processes		
Said Said Said	Replied Said Said	Sang Thanked Singing

There is no behavioural process in the story.

Findings

The analysis of the data reveals that the material processes are the most dominant processes in the stories prescribed to the children of the ICSE 2nd standard. Out of the total processes analysed in the data, 50.54 % are the material processes. The second highest are the relational processes which stand at 17.33 % of the total processes. Verbal processes stand at third position in terms of usage (14.44%) and mental processes are at the fourth position (13.72%). With merely 3.61percentage of the total processes, behavioural processes are at the second last position in terms of usage and existential processes are the least used. Obviously, the world constructed in the ICSE English textbook for 2nd standard has its focus on the outer action rather than on the inner action as the material processes in the selected data occupy the first position in terms of usage and the mental processes are relegated to the fourth position. However, this statement should not be considered as a generalisation in this regard and need to be tested by analysing more such data. Further, it may be analysed whether there is more focus on the outer action in comparison to the inner action in the world constructed in the English textbooks of other school boards as well. In addition, it

may also be analysed whether this focus continues or shifts in the world constructed in the English textbooks for higher academic standards. ■

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Relevance of Morrison to the Struggle of Dalit Women in Indian Sub-continent

Kavita Arya

The Indian society is known for its patriarchal patterns. In this society, being a woman is itself a handicapped situation. It is worse if a woman is poor, and worst, if she is also a Dalit or a Tribal. Dalits and Tribal people belong to the most marginalized sections of the society and face many types of exploitation simultaneously. Their situation is comparable with those of the African-American women described in the novels of Toni Morrison. Of course there are differences as they belong to different geographical and social settings. But these differences are superficial. There are many similarities in the respective realities. A cursory glance at some features of Dalits and Tribals brings out the stark similarities with African-American story told by Morrison. Both, the Dalits and the African-Americans have been forced out of the mainstream of the society. Both live away from the main settlements in cities and villages as exiles or pariahs and are ghettoized. The proposed paper would present glimpses of the Dalit Tribal saga which makes Toni Morrison relevant to the Indian situation.

Key words : Toni Morrison, African American, Dalit, Tribal,

Introduction

I have dedicated my life to women's rights. Wherever a woman is oppressed, I will go there and fight for her rights. - Toni Morrison.

Morrison's novels provide a comprehensive view of African American women's struggles to prepare themselves against the denigrated images of their womanhood. She portrays internal and external oppression, 'the pain, violence and death form the essential content' of these writings. Toni Morrison very touchingly describes the distorted self-image of the African American women and their self-hatred.

Why is Morrison relevant?

Why is an African American author, Morrison, necessary for the Indian Sub-Continent? - Because hers is the strongest voice in the world for women's emancipation. In 1979 she declared – "The function of freedom is to free someone else." That is why she is not only relevant but also necessary. Her bold stand makes her the strongest voice for

women's emancipation in the whole world. And she remained so throughout her life. Her literature though focused upon the struggle and exploitation of the African American women, is relevant to the realities and revolts of the Dalit women in the Indian sub-continent as well.

Race/Caste, Culture, and Gender

Morrison's novels are studied at three levels – Race, Culture and Gender. The Indian scenario is the same. All one needs is replacing the word Race by Caste. These three levels are applicable to the Dalit and Tribal situation as well. Even when a Dalit converts to Christianity, Islam or any other religion, just like a converted African American who remains an African, the Dalit too remains a Dalit, whatever be his Religion. Wherever he goes in the South Asia, he is treated as an 'untouchable'.

The Dalit/Tribal situation

The culture of the subaltern communities is looked down upon and is intentionally obliterated from the memory of not only the mainstream, but also of their own. The story of the Dalits/Tribals/African-Americans is no different. They don't know much about their own history. In the ancient classification of Hindu society, Dalits are described as *Shudras*. Generally uneducated, they are unable to keep written records of their history or culture. According to JS Rajput, "Although varying degrees of literacy were present among the first three castes, there was absolute illiteracy among *Shudras*." Dr BR Ambedkar, the greatest Dalit leader repeatedly underlined lack of education as the main cause of Dalit backwardness.

"His emphasis on the education of the Shudras is well explained in his own words: For want of education intellect deteriorated, For want of intellect morality decayed, For want of morality progress stopped, For want of progress wealth vanished, For want of wealth Shudra perished and all these sorrows sprang from illiteracy."
(Michael D. Palmer; Stanley M. Burgess, p. 210)

Same as an African-American, a Dalit or a Tribal is unable to tell the saga of his/her clan or caste. And no one goes to ask them about their history. The situation of a Tribal is more pathetic as most of them are unable to communicate in the mainstream languages. Owing to very limited exposure, they could not develop communicative skills. In these skills they are weaker than even the Dalits and ignorant about their cultural traditions. Their History has been eclipsed. It is superimposed by an inferiority complex, injected by the mainstream classes. Various complexes have destroyed their self respect and have created a feeling of incorrigible inferiority into them.

Color and Beauty parameters

The races in India are not easily identifiable but generally dark skin diminishes the self respect everywhere. The standards of beauty are set by white parameters. Western and European are considered to be the ideals of beauty. The communities with dark or color skin feel like Pecola of the Bluest Eye. A dark skinned fellow in India is obsessed with the

dream to look like a white-skinned person. The same obsession governs the psyche of the majority Indian people, especially girls who wish to look 'fair and lovely'. A feeling about their own dark skin, is akin to the inferiority complex portrayed by Morrison in many of her novels. A study into her characters and their struggle to be emancipated from the color obsession, may serve as a panacea, a psychological treatment, for the sickness of Indian society as well, where most of the dark skinned girls suffer with what we may call, the Pecola syndrome. The dominance and the continuous cultural bombarding by the mainstream from all the possible sources, has created in Dalits and Tribals a tendency to imitate, and to believe in the Indian mainstream parameters of lifestyle, ideals and self perception as their very own. Interestingly it is the same process and pattern that one can see in the common Indian milieu which attempts to imitate the American culture. Delhi dreams of becoming New York, Jabalpur dreams of becoming Delhi, Jagadapur dreams of becoming Jabalpur, and so on. It percolates layer by layer down to an individual. This collective psyche turns Indian Pecolas into a multitude; they live life as a tragedy and show undistinguishable symptoms of insanity.

Complex and Dilemma

The Dalit and Tribals in the modern times face a dilemma, similar to the one faced by the African-Americans. On one hand, they are anxiously searching to rediscover their roots, the space where they belonged, and to find out their own History. There is an urgency to redefine their respective political stance. On the other hand, an impatient section from among them, imitates the mainstream lifestyle. Quite a number of youth from Dalit and Tribal communities dislike not only their culture but also the color of their own skin. Till a generation or two ago, tattoos on their bodies used to be proud marks commemorating some ancient war fought by forefathers of a particular tribe. But now the younger generations dislike those tattoos. Girls with tattoos are not liked in the marriage market. In search of relief and respectability, many of them convert to other religions. But the stigma of being a Dalit or Tribal travels with them; they are unable to find respect or a sense of equality even after conversion.

Dehumanization

Both Dalit/Tribals and African Americans were dehumanized through a long process spread over centuries. The process combined Religion, business and political conspiracies. According to Joel Kovel:

“(Slavers) first reduced the human self of his black slave to a body and then reduced the body to a thing, he dehumanized his slave, made him quantifiable, and there by absorbed him into a rising world market or productive exchange.....Thus in the new culture of the West, the black human was reduced to a black thing” (Kovel 1984).

This process of reducing a community into a thing continues further within the families belonging to downtrodden communities and women become the ultimate target of

this dehumanizing process. Domestic violence is a deep rooted manifestation of this dehumanization. According to Nadeau, Kathleen, and Sangita Rayamajhi, Women are also subjected to a variety of violence in the home, primarily as daughters, sisters, and wives. Some of these violent acts include exchange marriages... marriage to temples, honor killings, bride-price, dowry, female circumcision, child marriage, sex selective abortion, and denial of widow marriages. (95)

Tradition of exploitation :

The story of Dalit/tribal segregation and atrocities on them is hundreds of years old. Dalits have been facing the Brahminic atrocities in the name of Religion since pre-historic era as is evinced by mythological references like that of Shambuk, Eklavya or Karna. The very genesis, the story of creation, by Brahma puts Dalits (Shudra) in the lowest rung. Manusmriti codified and stratified this ranking, sealing the Dalit fate for centuries to come. So the Dalit story is older and murkier than that of the African Americans. Interestingly Tribals find no mention in Brahma's scheme of things.

Voices of Dalit Revolt : It is strange but true that Dalit women in Travancore kingdom were not allowed to cover their breasts. According to Wikipedia :

The **Channar Lahala** or **Channar revolt** refers to the fight from 1813 to 1859 of Nadar women in Travancore kingdom for the right to cover their breasts! Baring of chest to upper caste/class persons was considered a sign of respect. Uneasy with their social status, a large number of Nadars embraced Christianity which offered equal rights. This led to violence against Nadar women, and also to the burning of schools and churches. In 1829, the Travancore queen, though herself a woman, issued a proclamation, which denied the right of Nadar women to cover their breasts. Is the story any different from the tales of torture over Black slaves? Strangely enough, despite its rich intellectual and literary traditions, there was no audible voice against exploitation and torture of Dalits and women in India. So strong was the clutch of Religion that burning a widow was considered a religious duty till the arrival of Raja Ram Mohan Roy.

Jyotiba Phule : The first important voice against atrocities on Dalits was that of Jyotiba Phule. Jyotiba started a strong movement for the emancipation of Dalits in general and Dalit women in particular. Much before Ambedkar or Toni Morrison, he tried to forge a unity with oppressed people throughout the world; he dedicated his landmark book *Gulaamgiri* to the movement for abolition of slavery in the United States. In 1973 he compared Dalits with Black Americans and wrote

- “. . . to the good people of the United States as a token of admiration for their sublime disinterested and self-sacrificing devotion in the cause of Negro Slavery... and with an earnest desire that their *Shudra* brethren may be inspired to free themselves ‘from the trammels of Brahmin thralldom.’ (xxiv)

The example of Jyotiba shows how the desire of Indian Dalits for emancipation, aspires to

forge an alliance with the African Americans more than a hundred and fifty years ago. This aspiration is universal and makes Toni Morrison all the more relevant to the struggle of Dalit women in the Indian Sub-Continent. Despite several laws enacted by the parliament, the exploitation and torture of Dalit and Tribal people continues even today. The recent reports about Soni Sori, a tribal woman from Chhattisgarh, is a case in point. Soni Sori is a well known victim of police atrocities, rape and torture. Now she is an icon of tribal resistance. According to Divya Trivedi, there is such a nexus between the rapists, the bureaucracy, and the capitalist system that the Chhattisgarh government tried to declare Soni Sori, as mentally unsound. Divya Trivedi reports:

- *“The Chhattisgarh government has initiated an enquiry into the mental health of Adivasi teacher Soni Sori lodged in the Jagdalpur jail to ascertain whether she should be sent to the mental asylum in Agra, according to women’s rights groups. Strongly condemning this act of the government, which comes on the back of a stray comment....”* (New Delhi: April 13, 2013)

In her handwritten letter to the National Commission for Women, Ms. Soni made seven demands. Excerpts:

- “We should be taken to the court whenever we are summoned. We should be provided food when we go to court. Because of Naxal cases, we are not given timely medical treatment.... I need help for my children. In the fight between the Naxals and the government I have lost everything. While the Naxals were harassing my father, I have been branded a Naxal sympathizer even though I am innocent. I have a lot to say but my fight is going on in the court and hence I cannot speak any more. Only I should not be tortured as now I do not have the strength to bear torture. Whenever I have written or spoken the truth I have been punished. This should not happen in the future.”

Soni Sori’s is a new voice in the darkness surrounding the tribal world. These women are not ready to accept the situation as it has been in the past. They do not subscribe to the level of self degradation as seen in Morrison’s first novel *The Bluest Eyes*. She announces her revolt against the traditional predicament. The self-degradation of the African American soul by the long centuries of slavery and dehumanization, is brought out sensitively when in the ‘Bluest Eye’ Pecola, an eleven year old girl is raped by her father. Silenced by all, she believes “The master had said “you are ugly people”. And that is all. “They had looked about themselves and saw nothing to contradict the statement, saw, in fact, support for it leaning at them from every bill board, every movie, every glance” (Morrison 1970: 27).

In that aspect, there is a clear difference between the Dalits and the Tribal people. The Tribal people do not feel themselves as degraded and dehumanized as their Dalit compatriots. But the principles and structures of their inferior status is nevertheless the same as described through imagery of circles by Gloria Wade-Gayles with reference to the African American women in American society. :

- *“There are three major circles of reality in American society, which reflects degrees of power and powerlessness. There is a large circle in which people, most of them men, experience influence and power. Far away from it there is a smaller circle, a narrow spare, in which black people, regardless of sex, experience uncertainty, exploitation and powerlessness. Hidden in this second circle is a third, a small, dark enclosure in which black women experience pain, isolation and vulnerability. There are the distinguishing marks of black womanhood in white America”* (Wade-Gayles 1984:3-4).

The design of circles within circles within a society is applicable to the Indian subcontinent as well. The Dalit/Tribal woman in India is in the most exploited circle that way.

Morrison’s *Beloved* (1987) tells the story of an enslaved African American woman who kills her beloved daughter to save her from slavers. The dead baby haunts her family. We read numerous such news stories where mothers kill their daughters to save them from ignominy awaiting them. Female feticide/infanticide is practiced on a huge scale in India and the country could have provided Morrison with an endless stock of such stories.

According to G Godson Bedeiah,

- “Morrison’s extensive fiction covers themes which include universal human predicaments, set in the context of the lives of African Americans, the systemic oppressions they face resulting in both personal and social dystopias.” ((Thesis)

The situation in American society is described by Paula Giddings in the following words:

- “...the experience of Black Women, is the relationship between sexism and racism because both are motivated by similar, economic, social, and psychological forces, it is only logical that those who sought to undermine Blacks were also the most virulent anti feminists. The means of oppression differed across race and sex lines, but the well spring of that oppression was the same”(Giddings 1984: 6).

Dalits in the Indian Sub-Continent

The pain of African American women reverberates in all the countries of the Indian Sub-Continent. We find the same same trauma and the same experiences that have been portrayed by Morrison in a completely different setting. Stories that fight for emancipation of Dalit women by narrating their tale and their autobiographies, can be grouped together with Toni Morrison as the literature of Resistance. The concerns raised by Morrison find impressive parallels and echoes among several women writers in India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The Dalit women in Bangladesh and Pakistan are mostly illiterate and uneducated. So they are unable to share their experiences in written words. Nevertheless, the silence itself is a mirror to the stark realities of their pathetic existence. Some of these writers belong to Dalit/Tribal communities and some are not from among them, but their5 writings are no less genuine.

India : Mahashweta Devi’s *‘Dopti’* is a brilliant example of treatment given to the suffering

and torture of Tribal women in Naxal areas. *Dopti* is the story of a Tribal woman. Her name is reminiscent of Draupadi, the famous character in the Mahabharata. The vivid description of her mass rape at a police camp, is not simply a fiction. It is a real tell often repeated in numerous police stations in various states of India, where Tribal and Dalit women, in the name of being Naxalites or their supporters, are tortured, raped and obliterated. A major Indian author of resistance that needs to be mentioned here is Bama. During her teaching experience, Bama found that the Catholic nuns oppressed the Dalit children and teachers. This was when she began writing. With the encouragement of a friend, she published her childhood experiences in her first novel, *Karukku*, in 1992. She exhibits patterns similar to Morrison's and presents an insider's view into the inner world of her tortured and alienated community.

- “ *One can find the differences and contrasts in the African American and Dalit Literature through the works of Toni Morrison and Bama. Toni Morrison (1931) and Bama also known as Bama Faustina Soosairaj (1958) excel in delineating political, psychological, and personal turmoil and study them with keen perception and deep insights.*”

Morrison an African American, and Bama an Indian Dalit, have similar experiences in their respective settings which are so far flung geographically and so different otherwise. But these different settings look similar in their attitude to weak and vulnerable women. The women writers share their pain in their writings, which, given the social realities, itself is a kind of revolt and needs tremendous courage. It is this pain - the pain shared by the entire women's world – that connects them to each other and makes them so relevant to each other.

Nepal : According to Anita Shreshtha, an established author in Nepal, the country “retains its centuries-old caste system. Dalits, the discriminated people under this system, suffer from restriction on the use public amenities, deprivation of economic opportunities, and general neglect by the state and society.” Just like India, Dalits in Nepal, are also discriminated in the religious and cultural spheres. As Anita Shreshtha puts it, the Dalits “...are not allowed to practice Hindu rituals, norms and values in the same manner as other castes. To escape from this discrimination, they converted into Christianity. And yet even within their Christian communities only those belonging to higher castes can become religious leaders or occupy key positions in the church. (Anita Shreshtha) Interestingly some castes, not considered as Dalits in India, are included in the Dalit category in Nepal. Several working castes like black/goldsmith, tailors, shoemakers and street cleaners, are considered low in Nepal. Poverty has strong marks over their existence and the condition of Dalit women is as worse as it is elsewhere in the continent. Dalit women and children have to work for very low wages. Those working in Haliya Pratha (bonded labor) or Khala Pratha (forced labor) do not earn from their work. They get only food grains.’

According to *The Kathmandu*, quoting National Human Rights Commission's report, a total of 1,313 rape cases were filed in the first seven months of fiscal 2018-19,

from July 17 to February 15 in Nepal. (*The Kathmandu*, September 23)

This prompted a prominent Nepali woman writer to say, “There is no country for women in the world.”

Pakistan : “*Hamey Bhi Jeeney Do : Pakistan Mai Acchoot Logon ki Suratehal*” is a book by Purbhu Lal Satyani. It describes the pathetic condition of Dalits in Pakistan. The book has been reviewed by Yoginder Sikand according to whom “Caste, the scourge of Hinduism, is so deeply entrenched in Indian society that it has not left the adherents of Islam, Sikhism, Christianity and Buddhism — theoretically egalitarian religions—unaffected.”

Purbhu Lal Satyani is a Pakistani Hindu working among Dalits. According to him, of Pakistan’s 3 million Hindus over 75% are Dalits. Being poorest, they could not shift to India at the time of partition. Minorities lead a bleak existence in Pakistan, the worst sufferers among them are Dalits. Massacre of Muslims in India by Hindutva extremists, leads to heightened repercussions in Pakistan and the brunt has to be borne by the Dalits. Satyani writes,

- *“For the poor Dalits, fighting for day to day survival, India Pakistan or Hindu Muslim fights are not as important. An added fact is that life for Dalits in India is hardly better than in Pakistan.”*

Dalit students are not allowed to use utensils that are used by other students. They are badly treated by Muslim teachers and students. Dalits do not send their girls to school fearing that they might be kidnapped, raped or forced to convert to Islam. From the details given by Satyani, one can assess the status of Dalit women in Pakistan. Some upper caste Muslim women have started writing their autobiographies and impressions of life of women in Pakistan, for example, *My Feudal Lord* or *Blasphemy* by Tahmeeda Durrani.

A reading of these books abundantly explains that expecting an autobiography from the illiterate and tortured Dalit women in Pakistan is expecting too much. Because of religious persecution and absence of a Dalit movement as has started in India, they are then condemned to continue living in precarious conditions. If they are forcibly kidnapped, raped or converted, the government authorities hardly come to help.

Bangladesh : In Bangladesh too the Dalits face horrible discrimination. This discrimination impacts the life of 6.5 million Dalits in Bangladesh. According to Khan Ferdousour Rahman, a Rights activist,

- *‘Dalits living in the municipal areas are employed in the public/private sectors as sweepers and cleaners with very low salary. Most of them are very poor. They are not allowed to rent or build houses outside their designated localities.’ (Your Rights to Know, Sep. 27, 2019.)*

It goes without saying that among the Bangladeshi Dalits, the worst affected are the women.



Just like in Pakistan, any voice of a Dalit author emerging from within the community, is not audible. The most important reason of this silence is complete lack of education for girls despite the fact that Bangladesh is doing quite well in the field of girls' education.

Sri Lanka : According to a report of International Dalit Solidarity Network, Sri Lanka, (Jan 21, 2015), "Bonded labor is widespread in tea plantations. Dalits constitute 83 percent of the total of 3.6 million plantation workers. Most of them are Tamils of Indian descent. The prevailing caste hierarchy of the Tamil plantation community is more or less a continuation of the South Indian caste system."

According to K. A. Geetha,

- "...the caste system in India has segregated thousands of Dalits from mainstream culture and condemned them to a subhuman and debased existence.Dr. Ambedkar shaped the tradition of revolutionary thinking for almost an entire generation of Dalits. The literary manifestation of this social awareness is Dalit literature which not only reveals the angst of being Dalit in a caste-driven society but also simultaneously records a revolutionary discourse which challenges the hegemonic caste. (An Analysis of Sri Lankan Tamil Dalit Literature)

Differences

There are also some major differences between the story of African Americans

and that of Dalits/Tribals in Indian subcontinent. Africans were brought to America as slaves just a few centuries ago but the Dalits/ tribal people have been living in India since time immemorial. Dalits were not legally enslaved like African Americans, but they faced no less torture and discrimination. They were not allowed in schools, temples, public places like village wells and ponds. The African Americans are a race, easily identifiable and distinct from the White Americans. Dalit women are comparatively less identifiable by the features but their poverty, illiteracy and tone betrays them to the attackers. Tribal women are at a more disadvantageous position as they can be easily identified by their racial features. In any case both Dalit and Tribal women are vulnerable targets, the same as African Americans. There is another great difference. The African American described in Morrison, knows that he has a homeland in Africa, and that he has a different culture. The African American of Morrison knows that his/her forefathers were forcibly brought from Africa to America. But the Dalit/Tribal in Indian subcontinent knows not where he belongs to. He knows not where to look for a home if he fails to find justice here. This much is certain, he remains homeless wherever he goes. It is this feeling of homelessness that made Dr Ambedkar tell Mahatma Gandhi – “Gandhiji, I have no homeland.” Ambedkar’s sad outburst reverberates even after so many decades in a number of incidents and expressions. The stories written by Dalit and Tribal women reflect the same pitiable predicament from which they find no escape.

Conclusion

Toni Morrison is relevant and shall always remain so, not only to the United States of America and to the struggle of women in the Indian Sub-continent but everywhere in the entire world. The ‘Washington Post’ writes of her:

- “she was relevant for a generation of black female writers in particular, she was crucial, the one without whom nothing would have been possible. Her work was also universal.”

Exploring the lives of the African American women, she discovered that the only crimes of these women were their color, gender and poverty. They had to suffer in a world ruled by the White, male and the rich. Same is the fate of the Dalit women in India and that is why Morrison shall remain relevant to their struggles. Such women throughout history and in contemporary society in life and in literature have traditionally been overlooked, undermined and stereotyped. They have existed only on the periphery of society, inhabiting marginal worlds, playing servile roles.

For Indian women enchained by patriarchy, religion and centuries of suppression ‘any voice which articulates experiences from the margins is a boon.’ Toni Morrison was a boon as she inspired a whole lot of women to write about their experiences and to revolt against their chains. ■

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Doris Lessing's Racial Politics in *The Grass is Singing*

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The novel *The Grass is Singing* is Doris Lessing's debut attempt, published in 1950. The novel represents the vivid account of racial politics prevailing in the life of the people living in South Africa. The paper is an attempt to understand conflicts between the white settlers and Africa native, explaining how they are prejudiced against each other. Also this study review how the novel is thematically connected with a failed marriage, gender bias among the laborers and black magic power that Lessing witnessed from the post colonial perspectives

KEY WORDS: Racial politics, Gender bias

The novel Doris Lessing is analyzed using white supremacy by Frederickson to reveal the behavior, ideology and policy which refers to the domination of the white people in the relationship between two races namely black people and the white people. Racism is also used to mention and unravel the racial acts which performed by the white masters toward the black natives as the outcome of white supremacy which is practiced in the story's setting. In Doris Lessing's *The Grass is Singing*, the story tells about the time when Rhodesia is still in the middle of oppression, moreover apartheid is also very dominant in the politic and regulation of the country. Hence, the racism is very apparent in the novel. Mary Turner is the main character in *The Grass is Singing*.

The novel talks about her overall behavior and relationship with the black servants around before her death. She is described as the one who has the most racial discrimination tendencies towards the natives aside from the other characters. The relationship between Mary and the natives is also portrayed clearly in the novel with various occasions and occurrences of racism which are worth to be studied. She is depicted to have the most intimate relationship with most of the servants, especially a black servant named Moses. The bond started when Mary meets him at the farm and from there onwards, Moses is always around her throughout the progress of the story. As a white woman, Mary holds a basic belief that the whites' society is the one who has every right to control the world.

Since Mary spends her time alone in the town, she is always known as a strong woman who leads her life freely. When she moves to the Turner's small house after her marriage with Dick Turner she becomes more and more addicted to control, especially over the servants. It is due to the fact that there is a limit in things to do while she lives there, hence she begins to feel controlled from the situation. The whites' belief in their superiority gets the best out of her and it drives her vaguely domineering towards the servants. The whites in Rhodesia assume that the natives have been planning on doing terrible things to them. When Mary is being laugh at by the natives, she is confused and even more scared because she thinks they do not regard her as the one with higher rank than most of them. The natives' act makes her feel like she is being put down and the situation is upside down where they would basically tear her apart the next time she gets on their nerves. As the results, Mary becomes more and more ruthless to the servants especially the ones who work as her maid at the house. This ruthless behavior is the form of white supremacy where she tries to control and dominate the black natives. For instance, when she thought that the maid is not good enough in cleaning her house she would yell at him and cut out their wage at least ten percent per mistake. The maids in return, ask for leave because they are not really fond of how Mary treats them. Another form of Mary's relationship with the black servants requires horrible working condition with how she always pays them less. Mary will order them to work overtime everyday with a little amount of recess and they will be paid under their expectation. With the wage that does not paid their hard work there are still the wage cuts over the small mistakes they do. Even if sometimes it is not their mistake. It is just that the masters have a bad day and decided to put their anger into cutting the servants' wages.

The natives are not able to protest at the unfair treatment that is given by Mary because after all she is the master. It is a basic courtesy to respect what the masters said and decided. In spite of the fact that usually even a slave may retorts back if they were being cornered and treated poorly, in this situation they are black people with no rights to reason. Black people do not have any privileges to express their disappointment towards the masters, they are even prohibited to talk back. They have to keep it to themselves for they have no rights to even feel oppressed. The bad working condition that the black servants receive and have to put up with from Mary does not only stop at the wage cuts. With the minimal amount of recess, from one up to three minutes per hour, is what something that can be said inhumane.

The natives, despite they have a black complexion, are also human beings that need a time to rest. Even animals take rest White Supremacy and Racism in Doris Lessing's *The Grass is Singing* when they feel like their feet are ready to give away. There are lots of times when Mary even forget that the slaves need time to catch their breath, recover from the weariness, and maybe eat something to bring their energy back. But apparently, Mary thinks that black people completely have different way of living from them. They assume that native people do not need any food to run in their system. For instance, when Mary is

busy ordering her former maid, Samson, around to clean the house and she does not even give him a second to breathe air into his old man lungs. She even goes as far as cutting his recess time when she happened to catch him slacking off. For the record, Samson's day goes on with him doing the chores while skipping meals. The illustration is described as follows: "She had forgotten completely about his need/to eat; in fact she had never thought of natives/ as needing to eat at all." (p.53)

The quotation above gives information that Mary does not give a proper working condition for the slaves. This is a form of white supremacy practice which exists in Mary's behavior towards the black natives. Mary tries to dominate the black servant and tries to prove that the control she has over the servant is still relevant. The little amount of recess and wage cut is enough to assume that she despises the slaves even though they work as hard as they could to meet Mary's expectation. According to John W. Cell (1982) Mary's act is considered as racism because she performs the re-imposition of slavery;

Yet racism would account for a wide range of conceivable alternatives – extermination, the re-imposition of slavery, deportation – that were not in fact undertaken. (p.4)

Although the fact that black people are unable to talk for themselves, they try several times to ask for permission but alas the masters always turn their requests down. The fear they have for their masters is always misinterpreted as a way to disrespect the whites. To stand up for themselves seems to be an act of rudeness that they have never been thinking of. When they are being treated badly, they do not do anything to defend themselves, let alone to fight back. It is like they gradually try to accept the messed up regulation and harsh treatment. To fight back only means they try to argue and confront the white society and it will only leave them the ruin for they do not have a decent amount of confidence in retorting the whites back. This case is the outcome of the behavior of white supremacy which leads to the absence of the black rights for it is already taken by the whites with the way they treat the black natives.

Dick Turner and the black natives Dick Turner is Mary's spouse and a white master who is dedicated to take care of his farm. Although they are married, their behavior towards the natives is in a complete opposite. While Mary tends to be harsh to the servants, Dick on the other hand is calmer when he is around his native slaves. He believes that treating the servants properly prevents them from leaving their job as his workers in the farm for it is hard to find the new one if he had a bad reputation. The Turner's servants also appears to be a very loyal ones from the fact that they have yet leave the Turner's farm even if they know that Dick is tight on money to pay their wage. It is perhaps because Dick is very considerate towards the slaves and it makes them feel secure when they are around him. The situation is illustrated in the quotation below;

Between Samson and Dick there was a perfect understanding: Dick locked everything, but always put out more food than was needed for any meal. This extra food was then used by Samson.(43)

The illustration shows that Dick tries to take care of his worker even if they are from a race which is loathed by his own. However, it is cannot be denied that Dick tries to keep his limit on their master and servant relationship by locking the cupboard for the sake of master pride. As a white, he fears what other people, especially fellow whites, think of him when they see that he does not put some efforts in controlling his servants when deep inside he is very much aware that what he does is rather unnecessary. The act is caused by the segregation and domination regulation of which exists in Southern Rhodesia as ideology where the black natives have to submit completely to the white people known as masters.

The land that supposed to be owned by the natives is secured by the masters. As the outcome, the black natives have to work minding the white's farms which allegedly on the black's property. When they speak, they also have to stare downwards and in a tone full of respects or else they will be accused as rude. In accordance, the white masters also have to speak to their servants or any black people with a harsh tone and with the least intimacy in order to avoid any speculation that leads to unwanted attention from the neighbors .

Charlie Slatter and the black natives Charlie Slatter in this story is depicted almost the same as Mary Turner. He is a white master whose obsession in authority consuming his well being as a human. Instead of being seen as a racist master, he is described as the one who constantly reminds the other fellow whites to show their capability of controlling the black natives. Charlie appears to be really strict on applying the apartheid as the ideology around the area. It can be seen that the way white masters, in this case Slatter, see and behave towards the black servants is also triggered by their sense of superiority. White people are known to be so full of themselves in light of the fact that they have clear white skin color. Charlie often make sure to remind the whites that they are the superior race which is above all the other races. This sense of superiority is a form of white supremacy where the white race often tends to look down at the other races that they consider as disgusting, especially those with black skin color. It is supported by John W. Cell (1982) in his book regarding white supremacy that;

The association of blackness with all things evil, ugly, and satanic and of whiteness with all things pure, beautiful, and godly was fundamental to their psychology, to the way medieval and early—modern Europeans (Especially northern Europeans) perceived and organized the world. In the conditions of

southern Africa and northern America this
color syndrome acquired immediacy and
relevance. (4)

From the narrative description quoted above, it shows that they do not want to be associated with the servants in any way. It is because the fact that white people always think high of themselves and they can only bear the idea of having a mere master and servant relationship with the black community, nothing more. The thought of addressing their servants with anything higher than slave is apparently cannot be accepted by the white people. They always try to remind themselves that the blacks are merely slaves and are not human just like the whites. White people construct a perspective where the black color on their skin is filth that dirties their status as a person and as human being. Being born with black skin apparently is a disgrace and catastrophe that put their lives in an unending hardship. Whereas being white gives them instant audacity to judge other races and dominate them if they are considered nauseating and any less human. It is in line with what Frederickson (1981) said about White Supremacy that;

White supremacy refers to the behaviors,
ideology, and policies which related to the
domination or power of European white people
ancestor that overpower the other race in term of
number. This White Supremacy leads to a
hatred and stereotype over physical
characteristics and ancestry.(3)

It is believed that little number of black people who live in Southern Rhodesia is also a factor why white supremacy is going strong there. It gives the whites an easy access of privileges to do domination over the natives because the minority is regarded as weakness and sign of surrender. It is why white community has a really high confidence in ruling the place and the natives. With the big majority of the people being white, they feel the need to put down the minority to make sure that the black natives are still around their hands. This ruthless way of thinking put them into an even severe behavior in treating black people, particularly the ones they call as servants. Even though it can be seen from the fact that the place and people are poorly treated, there is a regulation applied for the society the majority of the time, in order to make sure that everything will not cross the line.

Except, the regulation does not give any advantages towards the black society as it is made by the whites and solely for the whites' benefits, they only serve as a devastation for the blacks. Sure there are rules that are made to protect the blacks but it lacks of any thoughts on equality. The regulation, if anything, is biased to the whites. The commandments which exist in order to make sure if the black are well treated are basically long gone. This act is considered as racism is described by Frederickson (2002) where the inequality is also brought to several fractions of life;

But racism as I conceive it is not merely an attitude or set of beliefs, it also expresses itself in the practices, institution, and structures that a sense of differences justifies or validates.(6)

The conception of how racism is spread in every aspects of life is also supported by John W. Cell (1982) in his book *The highest stage of White supremacy* where he stated that;

Unconscious associations could be projected upon groups of people who were at the same time different, exploitable, and dangerously competitive. It was in the settler's interest to attack and dominate them. In these circumstances color prejudice was transformed into racism, which permeated thought, mores, institutions, and social relations. (4)

The case is completely poles apart when a native servant, Moses, appears to be the one who murder Mary Turner. The cops directly escort him to the jail without questioning what happened and if Mary is really killed by her servant. The black slave is deemed to not say anything even if the sin he has done is triggered by something committed by the master. Despite the fact that Moses is being shut out by the society and its parameter, Charlie Slatter have his life saved by having white skin color. Both are the same wrongdoing committed by two human beings and yet their fates are being based on something they have no power upon, which is born with certain skin colors. The white supremacy is apparent for the different of policy that Rhodesia's have. The policy is made to control and dominate the black natives by giving a different consequences for both races to the same crime. Tony and the black natives.

A young British man named Tony comes to Rhodesia to help the farmer there and make some money for himself. He lived in a small hut behind the Turners house so he will have an easy access in the Turner's farm. From the time he puts his feet on the Turner's property, he has noticed how the things were between the servants and the Turners, especially the relationship between a slave named Moses and the master, Mary. Subsequently he has some ideas on what probably is the main reason why Moses kills Mary. But Tony is frustrated with how the White Supremacy and Racism in Doris Lessing's *The Grass is Singing* cops investigated him. It is like the cops do not really want to know if Tony has any idea about the whole mishaps. They even appear to be avoiding in any way to ask Tony the real thing. Being the man of his act Tony tries to confront the cops about it and only gets retorted by Charlie Slatter. From the way he acts, Slatter believes that it is best for the young man to keep his mouth shut. He obviously does not want to reveal the real reason on why Mary is murdered but he is sure himself that it has something to do with how Mary behaves around the slave. But from the way he tries to hide it, Slatter simply wants the blame to be put onto the black slave, Moses. The author portrays Charlie Slatter's struggle in keeping his white

society name clean through this quotation;

But it was too hot, and those two men had warned him - not by words but by looks. What were they warning him about? He thought he understood now. The anger he had seen in Charlie Slatter's face was 'white society' fighting to defend itself. And that 'white society' could never, ever admit that a white person, and particularly a white woman, can have a human relationship, good or evil, with a black person. For as soon as it admits that, it falls. (20)

Doris Lessing's *The Grass is Singing* is a famous novel which is worth to be read and analyze. The novel is not only talk about racial discrimination but it is filled with other issue mentioned. Aside from racism, the major issue which can be studied is the feminism represented by the main character, Mary Turner. Psychological study also has a high possibility to be applied to analyze this novel for it is quite prominent in the story. ■

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The Voice of Vedanta in Ralph Waldo Emerson

Sabindra Raj Bhandari

This article relates the tenets of Vedanta that are exposed, enlarged, and expounded with a touch of novelty in the works of Emerson. Vedanta always proclaims that the ultimate reality is within us. The Absolute reality that the Vedanta projects as *Brahman* is essentially inward, and the entire phenomenal manifestations are just the reflection of that ultimate reality. The ultimate reality within is also the external reality that remains outside. So, Vedanta believes in unity between God, man and nature. These tenets of Vedanta have great impacts on Emerson. The essays and poems talk about this cosmic unity. His concepts of Over-Soul and the self-reliance remain as the metamorphosis of the voice of Vedanta. As such, Emerson seems to be an American *rishi* in Concord who is speaking the voice of the Vedanta with new insights. So, this article is exploratory and descriptive. It tries to correlate and analyze the concepts, ideas and voices of the Vedanta in the essays and poems of Emerson that only express the voice of Vedanta.

Key words: Vedanta, *atman*, *jivatman*, *paramatman*, Over Soul, *tattvamasi*, *Brahman*,

Introduction

The quest of Vedanta is for the ultimate truth. It also propounds the truth that there is always a single truth that is absolute one, and the entire perishable manifestations emanate from the imperishable one. The absolute one, *Brahman*, resides equally in all beings. It means we all are divine; the divinity is within us. The ultimate goal is the realization of that divinity with self evolution. This voice of Vedanta has a great impact on Emerson's writings. He also talks of Over-Soul, Self-Reliance, and the cosmic unity in his works. So, how can we relate Emerson's concept of Over-Soul as the metamorphosis of *Brahman* as proclaimed by Vedanta? What is the relation between Vedanta's voice *tattvamasi* (you are that) and the Self-Reliance? How do Emerson's essays and poems reflect the tenets of Vedanta when they propound the ultimate truth that forms merely goon changing, but eternity that remains within us is beyond decay?

The study is mainly exploratory and descriptive. Content analysis will be major factor to analyze, expound and explore the ideas and themes of Emerson's writing to correlate relationship with the tenets and voices of Vedanta. The concepts will be analyzed, described and compared particularly. So, the study follows bottom to top method that is

inductive approach. This article intends to establish a bridge between the two seemingly diverse arenas of philosophical schools, showing the unity in diversity.

The Voice of Vedanta

Unlike other five systems of Hindu philosophy the *UttarMimansa* or the Vedanta system is speculative in its nature. It speculates about the cosmic reality, the nature of the creation, and it quests for the ultimate reality. The Vedic system was polytheistic, but the Upanishadic was monotheistic. The Upanishadic canon that really adopted the inwardness point of view for the exploration of the ultimate reality is later on popularized as Vedanta. It attempts to explore the manifested world as the reflection of the inward reality that is within us. The Upanishads have this common view that there is a single reality. In this sense, the knowledge that the Upanishad disseminates is Vedanta. “The word ‘Anta’ in the ‘Vedanta’ means ‘theory’. And thus Vedanta means the theory of Vedas” (Mittal 23). The philosophical crux of Veda is systematized in the Upanishads. So “the term *Vedanta* (=Veda+anta end: “end of the Veda,” i.e., the goal or terminal development of Vedic thought). . .” (Campbell 19) stands for the philosophical ideas of Vedic system. The Vedanta reflects the ultimate reality as one, a unifying force, and that eternal reality is *Brahman*. This is a neuter term, but has been much discussed from the Upanishadic period (tentatively about 3000 years ago) to the present.

The entire phenomenal worldly manifestation is the immanent form of the nonqualified *Brahman* that is transcendental. The Principal Upanishads which are eleven in numbers have the greatest quest that the absolute reality *Brahman* is within us being the prime mover. The spark of that reality, *paramatma* or *Brahman* when conjoined with body becomes the *jivatman*. The power that causes the world of becoming is “the divine inmate of the mortal coil and is identical with the self (*atman*)” (Zimmer 79). It means the *Brahman* in the embodied form becomes the *Atman*. The word *Brahman* has its roots in “brh” that means to grow, “to burst forth” as described in the *Taittiriya Upanishad*, “He declared: “I will be many, I will propagate myself” (Deussen 238). So, its nature signifies that it remains in every creature. The *Brahman* which is the matter of explanation in Vedanta is beyond any definition, any demarcation, but ruling the entire creation. Zimmer slightly explains the nature of *Brahman* that the Vedanta speculates:

Brahman as the charm, or sacred magic formula, is the crystallized, frozen form . . . of the highest divine energy. This energy is perennially latent in man, dormant, yet capable of being strived to creative wakefulness through concentration. By brooding upon it, hatching it, the wizard makes it available to his mind and purpose, bringing it to crystallization in the charm . . . Brahman, in other words, is that through which we live and act, the fundamental spontaneity of our nature . . . Brahman properly is that which lies beyond the sphere and reach of intellectual consciousness, in the dark, great, unmeasured zone of height beyond height, depth beyond depth. (Zimmer 79)

The nature of the ultimate reality is powerfully described here in the above lines. It is energy, a consciousness, a power that drives the creation and the creatures. To perceive the existence of that inner drive is to the realization of the ultimate reality. The realization is a perfect sublimity, a bliss and eternity. It is a matter of great mystery in such a way that it goes beyond creation. Its transcendent form is the ultimate realization, but when it radiates its divine energy, then it is known in the immanent forms. Thus, it is the first “cause of universe, the universe comes out of *Brahman*” (Muller 7). The universe is in it and it is in the universe.

This mystical speculation of *Brahman* brings a completely monistic idea that there is a single reality, and that is absolute One. The phenomenal becoming is just emanated from it. The *Chandogya Upanishad* beautifully expresses it:

This (world), my dear, was only the Being, in the beginning, the only one without a second. It is true that some say that this (world) was only non-being in the beginning, only one without a second; (according to them) out of this non-being, the Being was born.

But, dear one, how could it be so? How could the Being or the existent be born out of the non-being or the non-existent? On the contrary, therefore, O dear one, there was the Being in the beginning, only one, without a second.

The same being intended: “I will be many (manifold). I will propagate myself, (Deussen 162-63)

As we cannot separate breath from life, in the same way, *Brahman*’s fullness cannot be gauged, because it can develop, grow and procreate into infinity, and dwindle into nullity. Prior to the phenomenal existent was a pure being, the *Brahman*, without a second. Then out of it, many forms of becoming emerge. However, all diverse antagonistic and even irreconcilable aspects of the universe come out of the same being, *Brahman*. That is the nature of absolute reality.

The Upanishadic lore explores the essence of *Brahman*. The main speculation is that there is one ultimate reality that they name *Brahman*. These beautiful verses (mantras) from *Kenopanishad* here dig out the essence of *Brahman*:

That which is not expressed through speech but that by which speech is expressed: that, verily, known thou, is *Brahman*, not what (people) here adore.

That which is thought by mind but by which, they say, the mind is thought (thinks); that, verily, know thou, is *Brahman* and not what (people) here adore.

That which is not breathed by life, but by which life breathes; that, verily, know thou, is *Brahman* and not what (people) here adore.

(Radhakrishnan 582-84)

The wonderful lines explore the true reality of the *Brahman*. It is a mystery beyond the level of transcendence. The entire cosmic manifestations go on the course determined by it

because it remains as a prime controller of everything that exists. So, Vedanta's quest is to realize this ultimate reality. The Vedic polytheism that is directed to outwardness shifts to quest the monistic inwardness. That is the crux of the philosophy of the canon of Vedanta.

The quest of Vedanta is that the reality that is absolute one remains in us being the prime mover. The world of becoming exists when the spark of that *Paramatman* or *Brahman* conjoins with the body being the *jivatman* (embodied soul). So, the great quest of Vedanta is to realize the ultimate reality within us. The Upanishadic canon explores the great relation between the *paramatman* and *atman*. The word "Atman" is derived from the root "an" which means "to breathe". So, the word signifies the breath of life. It is identified with the soul, self, prime mover, or inner controller that drives every creature. It is the embodied spark of the eternal reality, and is beyond the body and its gross senses. The popular expression from *Chandogya Upanishad* consists one of the basic principle of Vedanta when it identifies this *atman* with *Brahman* or *Paramatman*: "Believe me my dear, this universe consists of what that finest essence is, it is the real, it is the soul, that thou art, O Svetaketu" (Deussen 170). The great expression that thou art (*tattvamasi*) is the central voice of Vedanta. This great expression identifies the inner self with the cosmic self. This is the culmination of internalization of Vedic philosophy in the Upanishadic canon. The Upanishads explore *Brahman* as "distinct from all that exists or occurs in the domain of multiple things; *Brahman* is not this and not that, neti, neti. But *Brahman* is also deeply identical with all things and with all selves and with you yourself, and that thou art, *tattvamasi*" (Denys 18). This is the essence of Vedanta.

Mandukya Upanishad also expounds the great essence of Vedanta. It conjoins this embodied soul with the cosmic soul as it says, "All this, verily, is *Brahman*, but *Brahman*, is this *Atman* (the soul)" (Deussen 605). This great expression centralizes the entire voice of Vedanta that the phenomenal reality causes because of the inner reality. Similarly, *Brihadrankya Upanishad* holds another great saying of Vedanta, "I am *Brahman*" (Deussen 413). The Upanishad further goes on to the ultimate realization of this *Brahman* in the form of *Atman* that is here within us:

... not for the sake of being themselves, are beings dear, but for the sake of the self are the beings dear; not for the sake of the universe itself, is the universe dear, but for the sake of the self, is the universe dear.

The self itself, indeed, should be seen (in its true nature), should be heard about (from the scriptures) and should be thought up, should be reflected upon; O Maitreyi; he by whom this self is seen, heard, thought about, and know,— by him is this whole world known. (Deussen 502)

The entire discussion leads to a single conclusion that the eternal reality is within us, but the quest should be to realize that eternity. This is another great voice of Vedanta.

Before leading to the conclusion, a few aspects should be considered here. The exploration of *Brahman* even leads to the fact that the *Brahman* in the multiple forms rules

the entire cosmic manifestations. The whole manifestation is the reflection of that absolute reality. All these entire voices of Vedanta are summarized in the great scripture of Hinduism, the Bhagavadgita. It is a dialogue between Sri Krishna, the lord of the title, and a young warrior prince Arjuna. Sri Krishna reveals the profound truth to Arjuna in the battle field when the prince is reluctant to the battle. The central point of Sri Krishna's spiritual instruction, according to Capra, is the central key concepts of Hinduism and Vedanta. Sri Krishna explores the idea that the multitude of things and events around us are but different manifestations of the same absolute eternal reality. This reality is called *Brahman*, and it is the unifying concept (99). The crux of Vedanta is the exploration to inwardness for the realization of the ultimate reality (*Brahman*) that dwells within us being *Atman*. Shankara while writing the *Brahmasutras* as the basis of entire Vedantic tenets concludes that "the Brahman is to be realized by all as the *atman*. . . that the Brahman is the self same Atman of all men; . . . the Brahman is the Universal Atman residing in all the *atmans*; . . that the Universal Atman is different from the individual *atmans*; That is both identical with and different from. . . " (cited in Raju 236). It clarifies that *Brahman* is identical with *atman* in its nature, but in forms the individual *atman* is just the spark from the great universal *atman*. This great speculation of Vedanta reverberates in the writings of Emerson.

Vedanta in Emerson

Ralph Waldo Emerson remains as a pioneer among the American transcendentalists. He is so powerful in his words that make him highly readable. Moved greatly by his faith in God, man and nature, he was deeply inspired by Indian scriptures especially, the Upanishads, the Bhagavadgita and Vishnu Purana. Robert Godon writes about his central message that "the purpose of life was spiritual transformation and direct experience of divine power, here and now on earth" (qtd. in Goldberg 33). This insight that shines through his studies makes the idea clear that he speaks the voice of Vedanta. It is often known that he is a transcendentalist. Transcendentalism is a movement that flourished as a religious, philosophical and literary movement in the works of "a small group round Emerson in Concord, Massachusetts" (Manning 154). The movement was a syncretic one. So, Emerson was a great synthesizer who reinterprets the voice of Vedanta in a new perspective.

Emerson makes great efforts to maintain the agglutinative relationship among the individual, the god, nature and even the social institutions. In his essay, "The American Scholar," he speaks the voice of Vedanta with a touch of novelty so that he seems a *rishi* (preacher) of the Upanishad in Concord. He talks about the world and individual as the manifestation of the ultimate reality. He also expresses the dignity of an individual simply as an attribute to the absolute reality. In his essay "The American scholar," he speaks the voice of Vedanta:

. . . there is One Man—present to all particular man only partially, or through faculty, and that you must take the whole society to find the whole man
Man is thus metamorphosed into a thing, into many things. The planter, who is man sent out into the field to gather food, is seldom cheered by any idea of the

true dignity of his ministry. He sees his bushes and his cart, and nothing beyond, and sinks into farmer, instead of Man on the farm. (*AnEmersonReader* 171)

Here, in the above lines, we just hear the reverberations of the *Chandogya* and *Brihadaranakya* Upanishads. Emerson assures that what is infinite truth—god or *Brahman*—is also in man, and how simply an individual becomes the creator of his/her own world just being the manifestation of the absolute spirit. Emerson just uplifts the individual, giving the divinity. He says about the presence of “One Man” in each and everything. It means he talks about single reality from which all the phenomenal manifestations come in existence. The voice of Vedanta that projects *Brahman* as the universal source from which everything emanates finds a new perspective here.

Emerson qualifies the voice of Vedanta because from the above discussion it becomes clear that the hierarchies and distinction among men become valueless when each individual possesses the entire divinity in oneself. The simple thing one just needs is to awaken the self because the underlying principle in Vedanta and Emerson is “to see through the surfaces of familiar world to the wondrous redemptive reality beyond, . . . but sadly hidden by the mask of appearance” (Ruland and Bradbury 120). Emerson always frames an individual and his ability of within the universal context. He also notices that external limitations of body, senses, even society, institutions impede humans to realize the reality within. So, he proclaims in “The American Scholar” that the ultimate goal of the individual is to realize “the one thing in the world, of value, is the active soul. This every man is entitled to; this every man contains within him, although in almost all men obstructed, and as yet unborn. The soul active sees absolute truth and utters truth, or creates” (Emerson 175). However, *maya* that germinates out of ego degenerates humanity to realize the highest spiritual reality. Establishing identification with the gross body, the divine illusion *maya* makes us oblivious of the true reign of the self. Emerson beautifully presents the power and the nature of divine illusion in his poem “Maya.” He writes:

Illusion works impenetrable,
Weaving webs innumerable,
Her gay pictures never fail,
Crowds each other, veil on veil,
Charmer who will be discovered,
By man who thirsts to be deceived.(qtd. in Rosen 150)

We start to believe in pseudo reality as if that is each and everything and all. Since we are embroiled in the worldly affairs by the divine illusion, it hides the real world beyond us. The veil has to be transcended in order to have the realization of the truth. Only the real *jnana*, the wisdom of pure awareness and *yoga* (the method to unite this mind with the cosmic mind) can lead us beyond the parameters of *maya*. This concept of *maya* is the leitmotif of Vedanta in Emerson. Thus, the realization of self and its internalization, the central message of Vedanta, becomes the dominant voice in Emerson’s writings. This is

because it is often seen that there is a bond that joins man, nature and the supreme reality at once. An individual can leap up onto a higher plane, because all the components are directly handed to a person by the higher, larger and the supreme entity.

Emerson believes that everyone is capable to perceive the highest reality intuitively. Likewise, going beyond the limitations of time and space for the subjective experience, human being at once generates the greater truth. He realizes that the entire cosmic manifestations are the microcosms of the macrocosmic divinity as fundamentally expressed in *Chandogya* and *Brihadaranyaka* Upanishads, and the great idea like, “tattvamasi” and “I am *Brahman*”. This Upanishadic concept that moral truth in nature can be discovered with the help of one’s own guidance rather than any fixed harsh dogmatic doctrine is immensely liberating. Emerson establishes the importance of direct relationship with absolute reality in his essay “Nature.” He writes, “The foregoing generation beheld God and nature face to face. We –through their eyes. Why should not we also enjoy an original relation to the universe?” (qtd. in Wilson 4). The ideal aspect of Vedanta is found in Emerson’s words that assert there is nothing between the realm of absolute reality and the world of human beings.

In the essay “The Over- Soul,” Emerson speaks fundamentally the voice of Vedanta. He postulates the concept exactly more or less similar in the manner of Vedanta that there is an essential unity among all things that are ordered by a supreme mind or Over -Soul. Emerson holds an unshakable faith in the essential unity of all creations with the Over-Soul. More than that, the Over- Soul is a cosmic entity where man, god and nature conjoin, mingle, and merge. In this way, this concept of “Over-Soul” propounded by Emerson remains as a metamorphosis of the *Brahman* and *Atman* of philosophy of the Upanishad or Vedanta. Emerson who was deeply inspired by the tenets of Vedanta, in his essay “Over-Soul” writes:

. . . that great nature in which we rest as the earth lies in the soft arms of the atmosphere; that unity, that Over-Soul, within which everyman’s particular being is contained and made one with all other; that common heart of which all conversation is the worship. . . We live in succession, in division, in parts, in particles. Mean time within man is the soul of the whole; the wise silence; the universal beauty, to which every point and particle is equally related; the eternal one. (qtd. in Wilson 4-5)

The “eternal one” is the exact reverberation of the eternal *Brahman* that the Vedanta postulates. The unity with the Over- Soul, perhaps, reflects the concept of *Atman* that is emanated from absolute *Brahman*. The divine spirit, the Over -Soul, remain as a prime mover and an inner controller in each and every creature of the nature. It is also beyond a fixed definition and explanation. It is omniscient, omnipotent, and super supreme from where everything radiates and fuses into it as beautifully expressed in *Taittiriya Upanishad*: “That where from beings are born, thanks to which once born they live, and wherein when they die they penetrate—that you must desire to know. That is *Brahman* (qtd. in Tola and Dragonetti 89). The idea that *Brahman* is the foundation where everything that is manifested

rests has the similar voice that is explored in the concept of over soul that is propounded by Emerson.

The concept of “Over- Soul” unites an individual with the divine because Emerson views that “all spiritual being is in man” (cited in Wilson 66). This concept moreover holds unity of the cosmos as *KathaUpanishad* expresses: “what is here, is also there, what is there is also here” (Deussen 292). This synthesizes the perceptions of Vedanta and Emerson’s voices as well because manifested plurality and the real One are identical. Moreover, the crux of Vedanta’s voice on Emerson comes out when he sees an individual in the absolute divine form, deriving his existence from it. He beautifully speaks the voice of Vedanta in his poem “Brahma” as he writes:

If the red slayer thinks he says,
Or if the slain thinks he is slain,
They know not the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far of forgot to me is near,
Shadow and sunlight are the same,
The vanished gods to me appear;
And one to one are the shame and fame.

(AnEmersonReader 274)

The poem is almost a direct transcript from the *KathaUpanishad*. However, these lines find their exact resemblance with the verse of the Bhagavadgita where it has been proclaimed about the eternity of the *Atman* that remains in us an inner controller:

Who believes him a slayer, And who thinks him slain, Both these understand
not: He slays not, is not slain.

He is not born, nor does he ever die, Nor, having come to be, will he ever more
come not to be. Unborn, eternal, everlasting, this ancient one Is not slain when
the body is slain. (Edgerton 19)

When there is the realization that the form goes only changes, but the mover, inner controller is uncreated and eternal, how can anyone slay him? Or does not one transcend the death? So, one who realize that he is *tattvamasi* (you art that) is not entangled in metempsychosis. In the realm of *Brahman* or Over- Soul, there is perfect unity; even life and death are reconciled because every duality merges into the One, the eternal truth.

In his essay “Self- Reliance,” Emerson projects the need from everyman to realize his own ability to understand, evaluate and act according to his potentiality. One should go beyond the belief and customs, common values and limitations of society and established institutions. Only the mentally, morally and spiritually independent individual can have an understanding of the world, about himself and his place in the entire universe and about the

universe itself. The perfect harmony of the *Karma* (action), *Bhakti* (Devotion) and the *Jnana* (*shankhya*, wisdom) can connect a person with the divinity. This is another great voice of Vedanta to realize the inner potentiality in perfect harmony. For this union or *yoga* with the comic mind, self-reliance is must that directly relies upon trust in oneself. This entire concept is revealed in the essay “Self-Reliance” when Emerson writes:

The magnetism which all originates action exerts is explained when we inquire the reason of self-trust. . . what is aboriginal Self on which a universal reliance may be grounded? . . . The inquiry leads us to that source, at one the essence of genius, of virtue, and of life, which we call Spontaneity or Instinct. We denote this primary wisdom as Intuition . . . In that deep force, the last fact behind which analysis cannot go, all things find their common origin. (AnEmersonReader 219)

Self-Reliance, in this way, leads to the intuition. Then only an individual is able to perceive anything in the context of totality where he can realize the divinity of the absolute reality within. The reliance upon the self opens the way to the self realization because it is always activated, and leads towards the eternity. This is the voice of Vedanta that finds its culminations in the Bhagavadgita when Sri Krishna teaches *Karmayoga* (The Yoga of Action) to Arjuna.

Emerson instigates deeply for making of oneself that reflects the voice of *Karmayoga* where Sri Krishna postulates the idea of *niskamakarma* (selfless action) without wishing for consequences the action bears. The *Karmayoga* is not the renunciation of action, but it is renunciation in action. It eliminates the ego-centric actions. Then only human can reach to a stage known as workless that “is only through work for worklessness is not inaction but action that bears not fruit” (Hill 60). This idea is reflected in Emerson’s essay on “Self-Reliance” where he appeals “to insist on yourself; never imitate. Your own gift you can present every moment with the cumulative force of a whole life’s cultivation” (AnEmersonReader). So, one should go beyond the pseudo reality and make believe, and create a perception to realize the whole, rejecting the polarities that go here in life.

To cross the frontiers of polarities, the revelation of the *brahmavidya* (philosophical interpretation) and the *yogasastra* (the practical application of the *brahmavidya*) become essential as postulated by Vedanta. Only with *yoga* and *shankhya* (knowledge), the divinity within is realized. They *yoga* means “to yoke, harness, employ, set to work, co-ordinate, organize, and harmonize” (Frawley 208). As such, it becomes a way to attain the divine state (*brahmasthiti*), and the bliss of God (*brahmanirvana*), making “contact with the Supreme soul and stabilizing the mind in easy communion with Him after steadying it first in consciousness of one’s soul is called Yoga” (Hassija 367). Therefore, *yoga* yokes and controls our passions, which ultimately opens the passage from the pseudo reality into the realm of divinity, realizing that we are the reflection of the absolute reality. This ultimate voice of Vedanta is reflected in Emerson when he projects the idea of self reliance.

Self understanding or self reliance can uplift a person to the realization of the higher truth where a person sees the one the ultimate reality in all beings though they are seen divided in this phenomenal world. So, each particular creation is simply the reflection of one single mind—the super mind, which is the other name of the ultimate One. The entire creation is the microcosm of the macrocosm. The Whole can be known by knowing the particular self. It is only the omniscience of the absolute spirit, which enables us to have a direct realization of the self as explained in the *Chandogya Upanishad* “ta tvamasi: That art thou” (Radhakrishnan 462) and *Mandukya Upanishad*: “All this is, verily, *Brahman*. This self is *Brahman*” (Radhakrishna 695). This concept of self reliance is mesmerizingly declared by Sri Krishna in the Bhagavadgita: “He who sees the self, residing equally in all beings—the imperishable among the perishable—sees clearly (qtd. in Weber 26). It shows how the deep insight of Vedanta finds its new explanation and exemplification in the writings of Emerson.

Conclusion

The phenomenal manifestations remain as the reflection of the absolute reality is the voice of Vedanta. It also postulates the ideas that the absolute reality, *Brahman*, remains as the inner controller, and prime mover in each and every creature of this universe. It remains as a spark in each and everything. The creatures get their existence because of the divinity that is within. Moreover, there is a single reality which is absolute, and the world is just a vast multifarious form of that single One. These ideas of Vedanta find their new explanations and a new plane and zenith in the literary works of Emerson. Since he is the pioneer of American transcendentalist, his main quest is to go beyond the parameters of these ordered thoughts and senses. His essays “The Nature,” “Idealism,” and the “Self-Reliance” project the idea that the divinity known as the ultimate one is within us. So, this concept of a single unity is the voice of Vedanta. Moreover, Emerson’s entire writings always postulate for the discovery of higher truth mystically and intuitively which is one of the fundamental ideas of Vedanta. The Vedantic concept of self evolution is strong in the essay especially “Nature.” The ultimate absolute truth of Vedanta, *Brahman*, finds its great confluence in the concept of “Over-Soul.” The projections of both are simply for the single reality that guides the world and creatures, and it is immortal though the body and forms go on changing. The voice of Vedanta really becomes mesmerizing when it finds its culmination in the poem “Brahma.” This great coalescence is not only merely in the names, and it is really a moment of to be pleased when the philosophy of Emerson rings the melodies of Vedanta in the various tones. ■

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Abuse of Black Women in Antebellum Era as Represented in Slave Narratives

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The settlers while colonizing the North America are provided with vast stretch of land for cultivation. The industrial revolution in Europe increases the demand for raw material such as cotton. To cultivate the land manually, settlers are in requirement of cheap labour. The inhuman trans-Atlantic slave trade involves the kidnapping of Africans and selling them in the open slave markets of southern States of America. Thus slavery which took roots for more than two centuries prevails till today. These slaves do not have any human rights, and they are at the mercy of slaveholders. Slaves are killed and put to extreme physical torture. Slave marriages never have legal sanctity. Slave families get separated by the sale of slaves. Women go through extreme torture due to sexual abuse and rape. Slave women are brought to bear and rear slaves for the slave market. Slaves are treated on par with cattle. Slaves, who escape to the north, write their experiences and show the world the horrors of slavery. This leads to the Civil War and slavery is abolished. However, even today, glimpses of racist feelings still exist in American society.

Key words: Antebellum Era; Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade; Sexual Abuse; Mixed Race.

The main factor that differentiates the suffering in slavery by men and women is the slaveholder's exploitation of slave women's sexuality. Masters feel as if they have the right to involve in licentious acts with female slaves. Some female slaves give up life to protect their chastity. At times, few female slaves accept advances of their masters thinking that it will help them in freeing their children in future. However, most of their Masters take their female slaves by force and rape them. When there are no laws to shelter the slaves, masters live a life without fear of punishment. Masters are easily tempted to adultery, rape and murder. The institution of slavery is so designed that slave men are helpless to stop or retaliate the exploitations and suffering of slave women. Gerda Lerner points out that:

It dishonoured the women and by implication served as a
symbolic castration of their men. (Lerner 176)

Bethany Veney witnesses an auction of a young slave girl by name Eliza. Eliza is very attractive, many buyers who are racing to pay any amount to get her. These buyers will

sexually exploit her once they win her at the auction table. Insatiable desires of the slave owners make young women slaves pricey at the auction. Slave women have to witness their daughters going through the same abuse. In general, people celebrate motherhood throughout the world. However, for slave women, it is a different story. Bethany Veney wishes death to herself and her child than to live. She knows that no mother has power to protect her child. The unbridled acts of the slaveholders are cruel, and their lust is uncontrollable as the laws are in favour of white people. According to Benthany Veney:

...feels that the law holds over her no protection arm, it is not strange that, rude and uncultured as I was, I felt all this, and would have been glad if we could have died together there and then. (Veney 17)

Chinosole brings up that abuse of that kind on women slave affects not just her, but her husband and the entire slave family gets devastated. As Chinosole rightly declares that,

Its pain is destructive to gender relations within the community, not an isolated suffering visited upon women. (Chinosole 123)

If anyone tries to defend themselves, they are subjected to harsh punishments. In order to punish these rebels and also to create fear among other slaves, both male and female slaves are torn from their families by sale. Very often, Masters target young girls and single female slaves as objects of their sexual pursuits. The best example can be seen in the case of Harriet Jacobs, who is chased by her Master Dr. Flint till his death. Harriet Jacobs authors her narrative under the pseudonym, Linda Brent. She narrates the impact of sexual exploitation, which oppresses black women. She fight back to gain both her freedom and that of her two children from her cruel Master Dr. Flint.

Dr.Flint has a sexual crush on Jacobs, and she does not give in for his proposal. Dr.Flint is so possessive of her that, he never lets Jacobs to fieldwork, thinking that the overseer will exploit her sexually. Once, Dr. Flint sends his eldest son to Louisiana to have a look at the country for emigrating. However, he does not send Jacobs along with his son fearing his son will exploit her. Dr. Flint, with an iron will try to conquer Jacobs. One day he sees Jacobs talking to a slave man in the street, and she is thrashed for it. On Harriet Jacobs, Henry Louis Gates, Jr writes:

Charts in vivid details precisely how the same of her life, the choices she makes are defined by her reduction to a sexual object, an object to be raped, bred or abused. (Gates 12)

In Frederick Douglass's narrative, he gives a vivid account of horrors against black women. Frederick talks about his aunt Hester who disobeys her Master. She is a good-looking woman and an exquisite lady. Her Master warns her to keep herself away from Ned Roberts, a slave of Colonel Lloyd. She goes against it, and for the first time Frederick has to see an inhuman act know as punishment given to his aunt and the horror in Frederick Douglass's words,

He took her into the kitchen, and stripped her from neck to waist, leaving her neck, shoulders, and back, entirely naked... Her arms were stretched up at their full length... soon the warm, red blood came dripping to the floor. (Douglass 20)

The southern parts of the United States of America have come up with regulations known as slave codes that regulate every small aspect of a slave's life. Certain fundamental aspects of life like legal sanctity of marriage and protection against rape do not exist. The laws in southern states are in favour of slaveholders. One particular slave code says, "the child shall follow the condition of the mother" the child born into slavery and follows the fate of slave mother and not the biological father, who is their white Master. This gave to the creation of a mixed colour people called mulattoes. Genovese points out that:

Evidence from the slaveholders themselves confirms the existence of the stable interracial unions suggested in the narratives. (Genovese 418)

Jacobs remarkably says that slavery has equally spoiled both the slaves and their Master's families. Like many white women, Mrs. Flint is jealous and suspicious about the adultery of her husband. Slave women are an easy target for Mrs. Flint to let out her anger. The white mistresses often take revenge on the slave women for the adultery of their husbands. Jacobs explains that:

Slavery is a curse to the whites as well as to the blacks. It makes white fathers cruel and sensual; the sons violent and licentious; it contaminates the daughters, and makes the wives wretched. (Jacobs 76)

It is a dehumanizing institution that affects and destroys both the lives of slaveholders and slaves. The Slave Master's illegitimate relationship with many of his slave women spoils the young minds of his children. Sons of the slaveholders are influenced by their fathers and get into such acts quite early in their life.

Mulattoes are targeted by their slave holder's wives who are jealous and insecure with the presence of the colour children born to slave women by their husbands. They hate their husbands for any incurred favours to these mulattos. The tension is ever-present in the family of the Master for his acts of lust on black women. As Frederick Douglass observes:

The Master is frequently compelled to sell this class of his slaves, out of deference to the feelings of his white wife; and, cruel as the deed may strike anyone to be, for a man to sell his own children to human flesh-mongers. (Douglass 17)

Now we wonder whether such acts question the moral conscience of the Slave Masters.

William Wells Brown talks about a slaveholder by name Mr. Walker. He does not have a family, and so he appoints a slave woman to look after his house. Her name is Cynthia, the most beautiful slave woman. Mr. Walker once bought her from St. Louis intending to sell her. However, later, Mr. Walker changes his intention. She cannot stand his vile and wicked proposal for long. She succumbs to pressure and weeps for her hapless

situation. He makes Cynthia, his mistress, and she gives birth to four children. After Brown's escape to the north, he comes to know that Mr. Walker got married to a white girl and sold his mistress Cynthia and her four children into slavery. Slaveholders never keep their promises to slave women once their lust is satisfied.

William Brown feels that not just slave traders are at fault but the whole society at large. Many people are directly or indirectly are involved in that business. Slave women are purchased to produce slaves for their profit in their human merchandise business. In the opinion of William Wells Brown:

I answer, as far as I have any knowledge of the state where I came from, that those who raised slaves for the market are to be found among all classes. (William 36-37)

Frederick Douglass gives an account of Mr. Covey, a slave master despite being poor, manages to buy a woman slave of about twenty years old called Caroline. He brings her with the purpose that she will breed slaves for his plantation. Mr. Covey hires a slave by name Samuel Harrison and chains him with Caroline every night. To Mr. Covey's delight, Caroline is blessed with twins, an addition to Mr. Covey's wealth. According to Wilma King,

Children were separated from their mothers even before the child reached twelfth month. It was done intentionally by the masters to hinder and damage the affection between the mother and the child. Frederick confesses that he hardly saw his mother. According to Wilma King, "One of the most unsettling events in the lives of the slaves was early separation of the mothers and children when the women returned to work." (Wilma 13)

According to William Wells Brown, the slave trader Mr. Walker walks up to a slave mother whom he purchased and takes the child by one hand from her and then gifts the child to his acquaintance and moves on. He does it simply because he cannot bear the child's cry. The slave mother begs Mr. Walker to allow her to have her child back. William Brown cannot bear the woman's cry. In William Wells Brown's words,

When I saw this woman crying for her child so piteously, a shudder-a feeling akin to horror- shot through my frame. (William 19)

William Wells Brown, born into slavery, was stolen from all human rights of a great nation. His mother's name is Elizabeth, and William has five brothers and one sister. No two siblings of his are from the same father. William Brown learns from his mother that John Higgins, a relative of his Master, is his father. This shows slaveholder's friends, relatives too sexually abuse slave women.

When it comes to suffering by punishment, both men and women slaves suffer equally in physical punishments like whipping. However, female slaves have their peculiar problems of sexual abuse by their masters, sons of the masters and the overseer. It makes their life nothing short of a veritable hell. Circumstances of this kind evoke Angela Devis to state that:

The right claimed by slave owners and their agents over the bodies of female slaves was a direct expression of their presumed property rights over Black people as a whole. (Devis 175)

Girls from a young age come to know that their bodies are not their own. Slaveholders always feel that they own their slaves in body and soul. Harriet Jacobs's complaints that slave girls are not allowed being virtuous because their virtue is under constant attack from the male members of the slaveholders family and the overseer.

Most of the female slaves prefer bonding with dear ones and never try to escape because of their attachment with their children. On the other hand, men are not so attached to the family, so their escape rate is high. Slaves are not part in the "American Dream." Slaves are not treated as human beings and the citizens of the United States of America in the Antebellum Era. ■

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Black Songs as Generating Anguish, Spirituality and Belonging

A. Selvam

*Every tone was a testimony against slavery and
a prayer to God for deliverance from chains (Douglass 99).*

Music causes a transition within our souls that not even the best orator can achieve with his/her speech. For more or less the same reason, anthems of countries induce the citizens with a feeling of belonging, patriotic fervour, and pride. Imagine a group of people working in a large field with a man on a horse whipping those who are lazy, at the peak of summer, the midday heat accentuating their thirst and hunger. A sense of belonging was completely absent in their societal and cultural milieu. All they had was the throbbing pain in their throats and the sound of the breaking of their hearts which they had to channel out some way or the other. Music was their only resort. It was their cry for deliverance and the plea for an easier death. It was the “song of resistance” (?). There was a reason why black music affected Frederick Douglass and W E B Du Bois, and it was not because they were blacks, it was more so due to the power of music, the pain engrained in them. If eloquence of speech moved the whites, the blacks were moved by the cadence of these haunting chants. Du Bois in *The Souls of Black Folk* calls it “the rhythmic cry of the slave.....the most beautiful expression of human experience born this side the seas” (Du Bois 117). It was the sole way to channel the pain they felt, their bodily exertion, the mental anguish, and therefore they resisted the oppressor via their songs. This is synonymous with contemporary protest slogans because the power of words is phenomenal. It drives the victimizer to self-reflexivity, and it imbibes an ephemeral feeling of non-submission in the mind of the victim.

Du Bois, in the concluding chapter of his book *The Souls of Black Folk*, makes an interesting claim for the genuineness of black music (Du Bois 120). He talks about how these songs represent not only a religious urge for transcending the quotidian life but also how much of poetry is concealed “beneath conventional theology and unmeaning rhapsody”(Du Bois 120). The metaphors, similes, poetical devices galore embedded within the imaginative lines should definitely make us applaud the imagination of the black slave that was not thwarted by white hegemony. Their souls were living the pain and they sang it loud so as to make sense of their being. My aim in this paper is to show how blacks used

music as a tri-partite tool; to represent their sorrow, to achieve spiritual redemption, and to form a feeling of belonging within a community.

For the sake of convenience, this paper is divided into four parts. The first part deals with a brief introduction to slavery in the context of America; the second part views black music as a form of dissent as well as a form of spiritual redemption. The third part will deal with a brief introduction to how these songs are depicted in African American fiction, and the conclusion will combine these to look at how the idea of belongingness (i.e., of a community) is forged within the blacks via the power of music.

Slavery in America began when the first African slaves were brought to the North American colony of Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619, to aid in the production of such lucrative crops as tobacco. Slavery was practiced throughout the American colonies in the 17th and 18th centuries, and African-American slaves helped build the economic foundations of the new nation and the invention of the cotton gin in 1793 solidified the central importance of slavery to the South's economy (history.com).

Hence, it was for the betterment of the whole country that misery was induced on a people who were taken away from their homeland, traded across continents (The Middle Passage), sold as commodities, exploited and discriminated till they bled to death. The question here is what slavery made them into- mere puppets controlled by the strings of the Whiteman who was, interestingly, authorized to exploit them physically and mentally until the Emancipation Proclamation of January 1st, 1863. But by then they had suffered for more than two centuries; whipped by the thorns of animosity. Their body was long irresponsive; they had to find a method to sustain their souls. Therefore, they resorted to the "Sorrow Songs" (Du Bois 116) in order to assist their soul, to create an unrelenting will to not quit striving for free-dom. It was the only path open to them in which they could express their pain says Frederick Douglass in the fourth chapter of his autobiographical oeuvre *My Bondage and My Freedom*. He was born a slave and this observation came out of his experience as a slave and therefore, one should not question the validity of this poignant feature of black songs. As mentioned earlier, these songs were songs of defiance and they emerged out of the slave's reluctance to completely fall privy to the master's demand:

"My Lord calls me,
He calls me by the thunder,
The trumpet sounds it in my soul." (Du Bois 119)

The repeated references to the word "trumpet" are seen in many songs such as the above which not only implies non-submissiveness but also a feeling of spiritual redemption. Clearly, the slaves were looking for a way to transcend the wretchedness of life and these songs were the perfect antidote to the rampant oppression that was instilled on them and their progeny. There was no redemption for them in the white church neither did the white preacher provide them with any grace. Consequently, they took what these songs provided them- hope for a life beyond slavery. The belief in a less dismal and maybe even a little more

hopeful afterlife is being re-iterated in the following lines from a song, one should pay attention to its anaphoric feature which might suggest the trumpet call of the Last Judgment:

Michael, haul the boat ashore,
Then you'll hear the horn they blow,
Then you'll hear the trumpet sound,
Trumpet sound the world around,
Trumpet sound for rich and poor,
Trumpet sound the Jubilee,
Trumpet sound for you and me. (Du Bois 121)

Extending this idea of spiritual redemption via music into the milieu of contemporary African American fiction, very briefly, we come across characters such as Gabriel in James Baldwin's *Go Tell it on the Mountain*, Baby Suggs in Toni Morrison's *Beloved* or Nanny in Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. All of them are defined by their need to preach. They lead a life that they closely associate with a religious call. In other words, in the case of these characters, the spiritual redemption that the slave in the plantation found in his/her songs is transferred into the ultimate salvation that can be achieved by preaching. They preach for themselves, their family, and more importantly for their community.

The sense of a community and a feeling of belonging are forged by religious institutions such as churches or choir groups, as well as by the society in which we live. Keeping aside the politics of exclusivity of such groups for the moment, let us ponder the plight of the poor slaves who had to spend a major part of their lives in plantations. Their comprehension of a society was confined to the fenced plantation, their home was the settlement in which they lived, and the plantation was their community. The slaves were the citizens of that fabricated community run on the ideology of exploitation and inhumanity framed by the white master. The songs were the only manner of communicating the pain they endured to their kith and kin. Needless to say, the torment of the whip was transferred to the sorrow of the songs which they sang together:

When, struck with a sudden poverty, the United States refused to fulfil its promises of land to the freedmen, a brigadier-general went down to the Sea Islands to carry the news. An old woman on the outskirts of the throng began singing this song; all the mass joined with her, swaying. And the soldier wept. (Du Bois 119)

As mentioned earlier, these songs work along the same lines as that of a choir group. Their body moves when they sing and the concept of movement is preliminary to appreciating the degree of involvement and pain (for the slaves) that goes into uttering soulful music. "How can we know the dancer from the dance?" (Yeats 4) so goes the concluding lines of W B Yeats's poem "Among School Children". Similarly, the swaying of the body to music is the 'sahridaya' who understands the true meaning of the words. This collective effort of singing brought the slaves together and furthermore, it induced a sense of belonging and

oneness in their broken souls. They were united in their pain and they sang as a community. Black music was the only source of consolation for the slaves; it shaped them as a community providing them with spiritual redress. It not only strengthened their will to dismantle oppression but it also became a pathway to showcase their emotions. Maya Angelou in her autobiography, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, dedicates a few lines to these uncelebrated 'poets' who created music out of their sorrow: "Oh, Black known and unknown poets, how often have your auctioned pains sustained us? Who will compute the lonely nights made less lonely by your songs, or by the empty pots made less tragic by your tales?" (Angelou 54)

A people defined by the music they created stand as the testament to the anguish of a community. The songs were indeed spirituals which uplifted them, born out of collective agony and, therefore, the singing of such hymns made their will strong. It paved way for believing in a higher power which might deliver them. These songs taught them survival. Ingrained in the words was also a slight feeling of dissent. Singing made them long for the day in which they will be free, not as an individual but as a community. ■

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Development of Political Prose in Indian English Literature: A Critical Study

Ravikumar Bellad

This paper is a serious study of India's political prose writings, beginning with Raja Rammohun Roy. It examines the writings of all freedom fighters. The works of Banerji, Ghose, Sen, Tagore, Vivekananda, Ranade, Gokhale, Tilak, Malaviya, Syed Khan, the English Sobhroo, Gandhi, Nehru, Ambedkar all are examined with insightful observations. Englishmen were rediscovering India's past, the gradual spread of English education and Western ideas brought forth a band of earnest Indians who drank deep at the fountain of European learning.

Key words: *political prose, insightful observations, rediscovering India's past, Western ideas*

The British gained a confidence to rule over Bengal after the Battle of Plassey (1757), and the entire world after the last Anglo-Maratha war in 1818. The East India Company officials were kind-hearted, and men like Sir William Jones, H.T. Colebrooke, James Prinsep and others enlightened Indians for their betterment. M.K. Naik tells, Sir William Jones, who founded the Bengal Asiatic Society as early as 1784, H.T. Colebrooke, the author of *Digest of Hindu Law on Contracts and Succession* (1797-98), and James Prinsep, the discoverer of the clue to the Asokan inscriptions, were some of the representative white men in India then whose burden was certainly not imperial.

While these Englishmen were rediscovering India's past, the gradual spread of English education and Western ideas brought forth a band of earnest Indians who drank deep at the fountain of European learning. The two groups, the orientalist and occidentalists argued heatedly for the reforms in India. The cause of English education found its ablest Indian champion in Raja Rammohun Roy. In his persuasive *Letter on English Education* addressed to the Governor-General, Lord Amherst in 1823, he argued most forcefully against the establishment of a Sanskrit school in preference to one imparting English education:

If it had been intended to keep the British nation in ignorance of real knowledge, the Baconian philosophy would not have been allowed to displace the system of schoolmen, which was the best calculated to perpetuate ignorance. In the same manner, the Sanskrit system of education would be the best calculated to keep this

country in darkness, if such had been the policy of the British legislature. But as the improvement of the native population is the object of the government, it will consequently promote a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction, embracing... useful sciences, which may be accomplished by employing a few gentlemen of talents and learning educated in Europe and providing a college furnished with the necessary books, instruments and other apparatus. (Roy 302)

Even before this letter was written, Rammohun Roy had already been active in the cause of Western education. Together with David Hume, the British watch-maker turned educationist and Edward Hyde-East, the then Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Bengal, he established an association to promote European learning and science in 1816.

With the tide running so strongly in favour of English, the *coup de grace* was delivered by Lord Macaulay's famous *Minute* on education of 2 February 1835 which clinched the issue.

Raja Rammohun Roy (1772-1833), aptly described by Rabindranath Tagore as 'the inaugurator of the modern age in India' was indeed the morning star of the Indian renaissance. A pioneer in religious, educational, social and political reform, he was a man cast in the mould of the Humanists of the European Renaissance. He settled down in Calcutta in 1814 and till the end of his life carried on a crusade for social, cul-tural, religious and political reform. Plunging into journalism, he edited periodicals in three languages—*The Brahummunical Magazine* in English (1821-23), *Sambad Kaumudi* in Bengali (1821) and *Mirat-ul-Akhbar* in Persian (1822-23). In 1828, he founded the Brahmo Sabha or Samaj, which was the earliest attempt of its kind in the 19th century to revitalize Hindu-ism. Sailing for Britain in 1830 as the envoy of the Mughal emperor who conferred on him the title 'Raja', he continued his mission there until his death at Bristol in 1833.

Social reform was equally dear to Rammohun Roy. Here, the plight of women in orthodox Hindu society became his special concern. His broadsides against widow-burning include: 'A Conference between an Advocate for, and an Opponent of, the Practice of burning Widows alive' (1818). Rammohun Roy's famous 'Letter on English Education' (11 Dec 1823), which has already been mentioned, is a document of so great importance that it could very well be called 'the manifesto of the Indian renaissance'. The most significant of Roy's political writings are the two 'Petitions Against the Press Regulations' (1823). These petitions were occasioned by the passing of a Government ordinance in March 1823 suppressing the freedom of the press, known as 'Adam's gag' after John Adam, the acting Governor-General. Roy's 'Exposition of the Practical Operation of the Judicial and Revenue Systems of India' (1832) represents the evidence given by him before a Parliamentary Select Committee in London in 1831. This document, which embodies Roy's views on administrative reform, is specially remarkable for its spirited protest against

the economic drain in India under the East India Company rule and the exploitation of the peasantry by the rich landlords. Roy's writings obviously belong to the category of 'Literature of Knowledge', rather than 'Literature of Power', yet, he is a master of a distinguished English prose style. In a personal letter, Jeremy Bentham complimented Roy on 'a style, which but for the name of a Hindoo, I should certainly have ascribed to the pen of a superiorly educated and instructed Englishman.' In the same letter, praising James Mill's *History of India*, Bentham added, 'though as to style, I wish I could with truth and sincerity pronounce it equal to yours.' (Masani 7)

In Bengal K.M. Banerji (1813-85) and Ram Gopal Ghose (1815-68) wrote socio-political prose. Ghose was called the Indian Demosthenes. Hurish Chunder Mukerji (1824-60) edited *The Hindoo Patriot* from 1854 to 1860 with a passionate sense of mission, championing widow-remarriage, counselling reconciliation after the Mutiny and exposing the iniquities of the British planters. Rajendra Lal Mitra (1824-91), Assistant Secretary and Librarian, Bengal Asiatic Society, and hailed by Tagore as 'Sabyasachi' (i.e., ambidextrous) was one of the earliest Indian antiquarians, Indologists and historians. G.C. Ghose (1829-69) founded *The Bengal Weekly* in 1853, advocating political reforms.

The first name that comes to mind when one turns from Bengal to Bombay is that of Bal Shastri Jambhekar (1812-46), a great pioneer of the new awakening in Bombay presidency. Perhaps the first Sanskrit pundit of note to study English, he became the teacher of such men as Dadabhai Naoroji, Bhau Daji, and K.L. Chattrre. Linguist, educationist, translator, antiquarian (he contributed frequently to the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*), Jambhekar is best remembered as the founder of the first English-cum-Marathi journal in Maharashtra, *The Durpan* (1832). His contemporary, Dadoba Pandurang (Tarkhadkar) (1814-82), scholar, educationist, religious and social reformer, and author of the earliest standard Marathi grammar, wrote 'A Hindu Gentleman's Reflections respecting the works of Emanuel Swedenborg' (1878)—an enlightened study in comparative religious thought.

In the Madras presidency, apart from Boriah's 'Account of the Jains,' another noteworthy early document is Vannelakanti Soobrow's (He was, significantly enough known as 'English Soobrow') report on the 'State of Education in 1820,' submitted to the Madras School Book Society of which he was a nominated member. In 1844, Gazulu Lakshmi Narsu Chetty (1806-68), a public-spirited businessman and founder of the Madras Native Association, started *The Crescent*—a newspaper dedicated to 'the amelioration of the condition of the Hindoos.' In contrast with the Bengal, Bombay and Madras presidencies, the north India of the period shows little sustained interest in Indian English political prose writing, but as if to compensate for this, it can boast of having produced the first extensive Indian English autobiography (Roy's autobiographical sketch is an all too brief affair): *Autobiography of Lutufullah: A Mohamedan Gentleman and His Transactions with his fellow creatures: Interspersed with remarks on the habits, customs and character of the people with whom he had to deal* (1857). The son of a Muslim priest, Lutufullah (b. 1802)

served in the states of Baroda and Gwalior, and later, having learnt English, became a tutor in Persian, Arabic and Hindustani to British officers. He travelled widely over India and also visited England.

The period of Indian English literature from 1857 to 1920 is described as the 'winds of change.' The Evangelical revival in England, the social and educational reforms of the 1830s, the advent of the steamships during the 1840s, and the changes made in the system of recruitment to Company service in the 1850s ushered in totally changed attitudes. There arose the so called Bengal Renaissance in this period. After Raja Rammohun Roy, the Brahma Samaj followers were Keshub Chandra Sen (1838-84) and Dwarakanath Tagore. Likewise, R.G. Bhandarkar and M.G. Ranade started Prarthana Samaja in 1867. Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda appeared too. Dayananda Saraswati (1824-83) started Arya Samaj in the north. Blavatsky, Col. H.S. Olcott, W.O. Judge and others started Theosophical Society. This was a western movement but the society shifted to Adyar in India in 1878. With its blend of the teachings of Hinduism, Buddhism, Pythagoras and Plato, ancient Egyptian thought and early Christianity, Theosophy was an eclectic creed, but like the Arya Samaj it also helped the prevailing climate of the Indian resurgence.

Syed Ahmed Khan founded the Anglo-Arabic College at Aligarh in 1875. Abdul Latif and Amir Ali started a National Mohammedan Association in Calcutta. Surendranath Banerji founded the Indian Association. In 1885, the Indian National Congress was established, with the support of liberal-minded Englishmen like A.O. Hume, Sir William Wedderburn and Sir David Yule. A lot of political speeches, letters, correspondences, debates and proceedings are published.

Dadabai Naoroji wrote *Poverty of India*, criticizing the British exploitation of India. His *Speeches and Writings* is published. His student V.N. Mandlik founded *Native Opinion* and wrote extensively. R.G. Bhandarkar (1837-1925) was a great orientalist of the age. His *Early History of the Deccan* (1884) is a fine historical work. Hailed as 'Rishi Ranade' by Srinivasa Sastri, Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842-1901) was a gentle colossus of the late 19th century. His book *Rise of the Maratha Power* (1900) is a pioneer history. *Indian Economics* is his other work. Badruddin Tyabji was a moderate leader. K.T. Telang (1850-93) was a great thinker. He was the first Indian Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bombay. Two prominent Parsi contemporaries of Ranade were Sir Pherozeshah Merwanjee Mehta (1845-1915) and Sir Dinsha Edulji Wacha (1844-1936). The era of moderate politics ended with the rise of Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920), the 'father of the Indian unrest'. Tilak's *Gitarahasya* besides several political writings is noteworthy. N.C. Kelkar (1872-1947) also wrote. Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915), Tilak's younger contemporary, was the ablest disciple of Ranade and was acknowledged by Gandhi as his political guru. His *Speeches* (1908) and *Speeches and Writings: 3 Vols* (1962) are characteristic of an earnest and upright, and gentle and cultured soul, wholly dedicated to his country's cause. In Bengal K.D. Pal ran the *Hindu Patriot*. Keshub Chunder Sen (1838-84), under whose energetic leadership the Brahmo Samaj movement spread (but also split later), started the fortnightly, *Indian*

Mirror, in 1861. An impressive public speaker, he lectured widely, mostly on religious subjects, both in India and England. His lectures, models of Victorian rhetoric, have been published in *Lectures in India* (1901); *The New Dispensation* (1910); and *Discourses and Writings* (1904). Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (1838-94), renowned Bengali novelist and author of one of the earliest Indian English novels, wrote several essays in English, including 'On the origin of Hindu Festivals' (1870), 'Bengali Literature' (1871), 'The Study of Hindu Philosophy' (1873) and 'Vedic Literature' (1894). Womesh Chunder Bonnerjee (1844-1906), first president of the Indian National Congress (1885), established the London India Society in 1865, which later merged into the East Indian Association. His speeches are collected in *Life, Letters and Speeches of W.C. Bonnerjee* (1923) edited by K.L. Bandyopadhyaya. Of the three notable Ghoshes of the period (apart from Manmohan Ghose and Sri Aurobindo) Rashbihari Ghosh (1845-1921) and Lalmohan Ghosh (1849-1909) were Moderate Congress leaders. Motilal Ghosh (1847-1902) founded the well-known newspaper, *Amrita Bazar Patrika* in 1868. Dutt's friend, Surendranath Banerjee (1848-1925) was acclaimed by his age as perhaps its most powerful orator in English. His *Speeches* appeared later. Another Bengali leader who faded away after the rise of Gandhi was Bipin Chandra Pal (1858-1932) of the once celebrated radical trio called 'Lal-Bal-Pal.'

Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo and Swami Vivekananda too wrote political prose. Tagore's works like *Sadhana*, *Personality* and *Nationalism* are noteworthy. Sri Aurobindo's *Writings in Arya* are too many to mention. *Foundations of Indian Culture* is such an important work. Vivekananda's works are his lectures. In his lectures abroad, Vivekananda stresses the essential unity of all religions and the need to eschew sectarianism and fanaticism, and looks forward to the day when 'great men shall arise and cast off these kindergartens of religion and make vivid and powerful the true religion, the worship of the 'Spirit by the Spirit.'

North India produced such political prose writers like Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946), Motilal Nehru (1861-1931) and Lala Lajpat Rai (1865-1928). Muslim political thought from North India is represented by Syed Ahmed Khan (1817-98), whose role in the reawakening of his people has already been considered. His *Causes of the Indian Revolt* (1858) was translated into English by Colvin and Graham in 1873 and his *Writings and Speeches* were edited by Shan Mohammed in 1972. The most important of Southern writers were V.S. Srinivas Sastri (1869-1946). In a speech in London in 1921 he even called the British empire 'the greatest temple of freedom on this planet' and hoped that it would be said of England that she 'took charge of a people divided from her by colour, by race and by culture. She fitted them for the tasks of the empire, and when the time was ripe she gladly admitted them to be full and equal partners in the glory of the empire and the service of humanity.'

The Gandhian Age was from 1920 to 1947. As Nehru puts it, 'Gandhi... was like a powerful current of fresh air that made us stretch ourselves and take deep breaths.' (Nehru 303) Gandhi with his Non-cooperation Movement (1920), Civil Disobedience Movement

(1930) and Dandi March and Quit India Movement (1942) got India its freedom in 1947. He reformed the country in all respects, particularly the downtrodden, women and youth. M.K. Naik observes,

Indian English literature of the Gandhian age was inevitably influenced by these epoch-making developments in Indian life. A highly significant feature is the sudden flowering of the novel during the 'thirties, when the Gandhian movement was perhaps at its strongest. (Naik 124)

Gandhi's English writings fall into three periods. To the brief early London period (1888-91) belong the *London Diary*, a chronicle of his sojourn in London, written at the age of nineteen, and ten brief essays contributed to *The Vegetarian* and *The Vegetarian Messenger* on subjects like 'Indian Vegetarians', 'Foods of India' and 'Some Indian Festivals' The South African period (1893-1915) reveals Gandhi blossoming out as a disputationist, journalist and an author. In the pamphlets, 'An Appeal to Every Briton in South Africa' (1895), 'The Indian Franchise' (1895) and 'Grievances of the British Indians in South Africa' (1896), Gandhi argues vigorously for the amelioration of the lot of the South African Indians. *The Indian Opinion* (published in Gujarati and English; 1903-14) was the first of the journals launched by him. Gandhi's first major work, *Hind Swaraj* appeared in its columns in 1909.

Hailed by John Middleton Murry as one of the spiritual classics of the world and 'the greatest book that has been written in modern times and by Gerald Heard as one of those books about which may be said that they are not so much books as great natural phenomena, *Hind Swaraj* is a dialogue in 20 chapters between the Reader and the Writer on the problem of Indian conditions. The main thrust of Gandhi's argument is that true Indian freedom would consist of not merely political emancipation from the British rule but freedom from the bondage of the modern Western machine civilization which, according to him, has poisoned the springs of Indian culture and civilization. Then his autobiography *The Story of My Experiments with Truth* (Vol. I, 1927; Vol. II, 1928; translated by Mahadev Desai) is easily the most outstanding. Essentially a spiritual manual as its title indicates, it is also an absorbing human document, agonizingly frank and unflinchingly honest in its self-portraiture. Besides this, Gandhi has written hundreds of political documents and they are published.

Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964), the political heir of Gandhi, was one of the greatest leaders produced by the 'Third World' in modern times. Prime Minister of India for 17 years, he played an impressive role in international politics. His first book, *Soviet Russia* (1928) is a collection of sixteen articles comprising 'some random sketches and impressions' of Russia after his visit there in 1927. *Glimpses of World History* (1934) is more ambitious in scope. Comprising letters written to his daughter from prison during 1930-33, the book is a survey of world history from the beginnings of civilisation to the nineteen thirties. *An Autobiography* (1936) is easily the crowning achievement of Nehru as a writer. Written at the age of forty-five, it is a literary expression of a man at the height of his powers.

Nehru's prose is a just reflection of the man - sincere and idealistic, urbane and cultured, vigorous yet graceful - a man endowed with a clear and sharp (though perhaps not an original) mind, strong emotions, a feeling for beauty and a keen comic sense.

The chief associates of Gandhi and Nehru who wrote significant prose writings are Vallabhbhai Patel, Pattabi Sitaramayya, Rajendra Prasad, K.M. Munshi, J.B. Kripalani, A.K. Azad, J.C. Kumarappa, Morarji Desai, Vinoba Bhave and others. The works of Subhash Chandra Bose, B.R. Ambedkar, V.D. Savarkar, Mohammad Iqbal, M.A. Jinnah, M.N. Roy, S.A. Dange, Jayaprakash Narayan, Ram Mamohar Lohia and others also contribute significantly to the political prose writing in English. The Indian political prose in English has the following characteristic features:-

- * It is of the age of India's independence.
- * Much of the writings is in English or available in English.
- * Political prose speaks of India's need to reform itself, achieve political independence, and also achieve socio-economic reforms. Few writers concentrate on religious issues. ■

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Quest for an Authentic Selfhood in Sashi Deshpande's Novel *That Long Silence*

Saroj Kumar Lenka

Sashi Deshpande has achieved a reputation as a writer who adds a strong unique and culturally relevant feminist voice to modern Indian English literature. She has been applauded by feminist critics for creating female characters who are able to speak and act independently and have enough sense of personal identity as they struggle to overcome the various injustices in their domestic and social arena. Its characters are mostly educated, middle class Indian women who are financially secured and have the awareness about their rights and have the ability to speak and stand for a cause. That long silence is the realistic picture of every middle class, educated Indian woman seemingly she has all the freedom to enjoy but she is confined between realizations and restrictions.

Jaya's husband, Mohan is a traditionalist who has his roots firmly laid in customs. The differences in their outlook and attitude are so glaring that they fail to understand each other. To Mohan, a woman sitting before the hearth, awaiting her husband's return home and serving hot food is the real "work" of a woman. But to Jaya it is nothing but despair. The ideological difference creates a wide chasm between them and they fail to understand each other. The result is that their marital life grows shaky and shady. It rests on a thin thread of compromise between them rather than based on love. Out of social fear they continue to be husband and wife and not for their mutual need for each other. Mohan has married Jaya not out of love but she resembled his dream girl when she talked fluently in English. He proudly asserts:

"You know, Jaya, the first day I met you at your Ramukaku's house, you were talking to your brother Dinkar and somehow you sounded so much like that girl. I think it was at that moment that I decided I would marry you. (TLS 90)"

Jaya recollects to her dismay that there is absolutely no conversation left between her and Mohan. There is only plaintive silence which leads to unhappiness in her conjugal domestic and social life.

The silence between husband and wife intensifies day after day. Even when Mohan is caught very tightly in the jaws of bribery and they shift to a new abode in Dadar, Bombay, they remain cold and silent. There is no sharing because a psychological distance is kept

between them. Because of the lack of communication, Jaya becomes a silent victim. She has no say in his misconduct and she swallows the bitter pill silently but like a typical traditional wife she follows her husband through thick and thin. In a small old flat, she is out of touch with others, continues her rooting and becomes a silent introvert. Rarely, when he asks questions, she does not find a word to answer them. She says pathetically, “I racked my brains trying to think and answer” (TLS 31). She is silent even on crucial domestic issues. Veena Sheshadri comments:

“One ends of by wondering whether Jaya has imposed the long silence on herself not out of a sense of duty or to emulate the ideal Hindu woman of ages gone by, but in order to camouflage the streaks of ugliness within her. (94)”

Dissatisfied with her married life, Jaya is often engaged in deep contemplation lost in her thought about her childhood, girlhood and womanhood. Jaya is brought up with in the traditional Indian way with gender differentiation. As a child, she could not even respond to or admire classical music in spite of her father’s exhortations and admonitions. She resented the job of dishwashing and cloth washing assigned only to the girls and not to the boys. She stealthily abandoned work and furtively enjoyed Rafi and Lata Mangeshkar’s songs in radio Ceylon. Shaw rightly points out, “Home is girl’s prison and the woman’s work shop” (Penguin Dictionary 358).

Jaya silently recollects the common practice of giving a new name to the newly wedded bride on the wedding day. Jaya is given the name Suhasini by Mohan, her husband, on her wedding day. Though she remains silent, she does not take on or use the name Suhasini; she remains Jaya, the name given to her by her husband, means “a soft smiling, placed, motherly woman” (TLS 16). Her not accepting the new name Suhasini is the manifestation of her resistance as well as assertiveness. “However the rejection of the name Suhasini remains only a token and victory” (Chandra 150).

Soon after their marriage unable to be mute and dumb she had her first and only outburst with Mohan, she was then quite new to the accepted norms of married life. Moreover, though the fault is not on her side, she has to take the first reconciliatory step after days of Mohan’s stubborn silence. Soon after that Jaya instead of raising her voice in protest becomes a silent segregated woman. Mohan tells Jaya “My mother never raised her voice against my father however badly he behaved her” (TLS 83). He expects Jaya, his wife, to follow suit.

Often she feels wounded and hurt at the pile of accusations on her. But she is struck dumb. She wonders, “Oh God, why couldn’t I speak? Why couldn’t I say something? I could say nothing (TLS 120). Her husband used to describe women being treated very cruelly by their husbands and he calls it “Strength”. She comments, “He saw strength in the woman sitting silently in front of the fires, but I saw despair. I saw a despair so great that it would not voice itself. I saw a struggle so bitter that silence was the only weapon. Silence and surrender (TLS 36). Jaya’s plaintive silence and painful suffering leave her emotionally disturbed and mentally jolted. She tolerates even the worst hurt. All these are self-explanatory

to present a disharmonious and forced relationship between Jaya and Mohan. Both of them keep aloof because they are unable to express their real feelings. “All this certainly doesn’t show a natural and harmonious relationship between the two when we see that one is unable to express his or her real feelings to the other” (Sandhu 140).

Her silent suffering reaches its climax when Mohan leaves home silently and stealthily without a word to his wife after she has uncontrollably laughed at him. His absence unnerves her and she begins to ruminate. She is afraid that Mohan has left for good and he will not return to her. Her honour as a wife is at stake. As she does not want her family to disintegrate, she is rather longing to break her silence.

Jaya in her desperate state wanders in anguish in the streets of Mumbai because she could not blow the crushing burden of her marriage and the responsibility of her two children alone on her shoulders. The adverse situation changes after Mohan sends a telegram informing Jaya that the corruption case on him is settled amicably without loss of his job. All her silent protests have ended. With the “All Well” news from Mohan, she finds herself slipping into the grooves of her marital life again. But a change has come over her. She is assertively resilient to take up the role of a wife but without a difference. She has decided not to look for clues in Mohan’s face and then give “him the answer I know he wants” (TLS 193). She decides to write her story and thus she has achieved articulation of her predicament, her anguish, her despair and consequently broken that long silent of her. Her deep rational reflections have given her an important insight. She realizes that fragmentation of “Self” is not possible. Earlier she had caught off the bites of her that had refused to be Mohan’s wife. She had denied certain parts of herself. But now she likes to live “Whole” as an individual with all her blemishes, weaknesses and strength. She does not want to shred off her “Wifehood”. This decision fuels her with vigor and vitality. Jaya forces future with an affirmation vision full of hope. She believes, “Life has always to be made possible” (TLS 193).

Once Jaya breaks her silence the domesticity is reassumed. Her groping in darkness of life has ended. Her agony is over. The dark clouds of her life have passed away. She no longer wants silently to resolve round Mohan like the leg of a compass. “There was nothing left of her, not even bits and pieces that could be put together” (TLS 69). What she finds when she reaches through herself is “the woman who had once lived here. Mohan’s wife, Rahul’s and Rati’s mother. Not myself” (TLS 69). Even as a child she has learnt that husband is like a sheltering tree, a protection and a security for a woman role, abandoning her individuality has made her silent. Mohan’s going away without informing her terribly shaken to her roots. Mohan has locked his heart to her and has not shared his problem with her because she too is not receptive. Lack of mutual understanding has created a chasm between them. Though she is “very special” and “quiet unique” in the words of her father. She does not want to reject her wife role and mother role. Without these two hoods there is no life for her. Mohan’s going away stuns her first but later awakens her to her real place in life.

She realizes that life for her is to be lived fully in relationship with others. Jaya feels that she can have her identity if she has Mohan and her children with her. On receiving Mohan's telegram, she becomes herself. She expresses her feelings empathetically:

"I am not afraid any more. The panic has gone. I'm Mohan's wife I had thought and cut off the bits of me that had refused to be Mohan's wife. Now I know that kind of a fragmentation is not possible". (TLS 191).

She realizes that life is a two-way process. "Her intense searching of the self has brought knowledge of life which cannot be lived in a vacuum" (Bhatt 60). Jaya admits that woman must assert and change themselves. They must be resilient enough to take up the old roles not silently but assertively. She accepts that she must change and hopes that men may change too. She remembers the words of Ramukaka, "Jaya the happiness of your husband and home depends entirely on you" (TLS 138).

Such an optimistic ending of the novel, *That Long Silence* shows that the day is not far off when men and women will be considered equal and supplement to each other. ■

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Roots and Routes: Women in Divakaruni's *Before We Visit the Goddess*

Pooja Halyal

The Indian diaspora forms a considerable chunk of population in the United States. Drawn by the host of opportunities that the American fabric of life provides, ample number of migrants for varied reasons have moved into America and made it a permanent home. However, this settling down is fraught with a number of new experiences as the diasporic selves are caught invariably between two worlds and two very divergent cultures. The feelings of alienation, rootlessness, marginalization and a search for identity become the integral part of the experience of expatriation and transplantation which have become the most striking features of diasporic writing. More so the women immigrants find it emotionally very challenging to adapt to a world, where unbridled freedom itself can become troublesome. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is one such Indian American writers who speaks from diasporic subject positions of women and explores the psychic terrain of diaspora in most of her novels. The present paper is focused on her latest novel *Before We Visit the Goddess*, to study the four generations of women, whose shifting to new pastures brings into their lives a hoard of problems and complexities. Their individual attempts to cope, their initial hiccups, displaced identities and immigrant angst weave a rich tapestry of the diasporic lives of these women enabling the study of Indian diaspora from a gendered perspective. So, this paper attempts to examine the typical issues encountered by the Indian women immigrants, their struggles and negotiations to finally establish their individual identities as presented in the chosen novel.

Key words: Diaspora, gendered perspective, alienation, immigration, angst

“This was something I had achieved by myself, without having to depend on anyone. No one could take it away. That’s what I want for you my Tara, my Bela. That’s what it really means to be a fortunate lamp.” (208)

The above lines written down by Sabitri as a sane piece of advice by a dying woman to her granddaughter and her daughter clinch the whole novel *Before We Visit the Goddess* together. They are also the concluding lines of the novel and are the gist of novelist’s experienced philosophy, that was also what Simon de Beauvoir in her *The Second Sex* vouches for, that is each one of us will find solace only when we transcend ourselves and achieve what is unique to our selves, that which demarcates us from others and gives us an identity.

The novel among other themes also works out the quest for identity and a struggle for acceptance through the multiple narrations of a number of characters. Beginning with Durga, Sabitri's mother who lives in a village near Kolkata, Divakaruni presents a strong ambitious woman who establishes herself as an expert sweet maker and derives her identity from it. Using her skill of making confectionaries, Durga is able to make herself known for the best sweets in her village, and becomes the chosen one by the rich householders for sweets during all special occasions, which also gives economic sustenance to Durga's family. It's on one such occasion that Durga while catering sweets to the Mittirs, very strategically wins an opportunity for her academically bright daughter Sabitri to study in Kolkata, impressing upon Leelamoyi who sponsors Sabitri's studies, offering stay at her home in Kolkata. Though appearing only in the first chapter titled 'Fortunate Lamp,' Durga is present all through the novel – as it is her skill of making sweets that is inherited by her daughter Sabitri, that gives her a foothold in her troubled times, and the establishment of the shop 'Durga Sweets' in Kolkata, ultimately giving her the much needed stability and an individual identity. Also it is Durga's parting advice to the Kolkata bound Sabitri that "Good daughters are fortunate lamps, brightening the family's name" that pervades through the novel as a check to all the women in the novel who waver from their resolve, thereby making Durga a living presence in the novel providing the roots of responsibility even when they choose different routes in their lives

Durga's thrust that her daughter should get educated, uplift herself and make a name and earn a social standing as an independent and accomplished individual, becomes a message for all women in the novel. In fact it was Durga's words and her determination of educating her daughter that sustained Sabitri initially in the ambience of indifference and cold treatment that she received in the Mittirs house. Sabitri recollects, "To send Sabitri to Kolkata, she'd had to fight all their relatives, who warned her that she was sending the girl to her ruination. Remembering that gave Sabitri the strength to go down to her cheerless room for another long night of study" (44)

Hence, it was Durga's intense desire and maneuvering that transplanted Sabitri into a new land, though only a nearby city Kolkata, yet it displaced Sabitri and set her on a new path of establishing her own identity. However, Sabitri, enamoured by the little kindness shown to her by Leelamoyi and attracted by the closeness that Leelamoyi's son Rajiv developed towards her, loses sight of her target of becoming a teacher and ends up being unceremoniously thrown out of the Mittirs house. But, she is fortunate to get shelter from her Mathematics professor Bijay Dasgupta, who later marries her, and to the delight of Durga, also encourages her to study even after the birth of their daughter Bela. But Sabitri fails to see reason, as the comfort of marriage makes her complacent, only to realize later in harsh circumstances, what her mother had meant. It is only later in her life, after the death of her husband in an accident that she finally is able to carve an identity for herself through the establishment of Durga Sweets and inventing her own signature dish, naming it after her mother 'Durga Mohan.' It is the elation of the moment of making this dish, as she

confesses in the letter to her granddaughter that gives her highest happiness and sense of worth. As Bipin Bihari, Sabitri's closest confidante and manager of Durga Sweets remembers, "It must be the saffron I put in. oh, Bipin. I'm so happy, I don't think I've ever been happier." (85)

It's through this sweet Durga Mohan, that Sabitri finally plants herself and her mother's identity firmly in an alien land Kolkata, and flourishes there. However, as no parent however strong, can lead their children on safe and well meant paths; so also, Sabitri fails in settling her daughter Bela comfortably. In all haste, Bela runs away to America, on forged papers to marry Sanjay Dewan, a man struggling to eke out a living for himself. The third generation daughter 'Bela' is now in the roller coaster of life, an illegal diasporic, trying to plant herself in an alien land, with only the anchorage of her passionate love for Sanjay. As an immigrant, she undergoes lots of anxiety and emotional turmoil, trying to adjust to a life of bare minimum, small dreams and bearing the burden of mothering and motherhood without the support of her own mother, The cultural shocks in store for her in America, as she is ill-equipped to take on any decent job without a degree makes her life all the more difficult. When the hopelessness of her situation dawns on her during her unplanned pregnancy, her anxiety torments her thus:

Great, racking sobs erupted from Bela. She hadn't wept like this since she was a child. She couldn't stop even though she knew that getting worked up was bad for the baby: all the books had agreed on that. But everything she had tamped down, all her disappointments since-yes, for the first time she admitted it-her marriage, swirled in her like a dust storm. She was struck in this dingy apartment, struck in a dead-end job she hated, struck under a load of unpaid loans so heavy that she'd probably never be able to squirm out from under them and go back to college." (107)

However, it is in the delirium of her fever that Bela finally realizes the sacrifice of her mother and the unkind act of herself, of abandoning her mother. She recollects how soon after the funeral of her father,

"A well- meaning neighbor-woman said, "You've got to cry and let it out, or you'll go mad." Sabitri had looked at her, her face expressionless. "I won't go mad. I have a daughter to bring up." (111)

It is in her fit of fever that Bela who always felt that her mother spent more time at the sweet shop and does not give her enough time, ultimately is able to see her mother's association with Durga Sweets in proper light- "Durga Sweets, Bela saw now, had been important to her mother only because it was a means of providing Bela with all she needed, And then Bela had abandoned her" (111)

Having put up with all the sufferings, when Bela had finally adjusted to her American routine, with her daughter 'Tara', Sanjay and Bishu, Sanjay's best friend, a regular visitor

to their home, life offers its twist, and Sanjay develops an unnatural suspicion on the relationship between Bela and Bishu, loses his peace of mind, distances Bishu from their lives. The suffering caused by this separation results in Bishu's death within two years. It's only then Sanjay realizes that all the way he was playing to the tunes of Tara, who had masterminded this separation of Bishu from them. Sanjay who was indebted to the favours of Bishu, right from his loveless childhood times is now overcome with guilt and grief and decides to teach Tara, a lesson. He purposely takes charge of baby Tara on himself, detaches her from Bela, and makes himself inevitable to the baby and when Tara turns into her teenage shocks them with his decision to divorce Bela. However, this decision not only punishes Bela but wrecks devastation on Tara, who finds herself completely uprooted with no sanctuary to nurse her bruised soul. Alienated by her parents' divorce, let down by her most beloved father, in an alien land with no relatives to give her the necessary anchorage, she loses sight of her purpose in life. She quits her education and moves out of home and disconnects herself completely from her parents. Having lost her husband and daughter, Bela now is devastated. She has no job, no love or purpose in life and tries to take her life. But, somehow, after shifting places, in her drunken shrunken state, meets Kenneth who also was suffering pangs of desertion from David, his boyfriend. Ironically, it is Kenneth, an American gay who restores her to health and equilibrium in life, as Kenneth gets Bela a job in a local store, gets her to shed her kilos, overcome alcoholism and reinvent her culinary skills and establish her Blog- 'Bela's Kitchen'. Again, it is only her inheritance of her skill at cooking, the roots of culinary skills imbibed by her from her grandmother Durga via her mother Sabitri that gives Bela a sense of stability, a purpose and an identity as Bela's cook books are well received and makes her well known. Bela survives and re-establishes her connection with life independently through connecting back to her roots, only to get in touch with her daughter late in life.

Tara, on the other hand, does multiple dead-end, low paying jobs, is at the mercy of strangers for love who use her, has an abortion, gets into drugs, alcoholism, losing all connect with life, finally becoming a kleptomaniac. Chitra Divakaruni paints a picture of a helpless, alienated state of this second generation diasporic, Tara, whose only connect with America, was through her parents, and having lost it, the sheer independence the country offers can devastate the rootless person. In her search for tidbits of love, she develops an obsession of stealing the items which for her symbolize affection, care and love, which she fights to overcome, once she courts death during one of her driving escapades,

A small episode of meeting an old woman 'Mrs. Mehta' from India, when Tara gets hired to look after her temporarily to facilitate Mrs. Mehta's son and daughter-in-law going on a vacation, gives her first brush with an Indian woman. Tara's immediate adjustment with her gives a clue of what is lacking in her life- the emotional support and unconditional love that only close relatives with empathetic bonding can provide. Similarly when she gets hired to drive Dr. Venkatachalapati, a visiting economist from India, to Meenakshi temple at Pearland, since she too is of Indian descent, she unknowingly seems to follow

him into the temple and partake of all the rituals along with him, though it is her first visit to temple. Her visit to the Goddess seems to soothe her disturbed mind, and Dr. Venkatachalapati fills up the void in her of an absent father. His simple advice to purge the self, changes her life completely: “Before we visit the goddess,” he said, “We must cleanse ourselves”. (135)

Mesmerised by the chanting of mantras and offering personalized prayers to the Goddess, the scent of the holy ash has a cathartic effect on her, and she longs to really purge her life. She muses, “A prayer was offered in my name-probably for the first time in my life. Now I’m jubilantly carrying back a handful of squished flowers, an apple, a paper cone of ash, and a Styrofoam container filled with mushy porridge. And the magical smell” (129)

Soon after her car meets with an accident, and getting face-to-face with death, for the first time she opens up her heart to this stranger Dr. Venkatachalapathi and confesses about her abortion. His confession of having lost his own daughter ‘Meena’ for his non-acceptance of her lesbian orientation, somehow heals both, and taking his advice, “Go back to school, Amma. Don’t give up,” (135) Tara takes charge of her life once again and enrolls herself in college. She even consults a therapist Dr. Berger, for her kleptomaniac tendencies, gets married to Gary and has a son Neel, and takes stock of her life.

Tara now reverts to her roots, meets her mother, spends time with her and tries to set right her estranged relations with her. The ultimate healing happens to Tara through her connect with her grandmother Sabitri, when she finds the letter that Sabitri had written to Tara, persuading her not to quit her studies. Tara finds her roots, her connect to her legacy and derives the stability that she so much needs. The letter in fact, gives Tara the strength and resolve to overcome her kleptomania, because she for the first time, tries to return the stolen item, this time a photograph of her grandmother Sabitri from her mother Bela’s album, which she stole in spite of her mother’s refusal to give it to her. Tara narrates this as an achievement-

“I go to my bedroom and retrieve the sepia photo from my carry-on. It isn’t easy. I take a deep breath and hold it. I bite the inside of my cheek until I taste blood. Twice I turn back. But finally I manage to walk with the photo to the family room, stepping carefully in the dark. I’m going to put it back in the album. Dr. Berger, it’s the first time in my life that I’m returning what I’ve stolen. I think you might call this a landmark moment” (202)

However, Tara gets caught by her mother during her attempt to put the photo back in the album, which finally leads to Tara’s confession to her mother, revealing the angst in Tara due to uprooting that most immigrants face. She shouts-

“Do you want to know why I steal? I take things that I should have had but didn’t get. Things that mean happy memories. Things that stand for love and commitment. But sometimes I steal things that mean nothing. I steal them because there’s a big hole in the middle of my chest and stealing fills it up for a moment.”(204)

thus is set on the path of rejuvenation, healing all the bruises that she suffered due to lack of emotional attachments with people other than her parents.

Thus, Chitra Divakaruni describes the journey of Diaspora, especially women Diaspora in most of her works. She talks about immigrants encounter in new country and how one loses one's identity and becomes a nameless person but this also gives one an unknown sense of freedom. In the present novel too, she touches upon the discomfort that displacement brings in. Be it Sabitri, Bela or Tara, all the three women suffer immigrant angst while trying to adapt to the milieu outside their locale away from their near and dear ones, in exile and loneliness. As K.S Dhanam writes Divakaruni also contrasts the lives and perceptions of first generation immigrants with that of their children born and raised in foreign land. And inevitably, it includes the Indian American experience of grappling with two identities. She has her finger accurately on the diasporic pulse, fusing eastern values with western ethos. Her writing course with her identification is with a brave new world forging to life. Her sensitivity to contemporary voices, today's issues are threaded through with an ongoing search for identity beyond anthropology, beyond sociology and beyond academia. ■

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Masculinity and the War on Terror: A Reading of Kevin Powers' *The Yellow Birds*

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In Tim O'Brien's prize-winning literary reflections on the Vietnam War, *The Things They Carried*, the young O'Brien, who has taken off to the border of Canada trying to escape, engaged in a desperate moral struggle over the decision to flee or be sent off to a war he believes is wrong. "I feared the war," the character says, "but I also feared exile" (1990, 44). His confusion and perplexity of his struggle makes him envision conversations in his hometown where he attempts justified arguments with the imagined townspeople elaborating how the war is wrong. Yet his impassioned reasons face a beating when confronted with their condemnatory chatter. "No matter, it was a war to stop the Communists, plain and simple, which was how they liked things, and you were a treasonous pussy if you had second thoughts about killing or dying for plain and simple reasons" (45). Eventually he concedes defeat under the grip of something more powerful than the sincerity of his reasons or the voice of his conscience.

My conscience told me to run, but some irrational and powerful force was resisting, like a weight pushing me toward the war. What it came down to, stupidly, was a sense of shame. Hot, stupid shame. I did not want people to think badly of me. Not my parents, not my brother and sister, not even the folks down at the Gobbler Café. . . . I was ashamed of my conscience, ashamed to be doing the right thing (1990, 52).

As the final moment of decision making approaches O'Brien helplessly imagines a scene which leaves him sobbing as he retreats. "Traitor! they yelled. Turncoat! Pussy! I felt myself blush. . . . It had nothing to do with morality. Embarrassment, that's all it was" (59). The shame O'Brien dreads which disrupts his deliberation and conscience is expressed in the choice of names he imagines being called: "sissy," "pussy," "coward," "traitor." He is in the grip of an imaginary in which what is female is linked not only to the possibility of sexual violation, but to cowardice and treason as well, to an unsurvivable shame that threatens to undo him so that what finally propels him to war is the fear of being called a woman or made to feel like a woman that sends some men like him into pathological states of violent panic and desperate action. Kevin Powers' autobiographical Iraq War novel *The Yellow*

Birds sets into motion such a story of an embarrassing young man who sees in combat the prospect of a glorious entry into manhood, whose decision to enlist into the army was settled on a brief impulsiveness to avoid being calling names attributed to a more feminine self. Like O'Brien's character, Bartle in *The Yellow Birds* finds himself trapped in the binding action of shame; it curtails his ability to make decisions in a rational frame, or a moral frame, despite his wish to do so. The power of this binding is so great it overwhelms personal desire, political commitment, and conscious ethical concern as the only thing that pervades and becomes the sole determinant of his actions is a particular view of masculinity that he has been confronted with. From that moment it has been a continuing process of undoing and shaping oneself in lines of what you believe defines a man.

The aftermath of 9/11 witnessed a vigorous revitalization of the project of national manhood particularly in the public countenance of Bush and his use of rhetorical flourishes like "We'll smoke 'em out!", his vow to bring the terrorists in "dead or alive," and his taunting reply to the fear of guerilla attacks on US troops in Iraq, "Bring 'em on!", alluded to the response needed to restore the inviolability of the nation which has been challenged and therefore warranted an aggressive display of courage and manhood that was infallible. The obsessive repetition of the images of the fallen towers and the political cartoons of Saddam and Osama bin Laden that circulated in heaps as a site of retributive events increasingly gives us the impression of the US cultural imagination associated with the attack. The significance of the events got translated into the language of the symbolic and the idea that was embedded into the collective national consciousness was that the demolition of the towers came to stand for the destruction and penetration of American manhood. Faludi noted that the underside of the post-9/11 project of national manhood was "the suspicion that the nation and its men had gone soft" (2007, 8). It seemed that the nation was "feeling like a woman" too. Elder George, the gender-fundamentalist blogger while discussing about the situation and the possible solution clearly states

Things need to get back to a "natural balance" when it comes to gender. It is the masculine Gender that sets the standards, be they moral, ethical, educational, or societal. It is the masculine Gender that provides stability, constancy and discipline. . . . These attributes of the masculine Gender provide the secure environment in which the feminine Gender can nurture the race" (2001b)

American manhood converges with the image of national sovereignty and thus a symbolic effort to redeem the latter turns into articulating the restoration of the power of the American phallus. The idea of 'manning up' then repeats at the individual level with urgency in widespread panic of the nation collapsing into femininity on the international stage.

The War on Terror operates at an aesthetic level in the sense that the process of making it comprehensible and at the same time reasonable is carried out through stories, images and tone of the proclamations rather than the content. The structure associated with

the proliferation of the aesthetics of manhood, however, dwells on the basic premise that gender is primarily lived in the realm of the aesthetic; when considered the life lived by both men and women, the aesthetic dimension has a certain primacy. We, as individuals, more or less, live under the structuring regime of gender. As Bonnie Mann speaks about the permeating influence that gender weighs on our sensibilities-

Gender is implicated from the start in the operation of sense-making on every level, playing its role in making sense of me for others from the first moment of recognition (today at the moment of the sonographic image), determining so often the first colors that decorate the space of my belonging (whether the room I come home to is filled with pink, with pastels or sharper, harder colors), establishing important parameters around how I am held and addressed. I am welcomed to the world through the aesthetic passions of the people who receive me, so that my entire perceptual apparatus undergoes its training, from the beginning, in the midst of others' deeply held commitments. Gender is implicated, then, in the schooling of my senses, in the shaping of my perceptual capacities. In fact, I claim that when it comes to understanding how gender is lived in the body of the subject, the primary mode of its living is *aesthetic*. (2014, 70)

The association of masculine aesthetics with war explains how the constitution of images of national manhood penetrates and manages to get their claws deep into the very identity structure of individual persons. Young men and women in the United States, attracted to the idea of national manhood, coupled with poverty and an idle life with dim prospects offers to enlist as military recruits as a way to earn a dignified living as well as participate in the fantasy of masculine sovereignty at the same time. This precisely seems to be Bartle's reason as he tries to pin down, in retrospect, the objectives inducing him to join the military. The enticing trap of 'becoming a man' combined with the fear and shame of being called a fag or womanly because of your 'different' aesthetic pursuits precipitated in taking his decision, which doesn't turn out to be sagacious as he looks back now.

...because you wanted to be a man and people made fun of you and pushed you around in the cafeteria and the hallways in high school because you liked to read books and poems sometimes and they'd call you fag and really deep down you know you wanted to be a man and that's never gonna happen now and you are too much of a coward to be a man and get it over...(145)

Shame, in this particular regard, is a mechanism worthy of our attention. For Bartle, his personal space merges with the national scene dripping with the possibility of shame changing the course of his life. In a distorted world plagued by the captures of a fantasized efficacy of violent masculinity, gendered identifications are achieved by an imaginary domain replete with narratives of shame. And most often masculinity is claimed by an aggressive denial and defeat of any vulnerability including shame through redemptive violence. Speaking about the correlation between sovereign masculinity and shame Mann notes

“Shame always accompanies sovereign masculinity because it plays a central part in its production. This is why we see systematic, relentless, repetitious shaming, wherever sovereign masculinity is the aspirational ideal.” (2014, 109) Shame, thus, becomes a concomitant necessitating transformation of one’s self with its relation to the world as it fuses viscerally with the project of national manhood. Bartle speaks of experiencing ‘a unique kind of shame’ (37), a sense of humiliation brought about by their insignificant lives. Humiliation, to many, stands for emasculation that many young men feel in response to their aspirations of giving their lives a meaning, a life where they are respected as men. Military, because of its association with a community driven sense of glorification and patriotism, becomes one way for individuals to come out of this binding framework of shame. The shame to power conversion of a soldier is attained when he is offered a place in the collective fraternal agency of the military unit where he is offered honour as an antidote to shame. This conversion takes place most readily through hyperbolic displays of masculine agency, particularly in combat and violence. The shame to power framework operates quite smoothly as its redemptive promises of glory and honour capture the hearts of young men quite uncritically which in turn feeds unequivocally to the project of national manhood. But the register of your power to overcome your own fear, your own vulnerability, through an act of violence is often brought at the cost of lives as Bartle soon discovers. Bartle recounts of many instances when the soldier’s apprehension was conquered when he got the better of the opposition until it became a sort of a habit. In one such occasion Bartle depicts how they felt better when they knew they were killing an enemy together until they were sure he was dead. Such an act could comfort them of their own invincibility aiding to sink their fears which moves him to ask “what kind of men are we?”(21) For a soldier to get fully transformed at the end of their rigorous basic training and belong to a valued collective fraternity, they have to undergo the replacement of ethical questioning and moral concerns with a set of readymade morality. The ritualistic chanting of cadences, the recitation of creeds and codes of conduct, provide a set of readymade beliefs and values. The moral script replete with ideas of honour, pride and loyalty are internalized as these values and beliefs are incorporated from soldier to soldier to achieve a kind of uniformed homogeneity. The soldier who feels rescued from his own sense of a shameful devalued self pledges all loyalties to his association with the military as he is compellingly gratified in the purpose of a common objective. Epitomizing the model of the ideal soldier in the novel is Sergeant Sterling whose heroics in combat and leadership are exemplary. His bravery is characterized as “narrowly focused, pure and unadulterated” (43). Another trait that marks him out is his unflinching support and sacrifice to the cause which was “free of ideology, free of logic” (43). To imbibe what was being imparted he would yell at others to repeat what they were already practicing and find their own nasty spirit. If spectacular violence is the hallmark of sovereign masculinity in its American manifestation, Sterling represented it to the core as he would smile, scream and at the same time manage to look serene through shootings. Though Bartle hated him for the way in which he excelled in “death and brutality” (19), he

couldn't but share the soldiers' admiration for Sterling for he realized his necessity in war. It was the war who made warriors like Sterling.

In societies, particularly those that have a tradition of engaging in war, two important qualities associated with manhood pervasively are mental toughness and a multilayered inherent misogyny. Mental toughness comes with the ability to control one's response to suffering. Speaking about the psychological aspects expected of a potential warrior, Digby writes –

He must be able to focus selectively, and sometimes suspend altogether, the capacity to care about the suffering of others, as well as his own suffering. The warrior must be able to kill another man without consideration of the suffering of the persons who loved and depended upon that man. In some cases he even has to do that as those loved ones watch. That capacity to suspend caring about the suffering of one's victims plays a contributing role in military mistakes, including civilian casualties. (2014, 47)

The role of combat in war calls for a diminished concern about the suffering of others and a suppression of empathy that can lessen the guilt in case of casualties. Soldiers are turned into killing machines as Bartle recalls “nothing seemed more natural than someone getting killed” (11). In addition to killing—whether deliberately or by mistake—the warrior must be able to maim and mutilate other men without concern for the pain and continuing disability those men will endure. This kind of emotional impoverishment is emphasized as we find Sterling pounding bullets after bullets on an elderly couple in a car just on the basis of suspicion as others choose to watch in unmoved silence. To get them emotionally combat-ready, boys who let their fear show, or who manifest feelings of concern for the suffering of others, are commonly admonished with imperatives like “Tough it up,” “Boys don't cry,” “Suck it up,” “Play through the pain,” “No pain, no gain,” “C'mon, be a man,” etc. These injunctions toward manliness make it apparent that to become a “real man”, they are to be directed not to show any fear, emotional vulnerability, or empathy for the suffering of others. The results of such training can never be constructive as far as emotional wellbeing is concerned. Powerful emotional bonds among men fighting a common enemy are always considered as an important source of military strength. However, sometimes, the emotional handicap that a soldier is infused to exhibit in other avenues obstructs his ability when the need arises to care for a fellow soldier. Bartle is not accustomed to the role of a protector cum care-giver which Murph's mother wants him to take for her son. He would like to believe he was a little different as he possessed a remaining trace of “ghost of compassion” (14) at the start of the war. His guilt becomes profound when he considers the possibility of reversing Murph's fate had he not given up the caring role that he ought to have played in regard to the promise he had made. Even the safe shelter of motherly care becomes at times stifling and embarrassing for Bartle which accounts for his worsening relation with his mother as well as provides a reason to get enlisted. Despite the indoctrination of emotional toughness that goes into the making of these soldiers, the fragility of the whole setup is

exposed when we consider the fact that about 40 percent come back¹ with PTSD and other mental disorders while military suicide rates have been setting new records every passing year. The emotional impoverishment that they undergo as part of their training has a detrimental effect on their psychological health and the impact is on an alarming rise in recent years. In the novel, Bartle struggles to come in terms with his past guilt and contemplates suicide while it is suggested that Sterling must have pulled the trigger on himself. The ideals of manhood that one is made to believe leaves suicide as a more dignified way of going down rather than concede mental ailment and accept proper treatment because being seen seeking help would undermine his masculine image of toughness.

Inculcating mental toughness in boys goes hand in glove with misogyny as we find any tendency to show anxiety, emotional vulnerability, fear, or a need for help is taken not just as a sign of weakness or lack of bravery but also as a sign of not being a man at all, and the only alternative according to the culturally programmed gender binary is to be a woman. Coming to misogyny now, we see that its power to culturally enforce the ideals of masculinity, particularly that of warrior masculinity, continues unabated. As discussed earlier in the chapter, the threat of being deemed a woman or girl is taken incredibly seriously by any boy or man who has been subjected to this militaristic cultural programming. To be seen as a woman not only places a man on the alternative plane on the binary gender division but also implies that you have fallen to a level that is inferior and hence deeply despised. Misogyny, thus, constitutes an effective measure of culturally policing the lives of men in their passage towards warrior masculinity. The masculine imagination of the nation is reflected in the mindset of soldiers as the war suggests a struggle for power over a feminized Other. It is easier to kill or disfigure someone who is not deemed a full person. Likewise, to the extent men don't treat women as full persons, to the extent they dehumanize women, it becomes easier for men to mutilate or injure an enemy who is at once womanized. The effects of this cultural programming are seen in a warrior's life in civilian circumstances as well when interacting in a heterosexual relation. Commenting on how the ideals of warrior masculinity take a toll on their individualities Digby writes- "Men's maltreatment of women emanates from the fusion of the misogyny and emotional "toughness" that form the emotional core of warrior masculinity, along with the adversariality that we have seen to be intrinsic to heterosexuality in militaristic cultures. Hence it is not only individual women who become the victims of "manly men," it is women in general" (2014, 72). Raised on belligerent masculine ideals of mental toughness and misogyny, a soldier is disadvantaged to the extent that he is rendered emotionally impoverished and incapable of extending any meaningful relationship with women. In the novel we see Sterling and his soldiers trying to come out of their war agony by "raising hell in the bar" (55). Showing anxiety, weakness and their emotional vulnerability becomes an uncharted territory for the soldiers as Sterling finds himself on the edge of losing control and somehow sentimental, something the soldiers around him are not used to. The constraints of having to suppress his emotions all the time begins to show up as he uses force on a bargirl finding no other way to divulge his feelings. Reliance of force to satisfy desires and inhibition of empathy leads him to

...grabbed her by the face with his free hand and squeezed and she struggled to get loose and I could see on her cheeks a deep red where he held her. His thumb and fingers made the skin of each opposing cheek sink between her teeth, and she tried to pull away. Tears ran down through the remains of her mascara, but she kept her fine jaw clenched and stood as tall and firmly as she could against the presence of his hands. (66)

The sense of belief in the superiority of the masculine self requires the feminine Other to be possessed which at the same time justifies the use of physical domination and control over her.

Given the presence of an all-volunteer military in America, Power's novel also centers around the sense of alienation that veterans like Bartle goes through after their return home. Bartle internalizes the truth of modern combat as he is severed from his culture. In conveying Bartle's sense of separation, Powers communicates that only few civilians understand and share the responsibility of America's wars while veterans like Bartle are contentedly forgotten. Bailey comments "The all-voluntary service allows most Americans the safety of distance not only from war but the possibility of military service, even from their fellow citizens who have volunteered to serve" (254-255). Left isolated to struggle it out all alone, Bartle retreats time and again to a pastoral past unstained by the gruesome experiences of the war. The innocence-experience paradigm is both representative and atypical of American's experiences of the Iraq War. Innocence in the novel is conflated with the life the young Bartle and Murphy spent in the outskirts of Virginia and put against the experience that comes from living and participating in the Iraq War's horrors. By constantly returning to the Virginia/Iraq dichotomy the novel brings to the forefront Bartle's reflection upon a past that he had forgone with the blind embrace of a botched narrative. His soul searching scrutiny testifies the loss of innocence suffered. Growing into maturity and becoming a 'man' holds much significance in their lives which is however brought at the loss of their innocence. "...I can feel how young I was. I can feel my body before it was scarred. I can reach to my cheek and for a moment remember how the skin was unblemished, then torn, and then healed below my eye like a wadi in miniature...I can feel myself for what I was. Barely a man. Not a man" (38-39).

Masculinity, especially in the form of national manhood attends to and enables certain justificatory operations. The process of justification works so effectively that it colours the opinions of most Americans-whether one who would serve the army or one who had little or no part in it. The bartender in the novel is seen to reiterate the official position as he speak to Bartle about nuking "those sand niggers back to the Stone Age"(105) and "turning the whole place into glass" (105) . It allows them to fiercely defend the US mission of the War on Terror as necessary and good disregarding the death and destruction the path shall lead to. Gender becomes the justificatory apparatus in the money laundering² operation that the war is, brilliantly outlined by Mann as

As one reads deeper, one finds that the authors are fundamentally concerned with how to justify war when there is no credible enemy and how to convince people to spend money on the military if there is no prospect of war. First, how can you get the American people to engage in the profit-securing purchase and use of weapons capable of unspeakable levels of destructive force, designed to take human life, destroy infrastructure, and wreak environmental havoc into the next millennium on an unthinkable scale, when your nation is the unchallenged world superpower? An undisputed superpower seemingly has no good reason to buy so many guns, and very good reason to spend its money on other things. A superpower without credible enemies lurking at the gates is hard pressed to make a claim to self-defense or to find justification for war in the form of a threat to national sovereignty...Repeatedly lamenting the lack of any credible enemy, the authors subtly shift the emphasis to *an aesthetic of war* that is at once its own justification and beyond the need for justification. Here US sovereignty is no longer an issue of secure borders and secure interests—the authors acknowledge that these are not threatened. Sovereignty becomes instead a certain drive toward self-display, a certain style of national masculinity, and war becomes the material arena for its performative constitution, self-making rather than self-defending. The sublime spectacle of overwhelming power is the mechanism through which the feminizing humiliation of whatever enemy can be dredged up is to be accomplished, but more than that, it is the material sign of the superpower's superpower.

The soldier's conversion from a position of contempt to respect has been engendered on the basis of his belief in his weight and importance in the whole setup. His initial decision to join the armed forces may have been mobilized by his intent on proving his masculinity. However, when he realizes the hollowness of all justifications and the knowledge that he has been used in a larger game of profit and loss where he is just one of the many expendables finally creeps in, a powerful sense of disillusionment and betrayal is provoked. Bartle can now see through the futility of one such pep talk given to the platoon by one of the sergeants justifying the great violence that they were about to commit in the name of good. Bartle recalls how he was moved by the speech at the time of deployment. He accepts he didn't give much of a thought when he chose to join the army; his judgment more an outcome of a brief moment rather than thoughtful considerations. Finding himself stranded in a purposeless war as sacrificial pawns, where he is fighting neither an individual battle nor an ethical conflict leaves him disenchanted in the role of a soldier. The last effort to cling to the manhood of the soldier is made not because you believe in it but because that is what might get you home alive or help you in earning a dignified death if it comes to that. Notwithstanding the intense internalization sovereign masculinity acquires in the life of a soldier it is prone to failure. Bartle introduces us to Murphy as a terribly young, blond haired, country bred innocent who looked much like Sterling "but it was as if Murphy was the ordinary version"(35). He embodies a pole opposite to Sterling and these two soldiers pull Bartle in and out of the war. Bartle leaves no space for suspense as he declares about Murph's death in the opening ten pages of the novel and that he couldn't keep the promise that he had pledged to Murph's mother that he would ensure her son's safety. While musing

on his decision to join the army in the first place he tells that he shares this reality with Murph apart from the fact that both belonged to the state of Virginia. People like them lacked the courage to define their identity and instead adopted the identity of a soldier one who is made a hero and held in great esteem. Murph couldn't embrace the character of a soldier like Sterling did. Instead he chose to pursue a different course of action as his personal reaction against the dehumanizing pressures of the war. He was in full acceptance of the idea that in a war the soldier's name is already written down in the rolls of the already dead. Even before we learn of his death's full horror we see him anticipating his demise and trying to soften its impact on those he loves. Sterling recognizes what is happening to Murph as he confides to Bartle "you'd better get used to the fact that Murph's a dead man" (155). He continues: "There's only one way home for real, Private. You've got to stay deviant in this motherfucker" (156). Murphy doesn't "stay deviant" but instead comes "to embody an opacity I couldn't penetrate further," (156) Bartle says. Bartle discovers that while disappearing from the base Murphy has been watching a beautiful female medic attempt to save wounded soldiers. Murphy projects his last wish onto her as he considered the small area she was working in as the last known habitat of gentleness and kindness. Murph concludes that in watching the woman he expressed his most basic desire for agency: "He wanted to want" (165). It was after her death being shelled by enemy mortars that Murphy completely give up, goes AWOL, naked and wandering the streets where he is captured, killed and mutilated.

Thus, we find gender performing its justificatory act aptly if the threat of gendered shame makes us inconsiderate and morally complacent about the death and destruction of lives not included in the imagined fraternal community of the manly nation. Speaking about the significance of gender to a nation promoting war, Mann writes "...if it makes some men raised under the spectre of sovereign manhood prefer silence or death to the experience, then it must be of inexpressible value to the nation, especially in times of war"(94, 2014). Those who are duped to believe in the retributive power of masculinity seek to transform contempt into respect through the spectacle of violence. In addition to showing how gender works in the justificatory exercise of war *The Yellow Birds* is a painstaking exposition of the consequential ordeal that a soldier has to undergo in the narrative scheme of national manhood. ■

(Footnotes)

¹ William D Hartung in his *Costs of War* calls the WoT a historic money laundering operation. It names the material process by which 400 billion dollars in public monies (so far) are transferred into private hands through the money laundering agencies called the Pentagon, the State Department, the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency and the Department of Homeland Security. "The transfer is rather direct: the citizen's money is handed over through the vehicle of the private contract to the good people at Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon and General Dynamics." (Hartung 2012, 1).

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An Analytical Study of Manju Kapur's Literary Works

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An Analytical Study of Manju Kapur's Works presents an analysis of Kapur's novels in order to assess and evaluate her place in the contemporary Indian English Fiction. Manju Kapur shot into fame with her debut novel *Difficult Daughters* (1998). The novel won for her the prestigious Commonwealth Eurasia Region Award for the best debut novel of 1999. Manju Kapur is a post colonial writer who perceives the position of women in a patriarchal society and deals with the problems of women. She makes the woman a figure that fights against taboos, social and joint family restrictions and constraints laid by patriarchy in the tradition. Her writings reflect man–woman relationship, rebellion, body, human desire, longing, gender discrimination, marginalization and protest. Her novels manifest women's struggle for emancipation from economic, political and social bondages, voicing well the sentiments of women and their self-introspections. The female main character of her novels protest against male domination and are not silent rebels but are outspoken, bold, determined and action oriented. This paper will provide new perspectives and insight on the writings of Manju Kapur. This work will be of great help to the researches and teachers of English Literature.

Manju Kapur, born in 1948 at Amritsar was educated at M.A. Dalhousie University in 1972. She teaches English at Delhi University under the name Manju Kapur Dalmia. She is married to Gun Nidhi Dalmia, have three children and three grand children and live in New Delhi. 1999 commonwealth writer's prize, best first book, Europe and south Asia *Difficult Daughters*. 2011 DSC prize for South Asian Literature, short list *The Immigrant*. her works *Difficult Daughters* (1998) *A married woman* (2003) *Home* (2006) *The Immigrant* (2008) *Custody* (2011) *Shaping the world : Women writer on themselves* (2014) *Brother* (2016).

The search for control over one's destiny, the key theme of *Difficult Daughters*, refers to the Independence aspired to and obtained by a nation, but also to the independence yearned after by a woman and member of that same nation. Virmati, the heroine seeks human relations that will allow her life which, as an educated woman, she knows she deserves. Born in Amritsar in the Punjab in 1940, the daughter of a father of progressive ideas and a traditionalist mother, she aspires to a freer life than that offered her by those

around her. This aspiration is condemned to failure, thanks to the incomprehension she marries but also thanks to her own mistakes, for no one obliged her to marry who became her husband, and she was free not to make the choice she did. Virmati, like so many other women, is asked to accept a typical arranged marriage. She rebels against that destiny, to the lasting shame of her family, above all of her mother. Demand on her right to be educated, she manages to leave home to study in Lahore. All the same she falls in love with an Amritsar teacher known as the professor, a married man who first looks in her life as her parents' renter. After a number of fluctuation variations, including a period as a school principal in a small Himalayan State, she finally marries the man she loves and returns to Amritsar to live with him. However, he ignores to leave his first wife, and the issue for Virmati is harsh indeed. She ends up being cornered by her own family and despised by her husband's. Virmati's tale is told, from a present day perspective, by Ida, her only daughter, who seeks to reconstruct her late mother's life story, against the background of the Independence movement of the 1940s and the ensuing trauma of partition. Virmati's case may be seen as degenerate up to a point, but not correct so. It is well known that women participated forcefully in the social movements that led up to freedom.

The pages of *Difficult Daughters* speak not only of Virmati, but of other difficult daughters who succeed better than she did in their parallel struggles for freedom in their lives. At the centre of the narrative, scholars are confronted with a woman who fights but falls by the wayside, but at its edges, as no doubtless representative but still symbolic figures, scholars encounter as well be seen below other women, whose relative success points the way to futures.

The second novel of Manju Kapur's *A Married Woman*, is set in Delhi against the milieu of communal turbulences centered on the controversial Ram Janma Bhoomi-Babri Masjid. The novel traces the story of Astha from her childhood to her forties from side to side various hopes and miseries, complements and refusals, and recognitions and aggravations. As Robert clearly mentions in his article, The novel *A Married Woman* is heavily plotted. It traces the life of Astha from her young adulthood through her early middle years. In the process she dates with a couple of young men of her own choice like her western counterparts, marries a man of her parents' choice and discovers the joys of intimacy with her husband, begets children, yet grows distant from him, and struggles to become a painter. Much against her husband and her other family members she becomes a social activist, and falls in love with a woman, and finds herself –sort of, more (Rationale 102).

She reflects the middle class values and seems to enjoy her mental bliss for a long time but gradually experiences that there is something certainly lacking in her life. She suffers from a sense of incompleteness, suppression and agony which is further provoked by her involvement into the outer world of upheaval and protest. But the substitute she seeks temporarily is also hollow from within and fails eventually compelling her heaving a sigh of relief. *A Married Woman* can be read at the feminist level. In this novel Astha is

the heroine who brings the fight of Virmati further to new battlegrounds. Thus the novel can be read as a feminist study. Manju Kapur in one of her interviews opens her mind:

I am a feminist. And what is a feminist? I mean I believe in the rights of women to express themselves in the rights of women to work. I believe in equality, you know domestic equality, legal equality. I believe in all that. And the thing is that women don't really have that-you know even educated women, working women. There is a trapping of equality but you scratch the surface and it is not really equal (U.M. 04).

The female protagonist of the novel Astha who is the daughter of a cultured father and an orthodox mother, has an earnest desire for passive co-existence in the family. But she is dominated against and discriminated at her-in-law's house. There, she is made-up to have a willing body at night, a willing pair of hands and feet in the day and a submissive mouth. Her marriage with Hemant, the son of a government official in Delhi, does not show to be based on mutual co-operation and appreciative. It can be understood from these lines, In the domestic space, Hemant behaves like a typical hypermasculine. In other words, he is a proud member of a patriarchal society dominated by machismo and heterosexuality. The postcolonial notion of hypermasculinity is brought to the surface in colonial texts like *The Home and The World* authored by Rabindranath Tagore (Rationale 104-105). She is duty-bound to be a stable wife and sacrificing mother, like a sacred cow in the position of married woman. It traps to her bodily exploitation and emotional hunger. Being depressed of her emotional discharge, she recklessly seeks for it and drives to a "substitute-husband" (Rationale 110), lesbianism. Manju Kapur in her novel *A Married Woman* through the protagonist Astha, has stamped out a self governing life of the woman for self fulfillment and advocated for inter-religious marriage and female female relationship divergent to the patriarchal norms of traditional society.

Manju Kapur's *The Immigrant* (2008) is her fourth novel. In theme and locale the focus is shifted from India to Canada but at the core of it, the novel deals with man-woman relationship. Manju Kapur gave her splendid contribution in field of Indian Writing. She portrays new face of Indian woman. It is believed that Feminism is the movement which support woman to protest against man oriented world. It's fight for equality of rights in fields like social, political and economical. She woven feminist approach in her novel in that way that woman identify herself in social, economical and political bondage of society. *The Immigrant* is the story of encounter with as alien culture and tradition. It's individual effort to recognize his/her self with new setting. Migration is one type of reincarnation of self. It builds new world of hope around self. *The Immigrant* is the fourth novel of Manju Kapur. It deals with shifting from traditional culture to alien culture. But Manju Kapur draw new woman, who is not hopeless, helpless and dependent. She brought woman, who can fight for self identity and for her independency. Manju Kapur has left her own mark on English novels. She involves it with opposition of the mantle of tradition, culture, patriarchy

and social customs. Manju Kapur's protagonist in the present novel lives within the sphere of reality and successfully finds herself in foreign land. The novel presents Manju Kapur's understanding of human characters and her maturity as a novelist. Manju Kapur's novel reveals the life of women, their struggle for basic rights, quest for identity and survival. With education they become aware of their self reliance which is proved in concern with new women. Manju Kapur not only in *The Immigrant* but in her other novels also deals with some narrow and some universal issues, relating to the middle-class Indian society. She in particular takes up the cause of the females who are victimized on account of conservative and traditional mind-set of the Indian masses.

Such novels emerging in the 21st century furnish examples of a whole range of attitudes towards the imposition of tradition and offer an analysis of the joint family system, with its particular gendered spaces and hierarchies of power, exploring how these dictates the interaction of its member. These issues faced by the women writers today no longer feminist, they are everyday issues faced by everyday people. Many times the daily chores of the household, the instant family, the relationships and the joys and the sorrows become the setting of their works. Portrayal of Nina Manju Kapur as naval way of writing adds Indian tradition with western touch. These stories in of Nina, protagonist, who struggle for happiness, adjust herself in every stage of life, compromise for aesthetic pleasure, struggle to find herself in new world. Manju Kapur depicts a picture of educated modern Indian woman, who fight for her rights and get success. She discuss about man woman relationship and sexual worth. Novel brings lots of twist and turns in life of Nina. Her journey from India to Canada takes her in the voyage of independence. She came out from marginalized area. Manju Kapur describe Indian tendency of mother who is worried about her daughter's marriage. Her way of explanation goes so smoothly that while reading we feel the ease of side. Manju Kapur adds her flavour in her work. She uses richness of language and new face of woman. It defines her class. As she is contemporary writer, she draw perfect picture of today's woman. There is use of intellectual conversation in the novel itself example of her standard. There are many words we can find in her work which shows the picture of male dominated society. Manju Kapur stats that, Marriage is a question of Adjustment' (74). The theme of adaptation came into the picture first. Nina has to adopt new tradition, culture, environment, people and also person who is going to be her life partner. Now she started to feel her reborn will be soon. She has to think about others more than herself. There is a reborn of Nina as aunt, wife and sister in law. So woman has multi-personality in her one life. She plays many roles. There is use of smooth-tongued language and narrative method is so effective that we started to flow in the world of Nina. This chapter discusses about the female tendency due to this male oriented world. She thinks one can't move two steps ahead without her husband's help. Manju Kapur draw real picture of today's woman. If we compare this novel with real life situations we can connect with lots of issues. Around us there are many stories are happening. Nina is the same as, our mother, sister, aunty and other woman around us. Her way of narration is very lucid and simple. If we focus on feministic view we came across many female characters like Nina's mother, who is widow

and living with her only daughter. She has suffered lot of thing. Still she want that Nina get married soon. She is calm and very sweet in nature. She gets worried as mother worries for her daughter. She is very much supportive for Nina. Another character is Alka, sister in law of Nina. She is very good as sister and also as sister in law. But some of her words make us to think about her. She is ready to send Ishan to abroad for further study but she is not ready for her daughter because she has to get married. The Indian tendency is rooted in women of *The Immigrant*. There is another character, Nina's friend Zenobia, who is living alone in flat with parental money and abandoned by marriage after six years. Another one is Sue, who is wife of Gary and living at Canada. She has two children and she is living life as typical mother. So expect Nina other women are also good examples of Indian Woman. In short the marriage is the turning point of woman life. Woman has to born thrice in her life, Once when she born as daughter, second as wife and last as mother. Manju Kapur perfectly draw woman of Indian middle class married woman. It is the situation of today's female. She is educated, independent, self centred, ambitious and tough competitor. Still there are many doubts raises like, really a picture of woman get changed compare to earlier? Woman gets real independence from male dominated society? Is this modernism give impact on traditional conventions? Is there is same situation as women are in Golden cage? She describes with fine accuracy of detail how the happenings becomes the everyday, as when an Indian woman first begins to wear western clothing or tastes meat. Even the body that wore a sari with accustomed grace begins to change, to lose its softness, to look better in sweatpants and T-shirt. Is this reassuring, or unnerving? The author who so realistically drew out the world of Karol Bagh housewives in Home fails to go beyond the cardboard clichés of the immigrant experience in North America. While her characters try shedding off their immigrant's identity having steak, having sex with white people, Kapur's own immigration to this genre fails. Unlike, say, Ms Jhumpa Lahiri, her NRIs are less flavoured, less friendly, less complex, less convincing. May be Canada is too far for her. May be she should return to middle-class. A book with these themes is bound to raise comparisons. Brick Lane, it isn't. Nina comes to a Canada that doesn't have the ready-made ex-pat community that Nazeen finds in London. Also, she is educated, speaks perfectly good English, having taught it for years. She loves books. She wants to work in an academic field. Their daily lives are set out for us in all their commonplace fulfilments and frustrations. Once Ananda is married, we see him only as he relates to Nina and as he tries to solve his sexual anxieties: a mild reversal of the perception, frequent among male writers, of women as existing only as sexual beings and in relation to men. scholar don't hear much about dentistry, but scholar learn a lot about Andy's problem with premature ejaculation. The story of his worries, his secret Berkeley cure, his alarm clocks, his triumphs, is related straightforwardly and it is a serious matter, and Kapur does not jeer or sneer, but all the same poor Andy, in his earnest and exclusive concern for the behavior of his penis, is very funny. Kapur's comic sense is hard to describe. It does not come out in witty wording or an overtly comical scene. It is a kind of gently pervasive and delicious flavor, like that of ginger or coriander used with a light hand. The story starts from here and explores the

emotional and physical aspects of a married relationship. Ananda goes all the way to make Nina feel comfortable. But, Nina seems to live in her own world and doesn't make much effort to make the marriage work. Soon, both find themselves having an affair instead of making their relationship work better. The author has well explored how people change to adjust to a new culture, their turmoil at such circumstances etc. If readers like reading intimate portrayal of married life, go for

Manju Kapur's *The Immigrant*. She has indeed gone to the depth, with finest details. However, it may not be what every Indian would like to read. Personally, scholars don't enjoy such storylines, especially when they go in-depth to portray the intimate details of a married couple. Among some uneventful incidents, both Nina and Ananda divert from their loyalty and indulge themselves in extramarital affairs. After much mishmash, the novel ends with Nina's decision to get separate from Ananda, out of her strong desire for freedom and hope of finding a new horizon. The novel is set in the 1970s, so Nina's liberation from frustration and solitude begins with a consciousness raising group of women - bra-burners, according to Andy - who are the first people she is able to talk to in Halifax. No children seem to be coming to her marriage. Certainly her beloved and loving mother in India wants her to have children, but does she? She isn't sure. Her teaching degree is useless in Canada. She gets a part-time job at the local library, which leads to studying for a degree at library school, which leads to an affair with one of the students, which leads to a date rape, later on. All this is told in an even, quiet tone. Kapur's writing about sex is not erotic, nor is it detached and analytic. It is simply descriptive. There is clarity to it which is rare, and a peaceable steadiness, which I found both admirable and enjoyable. Kamala Markandaya, Nayantara Sahgal, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande and many others women writers as an individual rebel against the traditional role, breaking the silence of suffering trying to move out of the caged existence and asserting the individual self. This new spirit encourages woman to come out of the traditional shell and face the new world. This woman is trying to be herself and yet does not wish to break up the family ties. Since many social reformers helped the women to cross the threshold of family life and move out into the outer world of freedom struggle and social reform, the woman is presented with varied opportunities not only today but also yesterday during freedom movement. Yet writing in 1998, Manju Kapur, in her novels presents women who try to establish their own identity. The women of India have indeed achieved their success in half a century of Independence, but if there is to be a true female, independence, much remains to be done. The fight for autonomy remains an unfinished combat. In her quest of identity, Virmati the central character of the novel *Difficult Daughters*, rebels against tradition. 80 So there are lots of questions came across while reading literature related to feminist approach. But Manju Kapur came with new woman, who is salient rebel, outspoken and self-reliable.

Her female characters are real fighters against the out-dated tradition and conventions. There is also another dimension in it. The novel indicates that it is largely set in the thriving, upper middle-class colonies of Delhi in the mid-90s, against the backdrop of

the initial surge of foreign investment in India. Manju Kapur is a storyteller‘ in the old-fashioned sense, in that her novels are strongly narrative and descriptive, but also in the sense that the stories are compelling and told with conviction. Kapur explores the dilemmas this throws up for women who can’t obey the norm; she does this without ever becoming strident or making an argument for one set of values versus another. Although she clearly believes in emancipation, she writes lucidly about how this sought-after liberty destroys society’s traditions. The effects of women hankering for a life outside the home and sometimes achieving it are not always pleasant for the old order. ■

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The Diasporic Elements in the Short Stories and Fictions of Jhumpa Lahiri

Pratima Saha

Lahiri's stories document the characters' trauma of displacement and the feeling of cultural nostalgia. But there is no ill will and malice against the host country and no clash between Indians and Americans unlike her fellow literatures. For most of her stories Lahiri has chosen a third person omniscient narrative structure. In this way she can present her characters from an outsider's point of view. She very beautifully explores the psychic distemper which takes place with a non-native person. How they struggle to adopt the new culture and new language. She also presents the complications of an arranged marriage and the adjustments. This paper purports to deal with the dominant theme of lack of understanding between husband and wife that leads to an unsuccessful marriage life.

Diaspora is a feeling of displacements, up rootedness, alienation, discrimination, marginalization, identity crisis, cultural conflicts, yearning for home and homeland etc. Jhumpa Lahiri is different from other Indian writers writing in English. She is indeed the storyteller who waves the lace of love identity crisis, lies and faults in a matured way. Although the immigrant experience is central to the work, it is not her exclusive concerns: in the title story, she suggests, through her characters, that there are maladies' that trouble all of us. This contributes to our understanding of other people and of us.

Lahiri, like many Americans and Australians, is a second-generation immigrant who feels just as much at home in her parents' homeland as she does in her own. Yet she felt she belonged nowhere when she was young. The psychological dislocation that immigrants often suffer can cause their children to feel a similar sense of alienation. Although Lahiri's parents ultimately adjusted to living in America, they must have frequently longed for their mother country, giving Lahiri the opportunity to observe, at first hand, the often painful adjustment of immigrants to life in an adopted country. Her narratives weave together not only the stories of immigrants, but also those of their children, who feel that they belong neither in one place nor another.

Another grouping concerns first-generation Indians who are inevitably alienated from American culture because they have left the land in which they were born and brought up. Mrs Sen, while still quite young, is made to seem old because she cannot adapt to life in

America. She is a completely displaced person who yearns only for India and makes no attempt to assimilate. In a similar way Mr. Pirzada lives in America but is completely absorbed by what is happening in the war in his homeland, where his wife and children still reside.

The largest grouping of stories centers on marriage and relationships, particularly the arranged marriages that underpin Indian society. 'A Temporary Matter', 'Sexy', 'This Blessed House' and 'The Third and Final Continent', while also portraying memorable characters struggling to adapt to American culture, dwell on the intricacies of marriage and the difficulties that all individuals have in adapting to life as a family.

Jhumpa Lahiri is of Indian descent; both her parents were born in India. She was born in London but grew up in Rhode Island, a state on the east coast of the United States. From childhood, she often accompanied her parents back to India particularly to Calcutta (now known as Kolkata), the third-largest city in India, located in the state of West Bengal, close to India's eastern border with Bangladesh. Her father worked as a librarian and her mother remained a traditional Indian wife, maintaining the customs of her youth.

Lahiri began writing at age seven, co-writing stories with her best friend in primary school. She abandoned writing fiction as an adolescent, and lacked the confidence to resume the pursuit during her university years. While employed as a researcher, she found the stimulus to resume writing fiction and, after achieving a PhD in Renaissance Studies at Boston University, turned once again to creative writing. With a string of degrees behind her, she decided that the life of a scholar was less interesting than that of a fiction writer, and began seriously submitting stories for publication.

After being published in prestigious magazines such as *The New Yorker*, Lahiri was awarded the highest literary honour in the United States, the Pulitzer Prize for Literature, in 2000. Since then, she has been awarded many other prizes, including the O. Henry Award for short stories. In 2003, she wrote the novel *The Namesake*, which was made into a movie in 2006. In 2008, a second collection of short stories, *Unaccustomed Earth*, was published. Lahiri lives in New York City with her husband and two children.

All her short stories "A Temporary matter" "Sexy" "This Blessed House" and "The Third and Final continent" portrays the characters struggling to adapt to American culture. The immigrant experience is always fertile ground for fiction and Jhumpa Lahiri born in London to Bengali parents and raised in Rhode island – has built her literary career. It is difficult to compare Jhumpa Lahiri's work to many other Indian or Indian American authors, such as Shubodh Ghosh and Bharati Mukherjee. A deft development of character and plot is central to the short story, and is focused on the conflict around which the story is based. This conflict could be between characters, between characters and their society, or within the psyche of the main character. 'Mrs. Sen's', for example, concerns an Indian woman who is unable to assimilate into her adopted country, in contrast to her more socially adept husband. Her friendship with an American boy becomes an opportunity for each to experience the other's alternative culture.

The climax result from the convergence of the separate elements in the story and the ending generally comes from the falling action after the climax. Lahiri's endings are highly varied: they can often be abrupt, be either positive or negative, and are often tangential or ambiguous. 'The Treatment of Bibi Haldar' for example ends with a sense of mystical note because the main character has a baby without ever, to our knowledge, having any association with the opposite sex even though epilepsy. Lahiri's endings do not necessarily round off the story neatly. Instead, they encourage us to contemplate the ordinary lives of others and by doing so, provide us with a possible moment of insight or revelation about our own lives. ■

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Siblings in Love: Interrogating Incest in Ian McEwan's *The Cement Garden*

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The literary representation of incestuous relationships generally incorporates one or more of three heterosexual consensual or non-consensual possibilities: mother/son, father/daughter, brother/sister or full siblings. The homosexual incestuous relationships, consensual or non-consensual in nature, have their literary manifestations in a range of literature as well. The discussion here is strictly limited to the 'consensual sibling incest' as extends its formulation in Ian McEwan's *The Cement Garden* (1978). The chief enquiry in the proposed work will be to explore how the act of incest unearths the social and behavioural 'transgressions' of the young members of the family in the absence of their parents. An enquiry to the adolescent -minds and the exploration of its complexities find their elaborate narration in this revolutionary writing by McEwan. The study will seek to locate within its very premise the possible inferences behind the incestuous sexuality between Julie and Jack, the brother-sister duo in the novel. It is interesting to study about the varied reasons that instigate this 'sibling-love', the affection which is moulded with passion and sexuality—therefore prohibited.

Key words: Sexuality, Sibling, Incest

Why should we not love with those we love most? At the least, the notion makes us uneasy [...]; at worst, it fills us with horror.

ÊRobin Fox, *The Red Lamp of Incest* (8-9)

Etymologically derived from the Latin word *incestus* which means 'unchaste', incest entails prohibition in almost every society with marked exceptions. Those European languages in which the term incest has not been borrowed from Latin, it often incorporates the notions of blood, contamination, or mortification, denoting illicitness: Czech: *Krvesmilstvo* {krv = blood), Hungarian: *vérfertőzés* (contamination of blood), German: *blutschande*, Danish: *blodskam*, Swedish: *blodskam* (Sheper, 27). Sheper remarked rightly as "incest was culturally created, it is of course, culturally variable, with each culture defining incest differently" (157). Apart from the primitive practices of incestuous sexuality, the gradual development of "politicization of the incest taboos" (Wolf 114) became even more crucial in the cases of Inca, Hawaiian and Egyptian royalty who practiced incestuous

marriages in order to maintain the exclusiveness of their blood lines. However to preserve the integrity of family avoiding the inbreeding depression which in turn promulgates the genetic disorder infused in the children of parents clasped in a close genetic order, society had been imposing laws and equivalent punishments to those who commit incest. Although the Elizabethan and Victorian Age witnessed a considerable amount of imposing punishments, the Punishment of Incest Act was passed in 1908 and was in turn repealed by the Sexual Offenses Act of 1956 in England. However, the preservation of the family unit as “the strongest foundation of the social order” (Schepper 140) has undergone a terrible blow in the Modern context with the advent of the two consecutive World Wars and the gradual posterity of looming a wasteland. While the totality of family could no longer hold its centre, the undesirable consequence was the fragmentations in the family order. *The Cement Garden* substantiates this fragmented picture of postmodern familial ‘disorder’. In the context of increasing domestic disorder and decay, the aesthetic of body is eclipsed and the novel portrays the dark and grim aspect of modern sexuality in the most shocking way. As Maisch stresses, incest is not a *cause* of family disintegration, but a *symptom* of a “disturbed family order” (145) that already exists.

It is quite an accepted observation that McEwan was obsessed with the macabre, austere, and eerie condition of postmodern human plight to the extent that his earlier works are condensed with the theme of decadence which culminates in *The Cement Garden*. The author’s conspicuous intention to shudder the reader’s moral certainties becomes prominent while the novel unfolds itself as “a shock into literature” (Slay 9). The incidents which shock the readers are intricately woven in the plot, since the onset of the novel. The lack of family integration ushers in the sudden death of the father of the family, which is followed by the untimely demise of the mother. With the sudden turn of the events, the children are placed in a world devoid of parents thereby devoid of any disciplinary regimes that eventually culminates into the regression of the familial order of children’s roles. These disoriented children suffer the pangs of the dislocation of identities in a sheer isolation from the rest of the world. The paucity of proper supervision from the parents as well as from any of the external sources in addition to the segregation from the larger aspects of life direct the wretched children towards an indefinite future featured by ethical chaos in the fictional world. Malcom Bradbury, the former teacher of the novelist, outlines the grotesqueness steeped in the storyline:

McEwan’s work explored the fictional boundaries of the perverse and uncanny, shifting the levels, breaking the frame, admitting the forbidden [...] McEwan’s first novel *The Cement Garden* (1978) is a grimly Gothic tale, told from the child’s-eye viewpoint, of a household where the parents die and are buried in the garden, leaving the children to a world of incest, transvestism and regression. McEwan’s concern, emphasized by his use of the child’s-eye view, is with the way innocence is lost, the sense of initiation as darkness comes. (390)

The novel develops as a counter-foil to the earlier perspectives of childhood as benign innocence as rendered in Wordsworthian writings. The novel is reminiscent of the genre of island novels, in which William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* resembles most with its depiction of the lost innocence of children. This poignant cry of loss of innocence is taken up by McEwan though not in a setting of exotic island situation but in a space of urban wasteland of postmodern world. The conversion of the house into an infertile lifeless wasteland was a quick and hasty turn of events. The novel quite straightforwardly opens up with the death of the father figure in the house which indicates directly the unnaturalness laid deep down at the crux of family bonds. The death "seemed insignificant" (McEwan 15) to most of the members in the family. Jack, the adolescent, reverberates the probable causes of the children's aversion towards their father. The father was an insensitive and emotionally unsatisfying person whose pleasure was to crack disgusting jokes on his own family members. His insensibility and lack of love and affection towards his own kids appear through his obtuse remarks against "Sue for having almost invisible eyebrows and lashes, against Julie for her ambitions to be a famous athlete, against Tom for pissing in his bed sometimes, against Mother for being poor at arithmetic, and against me for my pimples which were just starting up at that time" (15). The culmination of such apathy of indifference ingrained in the father is that the kids accept the death of their father calmly and unemotionally. Jack, the narrator of the story, even extends further in disclosing his animosity at the very onset of the novel: "I did not kill my father, but I sometimes felt I had helped him on his way. And but for the fact that it coincided with a landmark in my own physical growth, his death seemed insignificant compared with what followed" (9).

Dysfunction in family integration is amplified further with gradual decay of the mother's health resulting in fatal consequences. The mother's death bears irresolvable conflicts amidst the housemates. The four children, Jack (14), Julie (17), Sue (13), and Tom (6) find themselves all alone confined in their own house devoid of any elderly supervision or external interference. It was these kids' sheer sense of love for their mother or a sense of insecurity regarding the disclosing of the sudden death of their mother which may cause rapture in their secluded abode that the children bury their mother in a trunk and further conceal the body in basement sealing it with the leftover cement mix. A decision as radical and horrifying as it sounds paves the way for strange chain of events. The absence of either of the parents caters a sense of void and emptiness amidst the children. Tom confirms that the demise of the both of the guardians was unbearable: "When Mother died, beneath my strongest feelings was a sense of adventure and freedom which I hardly dared admit to myself and which was derived from the memory of that day five years ago. But there was no excitement now. The days were too long, it was too hot, the house seemed to have fallen asleep" (71). The author anticipated this haphazard consequence of the removal of any form of disciplinary regime in following words: "I was trying to set up a situation where suddenly there were no social controls. Suddenly, children find themselves in the house - there are no teachers, no parents, no figures of authority, they have total freedom -

and yet they are completely paralysed” (qtd. in Volkmann 312). In a circumference of death and isolation, Julie being the oldest member in the household embarks herself as the mother-figure of the family. The previous and true identity of Julie that she is the eldest child transforms into an alternate identity of a mother-figure to the remaining children of the house who were primarily her younger brothers and sister.

This unexpected withdrawal of societal construction infuriates the elder children to commit the prohibited, to perform the forbidden love. Volkmann narrates the dysfunction firming in the storyline with a plausible statement: “In this tableau of increasing domestic decay and deterioration, the aesthetic of the human body is eclipsed by the description of how its man-made environment is dissolving. In accordance with this, throughout the novel sexuality is perceived as something dark, inexplicable, intricate and most confounding” (311). In *The Cement Garden* sexuality is incorporated in an appalling way rendering how social taboos are shattered. In this case of study the taboo of incest is committed by the brother-sister duo. Due to the absence of their parent and a total exodus of external intrusion, the elder brother- sister Jack and Julie configure the roles of ‘father’ and ‘mother’ to their younger brother-sister duo, Tom and Sue and becomes progressively sexualized. In their repetitive imitation of parental roles, Jack and Julie assume themselves to be man and wife. This assumption of these adolescents culminates in an incestuous bond. The climactic scene showcases an explicit sexual scene between the brother and sister which eventually bears a postmodern testimony of this age old taboo:

As I sucked and that same shudder ran through my sister’s body, I heard and felt a deep, regular pulse, a great, dull slow thudding which seemed to rise through the house and shake it. I fell back and Julie crouched forwards. We moved slowly in time to the sound till it seemed to be moving us, pushing us along... We began to giggle and forget what we were about. Soon we found ourselves lying side by side listening to the great rhythmic thuds that now proceeded a little slower than before. (133-134)

A total isolation from the rest of the external world can be assessed as one of the factors which gradually accelerates the possibility of the sibling incest. The alienation from the world of hustle and bustle is the same kind of instigator to thwart Jack and Julie to embrace each other. The isolated environment in which they are raised up was an ideal possibility for them to grow a mutual yet disastrous relationship. The isolation is quite appropriately marked throughout the narration in which except Derek and few chosen kids, none was allowed in the periphery. This alienation from the rest of the world prompts the individuals to turn inward naturally instead of outside to find love, resulting in unavoidable incestuous relationship. On a different note Julie’s selection of Derek cannot be determined as a natural outcome, rather her inclination towards him as a process of mate selection labels her as if she belongs to in Levi-Strauss’s sense an “absolutely elementary structure” (xxiii). In an exemplification of such extreme case of social alienation, Derek represents for the only remaining eligible mate confirming the laws of exogamy. However, this attachment deflates

and Julie explains her detachment to her brother in their moment of intimacy: “He wants to take *charge* of everything. He keeps talking about moving in with us” (130; emphasis mine). Julie finds the love of Derek as confining which triggers her towards her brother.

Their mutual compassion to enact the roles and perform the responsibilities of their parents, both Jack and Julie were in a continuous progress of preserving their lost loved objects, in this case their dead parents, alive by becoming them. Jack’s infatuation towards his sister could have been enunciated from his early attachments to his mother. Jack substantiates his love for his mother with his love for Julie who in turn occupies the very role and identity of his mother. Professor Klein comments on incestuous situation such as this:

The feelings of a man towards a woman are always influenced by his early attachment to his mother. But here again this will be more or less unconscious, and may be very much disguised in its manifestations . . . perhaps the loved woman’s appearance is quite different, but her voice or some characteristics of her personality are in accordance with his early impressions of his mother” and have a particular attraction for him. (1937: 324)

Of course their sexual awakening was not a sudden turn of event, rather what was a playful childish “game” (11) during earlier times, sculpted with the passage of time into a disastrous sexual inclination. The early memory of this intimacy was a fond memory of their happier days in which Sue was their subject of inspection: “Sue lay on the bed giggling with her knuckles in her mouth while Julie pushed a chair against the door [. . .] The game was that Julie and I were scientists examining a specimen from outer” (11). The incestuous behaviour of Jack and Julie can be interpreted as a recreation of experiences from infancy through a search for “memories in feelings” (Klein 1957: 180)

With the paradigm shift in socio-cultural aspects, the question regarding incest and its interpretations on myriad ends had been modified. Even incestuous stories and their representations had undergone radical changes. While the previous centuries witness minimal explicit exposure of incestuous stories, the turning of the century aggravated by the epoch of two World Wars, beholds silently the spectator of the sexual liberation. Thus what remained obscure in Victorian sagas, such as *Wuthering Heights* and *The Mill on the Floss*, within verbal elocution only in the case of the former and engulfing death in the latter, the postmodern experimentation in *The Cement Garden* is undoubtedly revolutionary. Jack Slay points out “the stifling, self-contained world of *The Cement Garden* mirrors the larger, more suffocating existence of modern society” (50). The conclusive paragraph of the novel demonstrates this suffocation of modern alienated society where the children at last face the police for creating an ethical chaos. The arrival of the police symbolically emphasises the intrusion of the external world into the paradisaical bliss of these children. This tale is embroidered not only with the corollaries of dysfunctional family in a dystopic modern worldview; it is more of a journey about the complications of sexual awakening: the problems of growing up. ■

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Feminist Assertion of Dina Dalal versus Masculine Compassion of her Brother Nusswan in *A Fine Balance*

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The paper probes into the question – “Is Nusswan presented entirely as a villain, or does he have redeeming features? What are his real feelings toward Dina?”

*“Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted fiend,
More hideous when thou show’st thee in a child
Than the sea monster!”*

(Shakespeare: **King Lear**, Act I, Scene 4, 270-272)

The first and foremost failure in Dina Dalal’s life is that she has not been able to meet the aspiration of becoming a doctor as she has promised her father against Nuswan’s openly revealed contempt of his father’s profession and the declaration of his decision to go into business, although that was the childish impulsiveness on the part of Dina. The subsequent death of her father should have propelled her all the more to fulfill his dream, especially when her brother stood by his own dream of being a businessman. That she could not study because their mother grew to be increasingly dependent and that her brother Nusswan made her scrub the bathroom and do his laundry are mere excuses to justify her inabilities.

Nusswan is the traditional archetype of a brother in a male dominated society. He undoubtedly exerts his authority upon Dina. At the same time one cannot deny that suiting to his character, he has accepted the full responsibility of Dina. He is the bread winner and the protector of his family. He objects to the cutting of her own beautiful hair by Dina. On one hand he thinks it’s no use wasting money on Dina’s matriculation due to her low marks but he puts some money aside every month for Dina’s future. ‘He focused his attention on the raising of Dina. The thought of the enormous responsibility resting on his shoulders worried him ceaselessly.’ (pg. 20) He finds Dina uncontrollable. ‘He confided to his relatives – that Dina’s defiance, her stubbornness, was driving him crazy, and only the Almighty’s help gave him strength to go forward in his duty.’ (pg.20) With all his sincerity Nusswan began taking Dina to the fire-temple regularly. He would thrust the sandalwood stick in her hand and pleaded to her, ‘Now pray properly – ask Dadaji to make you a good girl, ask Him to make you obedient.’ (pg.20) Nusswan is a man of high self-esteem. Resentful of his father’s low expectation of life, he plans his own future. He is already a businessman two

years prior to his father's death. He was living at home, saving his money while searching for a suitable flat and a suitable wife. He didn't want to be dependent upon his family. However, after his father's sudden demise and his mother's reclusion, he realizes the urgency of getting a wife and the needlessness of a new flat for as the head of the family he has to take care of his mother and sister. He took over the family finances promising that his mother and sister would want for nothing. No doubt he cut over the hired help. He retained the half-day cook, but did away with Lily, the live-in-servant for he claimed that he could not afford the wages, although Dina had learnt that there was an illicit relationship between him and Lily. Thankfully, that happens to be just a youthful prank and he doesn't indulge in to it in future.

He marries a nice girl called Ruby, who teaches Dina to stitch pillowcases, bedsheets, and curtains, an art which comes very handy later in her life to attain the financial independence she desires. When Nusswan suggests to his wife that she should look after his depressed mother, she tells him to admit her to some nursing home or an old age home. Instead Nusswan hires a full-time nurse to look after his mother. He does not intend to burden Dina furthermore.

He desires to marry her off to one of his friends. But the attitude to antagonize her only brother makes her decline his best offers. Like an extremely responsible brother, very much uncommon in the egocentric, selfish, materialistic twentieth century and in the days of women empowerment due to which women have lost all sympathy from the male members of their families, Nusswan regularly puts money aside for the marriage of his younger sister. He wishes that she is married to a rich, well educated man from a good family, somebody like a Chartered Accountant or a businessman, etc. Sincerely enough he introduces his best friends to Dina. But from Dina it is always a big "no" only because Nusswan has made the offer.

The couple has given her some liberty, by which she can visit parks, museums, markets, cinemas, public libraries, and the music concerts too. Dina decides to marry Rustom Dalal, her acquaintance at the music hall. Nusswan and Ruby do not like Rustom Dalal, the meek man on his bicycle. Yet, they do not create any unpleasantness when Rustom visits them. But that night after Rustom left he rebukes Dina, "To think I wasted so much time and energy introducing you to solicitors, chartered accountants, police superintendents and civil engineers. All from respectable families. How will I hold up my head when people hear that my sister married an unambitious medicine-mixing fool? Don't expect me to rejoice or come to the wedding. For me it will be a day of deep, dark mourning." "It was sad," he lamented, "that in order to hurt him she was ruining her own life. Mark my words, your spite will come back to haunt you. I am powerless to stop you..." (pg.36)

They approve of him against their will and do their best to help her get married happily. Nusswan wants to have a grand wedding. But he makes do with a small one for the bridal couple wants to have a small reception at home. For a while Dina is happy in her

life until the tragedy of the accidental death of her husband befalls her on the night of the third wedding anniversary, when Rustom has been knocked off his bicycle while he has gone to fetch ice-cream for his guests. Nusswan takes her back to her maiden house. He thinks that his sister is still very comely and young for the remarriage. He wants her to make up her mind before it is too late. Her family is with her to support her at the times of her trials and tribulations. But Dina is just impossible. She decides to go back to Rustom's house which is a commendable thing. However, she has to fend for herself. For a few years, she manages with her sewing and embroidery. But whenever she is short of her rent and rations, Nusswan is at her beck and call. Eventually, she finds a paying guest for herself, so that she can meet her expenditure. She also takes contracts for readymade school uniforms and hires Ishwar and his nephew to stitch the uniforms.

The novel is set in 1975 in an unidentified Indian city, it opens quietly and builds slowly, starting with a simple, centripetal narrative premise. Mrs. Dina Dalal, a financially pressed Parsi widow in her early 40's, is determined to keep her independence, resisting the options of remarriage or a return to the bullying charity of her brother's household. To make ends meet, Dina takes in a paying boarder, Maneck Kohlah, the son of a Parsi school chum, and hires two Hindu tailors, Ishvar and Omprakash Darji, to sew dresses for an export company. At first she sets the tailors to work under sweatshop conditions. The author charts the transformation of an empty apartment into a home full to bursting, and the binding of mismatched strangers into a communion as close as family. Initially, she is extremely strict to the tailors and doesn't want to give them any facilities. However, gradually a bond is developed so much so that she is prepared to accommodate Ishwar, Om and his would-be bride on her enclosed verandah, with the partition of her hand sewn quilt to give some privacy to the bridal couple.

All of them are fleeing from something – Dina from accepting charity from her brother's patriarchal household and forced remarriage, Maneck, is studying for a diploma to survive in a new world while his village in the mountains undergoes development (or destruction) by road construction and electrification projects leading to deforestation and the tailors, Ishvar and Om from caste, communal and institutional violence of Indira Gandhi's emergency rule. As Dina struggles to break free from the norms society has set for aging, single women, her life gets entwined in the stories of the other three.

Each of the four main characters is a refugee from one thing or another. Dina seeks to escape from the suffocating strictures imposed upon respectable, single, aging women. Under these circumstances, Dina's apartment becomes a haven for the tailors. The four strangers start sharing their stories, then meals, then living space, until, over the divides of caste, class and religion, the ties of human kinship prevail. In this one shabby little apartment, at least, the human family becomes more than a phrase, a metaphor, a piety.

Subsequently, while the tailors are forcefully taken away to work at the dam-construction site, it is Maneck, her paying-guest who helps her to complete and deliver her

order. After a while, Dina needs in need of some monetary help from Nusswan. Maneck accompanies her to his office. On Maneck's suggestion they go dressed up very well. Nusswan learns that Dina has arrived in the company of a young man. Nusswan laments over her past, 'Dina was attractive at forty-two. Almost as beautiful as she was twenty years ago, when she married that poor, unfortunate Rustom. Unfortunate from beginning to end. In looks, in money, in his life span...' On second thought 'He had no desire to speak ill of the departed. So sad his death.' He pats his cheeks alternatively, reverently with his right hand fingertips. Thus Nusswan is God-fearing with a spiritual bent of mind. At the same time he thinks it was 'a God-given second chance for Dina to set things right, find a more suitable husband. If only she had grabbed the chance.' (p.369)

Nusswan is very much a dutiful brother. He broods, 'Such a terrible thing her pride was, and her strange idea of independence. Working like a slave to earn a pittance, humiliating the whole family.' (pg.369) Dina was really impossible...He did not know how to handle her. 'Slowly he had learned to let his skin grow thick. But shaking off embarrassment was easier than discarding his sense of duty. She was still his little sister; he had to do his best for her.' (p.369)

He further regrets, 'What a waste, what a waste of life. Like watching a tragic play. It had lasted a whole life, almost three decades – a family estranged, Xerxes and Zarir growing up deprived of the love and attention of their Dina Aunty, she hardly knowing her two nephews. So much sadness and misery. 'He cannot help hoping, 'but perhaps there was still a chance of a joyful ending. There could be nothing better than becoming one happy, united family again. Soon it would be time for grandchildren in his own life. If Dina had abdicated as aunty, she could be a grand-aunty.' (pg.369)

He wanders wistfully, 'If they were serious and got married, how wonderful. Even if the chap was only thirty, he should consider himself lucky to have Dina – so attractive that she could put women half her age in the shade.' (pgs.369-370) Immediately he makes up his mind to organize the second wedding for her....one hundred guests, modest flower arrangements, a small band... However, when he gets to know that Maneck is only 17 yrs old, he decides he will not spend a single paisa for the wedding between a child and adult is no good according to him. Once he gets to know that Maneck is just a paying guest, he is relieved. He thinks Dina is cruel, unfeeling, leading him on with false hopes. To think how genuinely happy he had been for her a few minutes ago. Once again she had mocked him. So here is the compassionate brother who is unconditionally ever ready to make his sister happy, but the self-possessed sister does not care at all.

The motherly affection bounces back in her heart with Maneck and Om around. After the work at the dam-construction, Om's arm is comatose. He cannot work efficiently. He wriggles with pain. Dina applies the balm on his hand and shoulder. The goose flesh dwindled and vanished. Rustom would say that there was magic in her hands. She examined her hands and said wistfully, 'They have a long memory. These fingers. They still remember

that feeling of Rustom's muscles relaxing.' She lowered her hand, 'And in spite of his aching back he loved to cycle. Every chance he got, he jumped on it and pedalled off.' that led to his doom. (p.316)

Dina is involved with the tailors as well as with Maneck, so much that she even attends the funeral of Shankar, the beggar amidst the entire troop of beggars, just to give company to Maneck who insists upon attending the funeral despite his final examination. When Nusswan spots her in the funeral procession, he thinks it is perhaps the funeral of some VIP, for it was escorted by the police personnel. But Dina corrects him, telling him it was indeed a beggar's funeral. Nusswan opens and shuts his mouth in exasperation and then opens it again in sheer speechlessness. At this Dina wickedly suggests, "Shut it Nusswan, or a fly will get in." (pg. 507) Nusswan is as many as eleven years older to Dina. He has always treated her like his small sister. But she never addressed him as 'bhaiyya' or with any other aphorism in the typical Indian manner to respect the elderly brother who has been her caretaker and guardian after the death of their parents. Like any good brother from a middle class family, Nusswan tries to prevent her by ordering her to get into his car. His list of grievances, compiled over thirty years, flashed through his mind. Here was again an objectionable behavior. He warns, "You're not walking another step in the procession! Of all things – going to a beggar's funeral! How low can you sink? What will people say if they see my sister-"(p.507)But Dina diplomatically takes the help of the police to send him his way.

In fact, Dina herself was against attending the funeral of a beggar. She had only joined the funeral to keep an eye on Maneck. But then she had a demonic sense of victory over her elder brother who was all for her. She sarcastically comments, "That was fun. He'll be having bad dreams tonight, I think. Nightmares of funeral pyres – his reputation going up in smoke."(p. 508)

Dina had been constantly threatened by the cronies of the house-owner to vacate the house. She doesn't think of asking help from her brother. Instead, she goes to the Court to file her petition in vain. Finally, she telephones her brother to send a truck to take away her things after those are on the pavement. "Evicted? You call me after the furniture is on the pavement? Digging a well when the house is on fire?" Dina is nonplussed. "Can you send your truck or not?" She demands. "What choice do I have? It's my duty. Who else will help you if I don't?" (pg. 569) He retorts and sends the truck promptly although he could have washed his hands off her stubborn nature. Yet he is a conscientious brother. He is alarmed to imagine her on the street. Sergeant Kesar was so relieved that rescue was on the way. He says, "You are so fortunate, madam, at least you have somewhere to go. Daily I see cases where people end up making pavement their home. Lying there exhausted, lost, defeated." (pg.569) Dina is evicted. From then on Dina is a permanent refugee in Nusswan's house.

Finally, after eight years, Maneck comes to meet her. She apprises him about the tailor's plight...that they have become invalid beggars...with one fellow pulling the castors of the other with amputated legs.

She gives them food regularly without the knowledge of her brother and his wife. What is most shocking is she purposefully serves food to the dirty street beggars in the plates of Nusswan and Ruby, while she is seeking shelter in their house, thus revealing her ingratitude, viciousness, demonism and avenging nature.

It is true that sad people are generally egocentric and selfish. No doubt the family has to help the people like Dina. But they are so sadistic and masochistic that they cannot even cooperate with one who is all for them. Dina takes Nusswan for granted. She never cares for his feelings and his concern for herself. She grabs every opportunity to find fault with her one and only big brother. He is the only source where she can look for help when in need, though reluctantly. But she never bothers about what she could do for him or for his family. Very often we see such egocentric people in society. It is indicated at the end of the novel that Dina cooks for Nusswan's family... no big deal. What else would she do, if not make herself useful? Is it not better than being totally dependent upon him? But does that give her the moral right to serve food to the beggars in the plates of her brother, the master of the house and his wife?

It is fine that Dina fell for a simple and poor man like Rustom and got married to him against the wish of her brother and was indeed happy in the smallness of life with Rustom. But once the death struck a cruel blow upon him, Dina never gives herself a second chance to be happy and achieve status in life. Nusswan is the trouble-shooter ever ready on his tiptoes to bring sunshine in his sister's life, while Dina is the one who loves nestling comfortably in her past happiness and present pain simultaneously. What is so characteristic about Dina is her Ingratitude:

*"I hate ingratitude more in a man
Than lying, vainness, babbling drunkenness,
Or any taint of vice whose strong corruption
Inhabits our frail blood"*

(Shakespeare: **Twelfth Night**, Act III, Scene IV, 372-375) ■

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Mother Characters in the Select Novels of Alex Haley

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S. Ayyappa Raja

Motherhood makes a woman's life meaningful. It is a special gift from the God to women. It fulfills the purpose of their life. Giving birth to a baby is a critical process and it is like getting a rebirth for a woman. The woman bears intolerable pain not only to give birth but also to rear the child. Women play an important role in the life of every human being. In this paper, the researchers have analyzed the mother characters in the select novels of Alex Haley. Alex Haley is a renowned writer, novelist and journalist. He is a Black American who has written five novels. He has portrayed the sufferings of the Black people in the White American society. Alex Haley's novels *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* and *Queen: The Story of an American Family* are taken for the analysis. The mother characters play a prominent role in the novels. The mother characters of the novels are Louise Little and Queen respectively. They have certain similarities. They face racial violence and they have struggled to rear their children. Louise Little and Queen are fair skinned but they belong to the Black community. Their hardships and struggles to bring up their children are portrayed skillfully by the novelist. They are sexually exploited during their young age by the White men. They live for their children. Their quest for identity and their feeling of insecurity which occupied their whole life are adeptly presented in detail by Alex Haley.

Key words: Mother Characters, Racial Violence, Search for Identity, Black Women, Suppression.

Alex Haley is a prominent Black American author. His novel *Roots: The Saga of an American Family* has won Pulitzer prize in the year 1977. His debut work *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* portrays the life of Malcolm X who is an adherent supporter and fighter for the liberty and equality of Black people. *Roots: The Saga of an American Family* and *Queen: The Story of an American Family* are two prominent sequel novels of Alex Haley in which he has narrated his own maternal and paternal family history. David Stevens has helped Alex Haley to finish one of his novels *Mama Flora's Family*. Alex Haley depicts the racial violence and suppression that the Black people face in the White American society. He highlights the sexual harassments and repression experienced by the Black women in the American society. He narrates how women become a victim of sexual

tortures and suppression because of race and gender. He has explained about their struggles and difficulties to survive in the society filled with racial abuses. This paper analyses the mother characters of Alex Haley's novels namely: *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* and *Queen: The Story of an American Family*. The mother characters in these novels are born in Black slave community. From their childhood, they face racial discrimination and sexual harassments in their lives. They fight and survive in the male chauvinistic society. As mothers, they face many difficulties to raise their children. Their constant search for their identity has been depicted in the novels by Alex Haley.

In *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, Malcolm X's mother Louise Little plays an important role. Louise Little is born for a White father. She is fair and she does not have Black accent. She has not seen her father in her life and she feels happy about it. The author gives detail about Louise Little through Malcolm X who is the narrator of the novel: "Louise Little, my mother, who was born in Grenada, in the British West Indies, looked like a White woman. Her father was White. She had straight black hair, and her accent did not sound like a Negro's. Of this White father of hers, I know nothing except her shame about it" (2). Malcolm X's father Earl Little is a follower of Marcus Gravy and a supporter and fighter for the freedom and equality of Black people. He is a preacher. He spreads the words of Marcus Gravy to people which brought agitation among the White people and each time the family has to move to different place to avoid the danger from the Whites. This time, they have moved to Lansing.

A woman's whole world lies predominantly within her family. Her family means the most than anything else in the world. Louise Little is very much attached towards her family. Though she has many arguments with her husband, she never stops loving him. One day, in one such argument, Louise Little gets vision of her husband's death. She tries to stop him from going out. But Earl Little rushes out his house and never returns back to his home. Louise Little's intuition brings a kind of fear in her when her husband does not return home. Her fear grows as it is becoming late and her husband does not return home yet. The author describes her fear through the child of them: "When my father was not back home by our bedtime, my mother hugged and clutched us, and we felt strange, not knowing what to do, because she had never acted like that" (10). Her intuition becomes true and Earl Little is killed by the White racists that night. Louise Little tells Malcolm about her vision and instinct. Her vision becomes true and her husband never returns to home again. Malcolm X says:

It was then that my mother has this vision. She had always been a strange woman in this sense, and had always had a strong intuition of things about to happen. She told me later, my mother did, that she had a vision of my father's end. All the rest of the afternoon, she was not herself, crying and nervous and upset. I remember waking up to the sound of my mother's screaming again. When I scrambled out, my mother was taken by the police to the hospital, and to a room where a sheet was over my father in a bed. (10)

Women always think about their family. They think about the wellness of their family and its members. Hence, the mothers get the instinct about the dangers awaiting for the members of the family at times. Their care and concern make the members of the family to be cautious from awaiting dangers.

During the funeral, Louise Little is in great agony. She cries bitterly during the funeral. Malcolm X refers to her mother's condition: "I can remember a vague commotion, the house filled up with people crying, saying bitterly that the White Black Legion had finally gotten him. My mother was hysterical. In the bedroom, women were holding smelling salts under her nose. She was still hysterical at the funeral" (10). As a single mother, Louise Little stands alone with her eight children and she does not have anyone to console or help her. Malcolm X says about the pathetic condition of his mother: "My mother was thirty-four years old now, with no husband, no provider or protector to take care of her eight children. But some kind of a family routine got going again. And for as long as the first insurance money lasted, we did all right" (10). She has to take care of all her eight children. She has neither job nor any source of income. As a mother, she has to bear the herculean responsibility of rearing the eight children in the White racist society. Her struggle starts from that moment.

It is not an easy thing for a Black especially a woman to get a job in Lansing. The Whites dictate the terms and they can add or remove any Black from job. She hides her feelings and sadness inside and never reveals it to her children. She gets pay cheques from the State Welfare run by the White people. She is stubborn and strong in her conversation with the State Welfare people. She speaks boldly to them who want her children to get adopted by the Whites in that area. The author brings out her determination of rearing her children on her own:

She would speak sharply to the man at the grocery store for padding the bill, telling him that she wasn't ignorant, and he didn't like that. She would talk back sharply to the State Welfare people, telling them that she was a grown woman, able to raise her children, that it wasn't necessary for them to keep coming around so much, meddling in our lives. And they didn't like that. (13)

Though she is alone without any person to protect her, she is strong and brave enough to face the world and she is not ready to give up her children in the hands of the State Welfare people. She is determined to rear her eight children without anyone's help. She takes it as a challenge in her life.

Louise Little meets a Black man with whom she had relationship for a year. She believes that he will protect her and the children. She trusts him that he will take care of her children. On the contrary, he abandons her and he is not ready to take up the responsibility of rearing her eight children. This is one of the incidents that break down her into pieces. She is psychologically disturbed by the constant visits of the State Welfare people and it makes the condition worse. They take away Malcolm X from her and it affects her very much:

But it was a terrible shock to her. It was the beginning of the end of reality for my mother. When she began to sit around and walk around talking to herself—almost as though she was unaware that we were—it became increasingly terrifying. As my mother talked to herself more and more, she gradually became less responsive to us. She suffered a complete breakdown, and the court orders were finally signed. They took her to the State Mental Hospital at Kalamazoo. (19)

It shows the maternal love of Louise Little. She could not bear the separation of her child from her. It takes her to the level of madness. Louise Little stays in hospital for six years and hardly she is able to remember her children. Physical illness can be cured but the death of her husband and separation of her child have affected mentally. Malcolm X recalls his experience with his mother at the mental hospital:

Later, when I was still growing up in Michigan, I would go to visit her every so often. Nothing that I can imagine could have moved me as deeply as seeing her pitiful state. It was so much worse than if it had been a physical sickness, for which a cause might be known, medicine given, a cure of effected. Every time I visited her, when finally they led her—case, a number—back inside from where we had been sitting together, I felt worse. But she didn't recognize me at all. She stared at me. She didn't know who I was. She said, staring, "All the people have gone. (21)

Separation from her children has made a great impact in her and it leads her to mental illness. The maternal love of the Black mother is exhibited by Alex Haley in the form of Louise Little who has become mad due to the separation of her child.

In *Queen: The Story of an American Family*, the mother character, Queen plays an important role. Queen is born to a rich White man and a Black slave in a plantation. She is a mulatto. Her fair toned skin colour brings many problems to her. From her childhood, she faces racial suppression in the plantation where she has grown up. She is neither accepted by her father side of the family (the Whites) nor by her mother side of the family (the Blacks). She moves out of the plantation to the North where slaves can live safely. She is raped violently by her boy friend Digby. Queen has not revealed about her true identity as slave. Digby hates Black people and he finds out the truth about Queen one day. She undergoes severe sexual harassment at the hands of him. Later she meets Davis and she gives birth to a male child due to this relationship. She stays with twin sisters named Miss.Mandy and Miss.Gippy.

After delivery, Miss.Mandy and Miss.Gippy try to take away the baby from Queen. The real strength of a mother gets revealed when they deny to give the baby to Queen. Queen fights with them and gets the baby from them. The author describes: "He's my baby!" Queen was shouting now. He's mine. I want to see him. I want my baby! Queen cried. "Give me my baby!" (570). Queen is afraid that the sisters may take away her child

from her. It shows the maternal love of the mother and she can do anything for the safety of child.

When it comes for the naming of the child, Queen wants to christen David for the boy but the sisters fight with her and give him the name Abner. As a mother, Queen feels that they do not have any rights to select and keep a name for her child. The author describes her feelings: "Queen was puzzled. This had nothing to do with them. She is very grateful to the sisters for their many kindness, but the name of the baby was not their business" (570). It clearly displays her love for the child and the mother is the first and foremost relative of a child.

Though the sisters have helped Queen in many ways, Queen is very protective over her child. She is not ready to allow anyone to involve in her child's matter. The insecure feeling makes her to behave in that way. All the mothers are protective and possessive over their children. Queen becomes very possessive and she is afraid of separation of her child from her. This has made her to come out of the sister's home. The novelist presents her possessiveness: "I ain't ridiculous!" Queen answered. "I never get to see him no more, he's always with you. You wash him, change him, play with him, take him out. You'd feed him if you could, only you's all dried up so you cain't!" And the relief was replaced by a flesh of anger. "So we's leaving," Queen said again" (576).

It displays the insecurity of Queen as a mother. Her affection for her child is revealed. She does not want to give up her duty as a mother. Taking care and parenting of her child are her primary duties. She does not like the nursing of her baby by somebody.

One day when Queen is in her room with her child Abner, the sisters come to take away the child from her. Fire is lit in the room for warmth and Miss.Mandy goes near Abner's cot to take the child. Queen begs them to give her child. They are determined to separate the child from Queen: "The door burst open, and Miss.Mandy swept in followed by Miss.Gippy. They ignored Queen, and went to Abner's cot." "I have decided to move Abner into my room," said Miss.Mandy (576). This incident brings a mental disturbance in Queen and she becomes mentally unstable. She decides to escape from the sister's house. Alex Haley writes:

It was true. At that moment, Queen was mentally unbalanced. And the flames of the fire, the flames of her torment, lighted some dark corner in her mind. The only way to escape fire was to run away from it. She calmed herself, and seemed to accept what Miss.Mandy was telling her. But she asked to be allowed to have this night with Abner. Queen stared at the fire again. The flames glittered in her eyes, in her mind frightening her but making her determined on survival. She would run away from the fire. She would run away from the sisters. She would take Abner with her to someplace where no one would ever find them, and they would be safe. (577)

The insecure feeling of Queen makes her run away with her child to North where Black people can live freely and safely. As a mother she is very protective and affectionate towards her child. She does not give her child to anyone. It shows the maternal love of the mother vividly to the readers.

In both the novels, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* and *Queen: The Story of an American Family*, the mother characters Louise Little and Queen respectively play a vital role. Both Louise Little and Queen suffer from racial discrimination and sexual harassment from their childhood because of their race and gender. They lose their beloved ones and also get betrayed by the people whom they loved and trusted the most at one stage. Their children are the hope of their life. Their affection, possessiveness and protective nature towards their children are depicted adeptly by the writer. Though they struggle a lot to bring up their children, at any stage, they are not ready to give up their children. Their sense of insecurity and maternal love are skillfully presented by the writer. ■

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Portrayal of Conjugal Relationship in Patriarchal Societies: A Study of Rohinton Mistry's Novel, *Family Matters*

Pranita Dey

Saugata Kumar Nath

Marriage is a social institution that binds men and women together. People from different families are brought together through marriage and their physical union gives birth to children and thereby their lineage. The relationship of husband and wife is considered an important relationship in a family. D. H. Lawrence views, "The great relationship for humanity will always be the relationship between man and woman. The relation between man and man, woman and woman, parent and child will always be subsidiary" (130). Marriage is often defined as a social and legal union of two persons of opposite sex in Indian society. Burgess, Locke and Thomes mention, "Marriage is a socially sanctioned union of ... men with ... women in the roles of husband and wife" (1) and they form the basic unit of a family. But marriage might be a different experience for members of both the genders. Simone de Beauvoir views:

Marriage has always been a very different thing for man and for woman. The two sexes are necessary to each other, but this necessity has never brought about a condition of reciprocity between them; women, as we have seen, have never constituted a caste making exchanges and contracts with the male caste upon a footing equality (415-416).

Though women and men are complimentary to each other, men are mostly held socially independent and women as dependent on men in a patriarchal society. Steven L. Nock observes, "Even though marriage contributes to the well-being of both men and women, husbands are the greater beneficiaries. Marriage itself improves men's lives; the quality of the marriage affects women's lives" (3). Steven L Nock means to say that marriage affects both men and women in some way or the other where men are often in a better position than women. He further mentions, "Men appear to reap the most physical health benefits from marriage and suffer the greatest health consequences when they divorce... Wives are important sources of help and assistance to their husbands. Men may be encouraged by wives to break bad habits, attend to their health, and so on" (Nock 14-15). The quality of

marriage, often affects the conjugal relationship as well as the life of men and women and also their future generations.

The masculinity of man is often measured in terms of marriage. Steven L. Nock mentions, "Marriage is typically an asset for men, regardless of the quality of the marital union" (14). Nock further opines:

Marriage is beneficial for men because of its meaning and implications for masculinity. . . . In other words, masculinity is more than an attribute that male possess automatically by virtue of their anatomy, age, or maturation; rather, it is something that must be attained or earned. At the same time, masculinity is indeed something that seems to be demanded of men, even of men who may not want it. For many purpose, a male must be sufficiently masculine to receive full rights as a member of our society. Those who fail suffer consequences (43-44).

Such an analysis of husband, masculinity and male leads to the conclusion that social constructs and norms are not restricted to women only, men are also target of it. However, men are comparatively more at liberty than women in patriarchal societies. But in order to avail the liberty, men ought to achieve or earn masculinity. Likewise, women are expected to achieve femininity.

Marriage is considered as one of the social constructs that has often been designed with certain norms, ideals and rituals in societies. Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann mention, "The sociology of knowledge understands human reality as socially constructed reality" (210-211). The quoted line expresses the idea that the idealised norms for human reality are socially constructed ones. The norms of marriage are different from society to society, place to place. But in patriarchal societies in India, the core idea remains almost the same. Ideally, the girl has to leave her parental home for her new home – the house of her husband. With marriage, the life of a girl meets tremendous changes. On the basis of a survey done in India, Mandelbaum opines, "The nuptial rites mark the great divide in a girl's life. She is physically transferred from the familiar intimacy of her childhood home to a strange place and new people, some of whom are, by reason of their roles, either distant or disciplinary" (78). In a patriarchal society, thus, the bride leaves her parents' home to settle down in a new household and in a new family culture.

In a patriarchal family, marriages are mostly arranged by parents and other elders. Burgess, Locke, Thomes point out that they often put emphasis on "prudence, on economic and social status, and on adjustment of the son-in-law or the daughter-in-law to the family group" (8). According to Leela Dube, "In South Asia arranged marriages are the norm. . . . To many the very idea of young people choosing their partners for themselves is scandalizing.... In cases where a young man and a woman decide to marry, they try to obtain the approval of their parents. Very often parents step in, arrange the details, making the affair resemble an arranged marriage" (109-110). It can be understood that the marriages arranged by family members and would be groom and bride together is often considered to be commendable.

With the event of marriage, the conjugal life of the husband and wife begins with hopes and aspirations of themselves and often of other members of the family and society. Their sex relationship is "...expected to result in the production of children" (Leslie 16). Children turn out to be crucial and important aspects and assets in married life. Once married, society starts judging the couple in terms of children. It turns out to be the responsibility of the husband and the wife to beget children. Women are said to be barren if a couple has no children and to declare her barren, the society does not wait for medical tests. For a childless couple, society has different constructs to make them feel guilty. Mandelbaum writes, "Her greatest responsibility is to bear a child, preferably a son. Barrenness is a fear, a curse, an unending reproach. . . . An unfortunate who must at last conclude that she will bear no child may well urge her husband to adopt a son or to take another wife so that there may be a child to his name" (86). Barrenness in most cases leads to imbalance in the husband wife relationship.

The relationship of husband and wife is one of inter dependence, responsibility, trust and care. Simone de Beauvoir views, "Marriage has always been a very different thing for man and for woman. The two sexes are necessary to each other ..." (Beauvoir 416). Beauvoir views that marriage has different meaning individually to a man and a woman. The mutual understanding of husband and wife mostly does not affect only themselves but their offspring too. It most often imprints a non erasable picture in them psychologically, which thereby commands them to act accordingly in due time. The maintenance of the household along with the relationship mainly depends upon labour and economic cooperation. Murdock notes:

The man, perhaps returns from a day of hunting, chilled, unsuccessful, and with his clothing soiled and torn, to find warmth before a fire which he could not have maintained, to eat food gathered and cooked by the (41) woman instead of going hungry, and to receive fresh garments for the morrow, prepared, mended, or laundered by her hands. ...Moreover, if either is injured or ill, the other can nurse him back to health. These and similar rewarding experiences, repeated daily, would suffice of themselves to cement the union (42).

It can be understood that each partner has been entrusted with some definite tasks by the social system in order to make the relationship healthy. The assigned tasks are often based on a general understanding of physical strength and need. In most of the societies, marriage is the only institution where economic and sexual union exist with residential cohabitation.

In the relationship of husband and wife, affection is one of the important elements to strengthen their bond. While alienation from self might hamper the relationship, affection often makes their relationship strong and "research suggests that the informed and deliberate use of expressions of affection has a profound impact on marital satisfaction" (Ponzetti 42). Affection among married couples may lead to marital satisfaction. Ponzetti adds, "Research suggests that a spouse who receives the type of love that he or she desires has higher levels of marital satisfaction than a spouse who does not. Each person in the

relationship can directly influence the level of satisfaction that the other person experiences. This has profound implications for a relationship” (45). Love is essential in any relationship, and in husband-wife relationship, the presence of it helps not only the couple, but also the other members of the family.

Communication among spouses is often helpful in a successful marital relationship. In order to know each other and express love and affection, communication often plays pivotal role. While talking about marital satisfaction, Ponzetti mentions of communication in the following words, “Knowing that a relational partner might not fully appreciate or feel loved by a certain action makes it clear that communication on this topic between spouses is essential. Likewise, it requires communication to know what positively increases a spouse’s sense of satisfaction” (45). The quoted lines express the idea that communication can increase good moments among couples. Verbal expression of love and affection often makes them feel encouraged.

It is pertinent to refer to marital success while discussing marriage and husband-wife relationship. According to David Knox and Caroline Schacht, “Marital success is measured in terms of marital stability and marital happiness. Stability refers to how long the spouses have been married and how permanent they view their relationship, whereas marital happiness refers to more subjective aspects of the relationship” (234). In marital relationship, marital success is one of the important elements that helps develop a family.

Rohinton Mistry’s novel, *Family Matters* (published in 2002), depicts the picture of a Parsi family wherein the relationship of husband and wife is represented through Nariman Vakeel and his wife Yasmin, and through Nariman’s daughter Roxana and her husband Yezad. Nariman marries a widow with two children; rather he is forced to marry her because of his past affair with a Goan girl. Community plays a vital role in deciding the marriage of Nariman with Yasmin. His parents and relatives decide the life partner for Nariman, ignoring his wish to be together with Lucy Braganza, with whom he was his love. He marries Yasmin and leads a married life with three children, one of whom being his biological child. It was late in his old age and days of weakness and illness that he realises his mistake in marrying Yasmin. A picture of old, educated, helpless and frustrated Nariman can be seen in the novel. Nariman considers his marriage to be the reason for the lack of peace in his life.

Men are often judged in terms of marriage. It appears that marriage marks men as a responsible as well as a settled person. As mentioned by Steven L. Nock (14), marriage is like an asset for men irrespective of the quality of marital union. In the novel, *Family Matters*, Nariman seems to be judged in terms of marriage by his family and community. As soon as he decides to marry someone from his community, it becomes a matter of celebration. Nariman remembers the time when, “Much rejoicing had erupted when his parents announced that their only son, after years of refusing to end his ill-considered liaison with that Goan woman, refusing to meet decent Parsi girls, refusing to marry someone respectable – that their beloved Nari had finally listened to reason and agreed to settle

down” (Mistry 11). His love affair with a non-Parsi girl has been considered ill, and his decision to marry a Parsi girl makes him a reasonable and responsible person in the eyes of the people of his community. He achieves a special position and attention as soon as he decides to marry someone from his community. Later, Nariman’s son, Jal, is also judged by Yezad, in terms of marital status, as he remains unmarried. It can be said that marriage is a gateway for men to achieve or earn masculinity in the eyes of others.

Marriage unites two individuals into the relationship of husband and wife. As mentioned by Burgess, Locke and Thomes (1), marriage is a socially sanctioned amalgamation of a man and a woman to play the role of husband and wife in a patriarchal society. In the novel, *Family Matters*, Nariman is involved in a love relationship with a Goan girl, Lucy. But the love relationship of Nariman and Lucy is not socially accepted as they belong to two different communities. To marry someone from a different community seems to be against their (Parsi) societal norms. So, Nariman is married with Yasmin Contractor, a widow and mother of two children, who belongs to Parsi community. Marriage unites them to the relationship of husband and wife, though he was in love with someone else. It seems that society usually accepts the relationship of man and woman, constructed through marriage and ignores relationship governed by other means.

Marriage is a social construct and the norms set for it functions differently for different people. Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann (210-211) mention that the idealised norms for human reality are socially constructed ones. The norms for marriage and married life are also socially constructed which may or may not prove fruitful to individuals. In the novel, *Family Matters*, the marriage of Nariman and Yasmin is the result of socially accepted ideas and norms. No doubt, in order to meet the expectation of parents and society, Nariman marries a woman who is not his choice. Nariman considers the time as “miserable years” (Mistry 10) which he spends together with Yasmin as husband and wife. His notion, “Only a rotten ending could come out of such a rotten beginning” (Mistry 10) expresses the idea that though norms are set for smooth running of society, the quality of marriage often affects the present and future of individuals.

Marital satisfaction is considered an important aspect in married life. Ponzetti rightly points out that expression of affection may lead to marital satisfaction. The relationship of Yezad and Roxana in the novel, *Family Matters*, supports the idea of affection. Though their relationship faces ups and downs yet due to their affection, love, understanding and care of each other, their married life is a successful one. The couple undergoes many struggles, both in personal and professional life, but they remain united and attached to each other in every situation. This unity is perhaps possible due to their positive outlook towards their married life. This can be understood when “Nariman noticed, and smiled with pleasure. He delighted in his daughter’s happiness, the bond she shared with Yezad” (Mistry 26). This expresses the idea that marital satisfaction is not only essential for the married couples, but also for other members of a family. Parents are often happy to witness happiness in the married life of their children.

On being married, often the bride faces challenge as a daughter-in-law. Opler (126) mentions that through proverbs and songs, society informs the girl about the transition at marriage, as well as about the hostility of mother-in-law and sister-in-law that she might face in her new relationships and new home. In the novel, *Family Matters*, the sisters-in-law of Roxana appear so rude to her that Roxana and Yezad are to settle down in a different flat, gifted by Roxana's father. As Roxana and Yezad's son Murad once says, "Maybe if you had stayed, they would have become friendlier" (Mistry 46), Yezad replies, "You don't know your aunties, it would meant years of fights and quarrels. When [your] grandpa gave us Pleasant Villa, that was the best thing for us" (Mistry 46). It shows that a daughter-in-law often faces problems in her in-laws' home, which, however, can be solved mostly with the help of the husband, as in the case of Roxana.

Communication is an important feature in any relationship. It is essential for husband-wife relationship as well. Ponzetti mentions that verbal expression of love and affection often makes couple feel encouraged. Communication can increase good moments among couples. Such a notion finds representation in the novel, *Family Matters*. In the novel, the relationship of Roxana and Yezad seems to be satisfactory as their relationship does not lack communication. Verbal expression of love, care and affection makes their bond strong. Even at times of distress and anxiety, they share their feeling and problem, which appears positive. Nariman views, "He had often seen them communicate with subtle signals invisible to the world" (Mistry 26). This encounter always makes him happy. Further, communication often helps to overcome tricky situation in marital life. Once Nariman appears slightly disturbed with the return of Lucy in his married life, but Yasmin supports him to handle the situation. Nariman remembers, "And how supportive Yasmin had been after the wedding" (Mistry 67). Thus, it can be said that communication in husband-wife relationship is essential and it can often help to overcome most of the problems in husband-wife relationship.

In a patriarchal society, marriage is seen essential and normal for women, denial of it often invites controversy. Beauvoir rightly opines, "Marriage is the destiny traditionally offered to women by society" (415). The marriage of Roxana appears to be normal whereas, spinster Coomy has been looked as a depressed soul. Roxana feels sorry for her sister Coomy. When her son Jehangir asks for the reason, she answers, "Because they never got married, they don't have a family like us" (Mistry 43). Further, her elder son Murad adds, "And it always feels gloomy in their house" (Mistry 43). Hence, it can be opined that women are mostly judged by their marital status. Often, their anger, anxiety etc., are being blamed for their spinsterhood.

Thus, the above study reveals that marriage is a social construct which has lasting implications in the lives of not only the husband and wife but in the family lineage. The success of a marriage depends on a number of social, financial and other factors. Husband and wife form conjugal relationship and the success of such a relationship depends – besides on the social norms and financial conditions – on the level of understanding and communication between the couple. A successful marriage leads to happiness for the married

couple as well as for the other members of the family. A family is a unit of the society, hence, a happy family life may contribute to the formation of a happy society. The study with special reference to Rohinton Mistry's novel, *Family Matters*, reveals how the success of a conjugal life and happiness of a family depend on a number of factors. ■

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Post Colonial Studies: Subaltern Theory and Practice

Subhadarshini Mohapatra

This paper tries to highlight the true concept of Post-colonial studies with special reference to Subaltern Theory and Practice. As we know, Post-colonial theory reviews the power and continued dominance of western ways of intellectual investigation. The complex and shifting nature of national identity, being a part and parcel of Post-colonial studies differentiates one group from the other. In other words, Post-colonial studies specifically critically analyzes the history, culture, traditions, literature and modes of discourse indigenous to England, Spain, France and other European powers. Later on, post-colonial literature specifically concentrates on the literary evolution and development of the Third World countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean islands and South America. It also extends the scope of intellectual discourse of Australia, Canada and New Zealand. Some other scholars include British literature of 18th and 19th century with special reference to the socio-economic life during Colonial exploitation.

Key words: *Post-colonial, Subaltern Theory, Imperialism, Oriental, Occidental*

This paper tries to highlight the true concept of Post-colonial Studies with special reference to Subaltern Theory and Practice. As we know Post-colonial Theory reviews the power and continued dominance of Western ways of intellectual investigation. The complex and shifting nature of National Identity, being a part and parcel of Post-colonial Studies differentiate one group from the other. So Post-colonialism as rightly viewed by Patricia Waugh as an approach to the Historical, Political, Cultural and Textual ramifications of the colonial encounter between the West dating from 16th century to the present Day.

In other words, Post-colonial studies specifically, critically analyses the history, culture, traditions, literature and modes of discourse indigenous to England, Spain, France and other European powers. Later on, Post-colonial literature specifically concentrates on the literary evolution and development of the Third World Countries in Africa, Asia the Caribbean Islands and South America.

It also extends the scope of Intellectual Discourse of Australia, Canada and New Zealand. Some other scholars include British Literature of 18th and 19th century with special reference to the socio-economic life during colonial exploitation. So Post-colonial studies is not a fixed entity of cultural discourse with unique methodology. Rather it deals with an

oceanful of central and recurrent issues of Western Imperialism. In other words, it is “Hybridization of colonial languages and cultures”. Post-colonial studies also focus on the paradoxical status of the US as a contemporary empire and Post-colonial Nation. It also refers to Universal Immigration in a Globalized World.

Originally, the word “Subaltern” is derived from the Italian word Subatemo. Oxford Dictionary provides the meaning of the term “Subaltern” as of “Inferior” rank. But today its definition has changed and is used in multifarious purposes. After Gramsci, Bill Ashcroft viewed subaltern to those sections of the people or communities who are under the command of ruling class and subject to the hegemony of the dominant group.

This paper also marks how Subaltern Theory has undergone a tremendous change and influenced varied disciplines in its course of action from time to time. On the other hand, Subaltern Studies raise a voice for the voiceless and bring them back to the mainstream. Marxist Antonio Gramsci for the first time used the term “Subaltern” in his famous book “Prison Note-books “(1971) as a code word to cheat the prison censor to allow his manuscripts out of the prison. So the philosophical and social foundation of Subaltern Studies germinated from the writings of the Italian Marxist thinker Antonio Gramsci.

In later years, Bill Ashcroft in Post-colonial studies :”The key concepts views “Subaltern” as the underprivileged under the ruling class and subject to the hegemony of the dominant groups. On the other hand, Antonio Gramsci was concerned with the historiography of the subaltern classes.

Asian historiography applied “Subaltern” method to the historical enquiry by the 1980s. It tries to uncover the hidden facts of history. So the concept of “Subaltern” was evolved as a “Eurocentric” method of historical enquiry to subvert the power and Authority of the social groups who hold hegemonic power. Boaventura de Sousa Santos in his book *Toward a New Legal Common Sense* (2002) views it as a “Counter Hegemonic Practice.... of social struggle against Neoliberalism and Globalization, especially the struggle against social exclusion”. Thus, the “Subaltern” has become a standard way to designate the colonial subject that has been constructed by European discourse.

If we throw a glance into the Post-colonial theory and practice, the term “Subaltern” describes the lower social classes and the “other” social groups displaced to the edge of a society in an imperial colony. In other words, “a Subaltern” is a native man and woman without a proper human identity. But Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak refutes Subaltern as synonymous to “Oppressed”. Rather she views it a special difference or inaccessibility to cultural Imperialism.

In 1980s, a group of South Asian Historians under the able and active leadership of Ranajit Guha started the project of subaltern studies claimed the rewriting of Indian freedom movement which was an active movement and oppression of Britishers on the Indians. Being the founder and editor of “Subaltern Studies”, he clearly and vividly explained

his objectives and functions in his well known famous book *Elementary aspects of pleasures Insurgency in colonial India* Guha challenged the British Imperialist oppression and local landlord exploitation as the foundation of his Subaltern Theory. It gave birth to the germination of a Theoretical Consciousness and public awareness. It led to India's long Subaltern tradition along with the landmark insurgency of Mahatma Gandhi.

Echoing Ranajit Guha, Vinayak Chaturvedi in his *A Critical Theory of Subalterneity : Rethinking class, in Indian Historiography* States that the Elitist dominance misrepresent the exact historicity of the freedom movement. The fire of Indian Subaltern Theory was ignited in 1969 in Naxalbari area of West Bengal after the success of a rural peasant against the Indian National Government. However, in 1980s, Ranajit Guha and his followers strongly believed that elite historiography has been an objective representation in the subject matters of subaltern group. Originated many as a protest against socialism, Subalterns included Industrial workers, women, tribal people. So the scope of Subaltern studies has been widened with wider and vast ramifications. Ania Lorna's "colonialism/Post Colonialism" highlights on Nationalism and Decolonization which were borne out of the descent of women movement, peasant struggle or caste and class-based struggle of common man.

John Hawley in *Encyclopedia of Post Colonial studies* views that the Subaltern Studies hints on two dominant modes of thinking such as elite and radical historiography. Dipesh Chakrabarty in his essay "Post coloniality and the artifice of History: who speaks for Indian past" refers to the post colonial studies.

Subaltern Studies in India became one of the main fields of study in the Academic Circle in the 1990s. The main focus of Subaltern Studies is to affirm the complete autonomous of the unprivileged in India. We feel the impact of Subaltern Studies in World literature, films full of racial discrimination and gender stereotypes.

The ambiguous and shifting nature of national identity is integral to post colonial theory. This is so as identification with one group inevitably leads to differentiation with others. This paper hints to anthropological data which makes us think that nation is truly a cultural construct, a man-made artifice.

By definition, post colonialism is a period of time after colonialism and post colonial literature stands as an opposition to the colonial. But some critics view literature opposed to colonialism is post colonial despite its production during the colonial period. However, post colonial literature focused on race relations and the effects of racism.. So Post-colonial literature includes the forces of Imperialism and colonial expansion. In short, Post-colonial literature is that which has arisen primarily since the end of World War II from regions of the World undergoing decolonization. Works from such regions in the 20th and 21st centuries, such as the Indian subcontinent, Nigeria, South Africa and many parts of the Caribbean. As we know, Post-colonial theory reviews the power and continued dominance of western ways of intellectual investigation.

Post-colonialism is mainly concerned with the political, historical and social impact of colonization along with the colonized societies. The term Post-colonial refers to the cultural interactions between the colonizers and the colonized societies. So Post-colonial theory influenced the way we go through texts, the way we understand national and transnational histories. The study further leads to the development of the Post-colonialist discourse handled by such critics as Gayatri Chakrabarti, Homi K Bhaba, Edward Said, Franz Fanon and others. We see Post-colonialism is based on the Hegelian notion of Master-Slave dialectics and the idea of the 'Self' in relation to the 'Other'. Simultaneously, we find Edward Said in his 'Orientalism' establishes the binary opposition of post Colonial Canon between 'colonizers' and the colonized through the dichotomy of the orient and the occident. In orientation, we find the occident represents the self or subject. But orient on the other side stands for the 'Other' or Object. It is characterized as weak, opposed and suppressed.

The scope and connotations of Post-colonial studies have been expanded being affected by Globalization, Environmentalism, Transnationalism and Neo-liberalism. Post-colonial studies have been shadowed under Neo-Imperialism. As a result, the issues emerged from post-colonial societies on Today's Globalized World have shown the usefulness of the Post-colonial analysis. Now Post-colonial studies have been universal and helps to analyse global culture and problem. For example, Global Warming and its devastating effect, rapid Industrialization and the urge for accumulating unprecedented wealth at the cost of environment have attracted everyone's attention at a Post-colonial era. The environment along with its varied associated topics like Eco-feminism, ecological Imperialism, environment and after all Specialism have attracted Post-colonial thinking as it has a direct relation between Colonialist treatment of indigenous flora and fauna and colonized treatment. Besides Post-colonial studies hints to study the concept of boundaries and borders including cultural borders. Another pertinent problem of post-colonial studies is the issue of the sacred religion. The post secular Age opens arena for ample opportunities.

Post-colonial analysis unfurls varied questions regarding society, culture, politics and philosophy based on colonial experience and its influence on Today's World. Hybridity, mimicry, subaltern discrimination, aloofness and gender hegemony also have great place in post colonial studies. In this context, we find Gayatri Spivak as a post-colonial critic with a twist of feminism, Marxism and literary criticism. As a follower of the Deconstructive Theory of Derrida, we find her ideas constantly evolving in the true Deconstructive way. Her ideas are in motion and develop day by day. To her, "ethics" is not just a problem of knowledge but a call of a relationship. She considers good relationship is always individualistic, close and strong. Strong relationship demands responsibility and accountability. So good relation with the "other" is an act of love and fellow feeling. This is unrequited relationship.

Edward Said's "Orientalism" forms a very vital background for Post-colonial studies. This orient enables one to dive deep into western learning, western consciousness and even empire. It reflects what is inferior ("Other") to the west. Orientalism is a way of

regular writing dominated by imperatives. The orient depicts man as feminine, weak and even dangerous for his sexual possessiveness of white, western woman. On the other hand, Latent Orientalism is unconscious, separate, eccentric background and passive. It is tyrannical and regressive. So it is always the other, which is easy to win. On the other hand, manifest Orientalism deals with recurrent changes and policies seen in Orientalist thinking. However, the Earlier Orientalism considered the Orient a vast entity with a wide arena cultures and countries which includes most of Asia and the Middle East. They consider and study "Orient" as an organic whole.

On the other hand, Gramsci believed that it is the responsibility of the state to uplift the population to a particular cultural and moral level. So, hegemony is a process by which educative pressure is applied to single individuals so as to obtain their consent and their collaboration, turning necessity and coercion into Freedom.

"Subaltern" studies began as a revisionist historiography of peasant movements in colonial India. The Subaltern studies group was formed in 1979. The first edited volume of Subaltern studies was published in 1982. In the late 1983 when Guha moved to Australian National University, the project gained a new life. Subaltern literature emerged to voice for all those oppressed, exploited and marginalized, underprivileged group of people who have tolerated social, racial, cultural inequalities and exploitation for ages and ages. It is felt in all literature. Even Odia literature is no exception to it.

The historian in the Subaltern historiography creates a special place for the Subaltern. As a result, he goes against the traditional norm of history writing. For example, Ranajit Guha refutes the elite representation of history. So, Post-colonial theory should reevaluate its own biases and make an effort to dispel differences. Orientalism, imperialism enlightenment and nationalism expand the horizon of Post-colonialism.

Post-colonial studies generally problematise the exploitation and hegemonization of the colonized people and their culture. Edward Said in his *Orientalism* discusses the differences between the occident and the orient, the dominant, the dominated, the colonial and the colonized. Even the question of "self" comes into debate. To Said, Cultural Imperialism is driven by the colonial mindset of socio-political and even intellectual hegemonization. Native language of the colonized people is often affected by the Euro-centric ideology and language. Post-colonial studies hints at the binaries of self and the other, East and West, center and marginalized. So, we find "Old Subaltern", "New Subaltern", "Aggravated Subaltern", "Situational Subaltern", "Racial Subaltern" and "Gendered Subaltern" following Gayatri Spivak's concept of "Old Subaltern" and Antonio Gramsci's "Subaltern Identity".

Subaltern studies embodies an important component of Post-colonial discourse and its history goes back to Hegel's problematization of Master-Slave dialectics, philosophy of self and the other and Antonio Gramsci's detailed analysis of the characteristics of subaltern dynamism in his 'Selections from prison notebooks. On the other hand, the South

Asian Subaltern scholars under the leadership of Ranajit Guha took the Subaltern scholarship by highlighting neglected minor narratives and socially ostracized people of the society such as chandalas, sudras, namasudras, fakirs, widows, prostitutes etc. Simultaneously emphasis is given on writing subaltern historiography to interrogate elitist and bourgeois historiography. According to Partha Chatterjee, subaltern consciousness is inseparable from Indian socio-cultural situation, caste conscious and socio-economic hegemonization. So, subaltern studies is often considered to be the corollary of Post-colonial studies.

The scope and connotations of Post-colonial studies have been expanded being affected by Globalization, Environmentalism, Transnationalism and Neoliberalism. Post-colonial studies have been shadowed under Neo-Imperialism. As a result, the issues emerged from Post-colonial societies. Today's Globalized World has shown the usefulness of Post-colonial analysis. Now Post-colonial studies have been Universal and helps to analyse global culture and problem. For example, Global warming and its devastating effect, rapid industrialization and the urge for accumulating unprecedented wealth at the cost of environment have attracted everyone's attention at a Post-colonial era.

Subalterns face a dual confusion, according to Spivak's, both in the terms of economic deprivation as well as cultural loss. Hybridity is closely related to Post-colonialism. In the present scenario, we find Indian authors like Salman Rushdie, V.S Naipaul, Hanif Kureshi, Sara Suleri, Bharati Mukherjee and many more are concerned with topics like cultural loss, displacement, feminist issues, oriental clichés, identity loss, migration, aloofness and insecurity. So, Post-colonial identity is fluid, rational, dynamic and in a flux. It changes day by day.

If we throw a glance to Indian Society, we find in the name of Hinduism, the Subaltern is othered both by the British and the native Elites. For example, the Tantriks, the Devadashis, the Harijans, hijras and after all the illiterate rural folk, the scheduled classes are treated as Subalterns. The main aim of Subaltern Studies is to highlight the position of power class in the World and to show the direction to uplift the oppressed.

The Subaltern Studies evolved in 1980s which was deeply influenced by the scholarship of Eric Strokes who attempted to formulate a new narrative history of India and South Asia. Gayatri Chakrabarti in her intellectual essay "can the Subaltern speak" argues that the abolition of the Hindu rite of "Sati" in India by the British was an incident of saving brown women from brown men by the white men. This makes us think the then relationship between colonizers and the colonized. The ills of Indian society stem from Hinduism and its radical tendencies. Women especially uneducated poor women fall as Subalterns to the clutch of Hinduism. Likewise, widows in Benaras and Devadashis in Indian temples are also forced to perform certain duties against their will or interest. Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable*, Vasudev Sunani's *Asprushya*, Godavarish Mishra's *Nila mastarani*, Arundhati Roy's *God of Small Things*, R.K. Narayan's *The Painter of Signs* are some burning examples highlighting the problem of Subalterneity.

However, after 75 years of Indian independence, caste system still prevails in India. Untouchables are still subalterns who are voiceless. The story *Nila Mastarani* by Godavarish Mishra very vehemently exposed the caste system of the then Odia culture and tradition. Even the film “Slum dog Millionaire” very derogatively exposed the Subaltern issue. No doubt, Government programs and quotas have tried to raise the living standards of untouchables reserving places in the legislature, Government jobs, schools and colleges. Likewise, urbanization, economic development, industrialization and globalization benefit untouchables breaking down caste barriers. On the other hand, untouchables have formed a strong and organised political force named as “Dalits”. However, the history of Subaltern groups is necessarily fragmented and episodic. But a tendency of unification exists among them and this is always a subject to the activity of the ruling class. ■

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Ecological Study of Kalidas's *Abhijnana Sakuntalam*

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Kalidas's *Abhijnana Sakuntalam* is considered to be the master piece among his plays. He has discussed the close affinity between human beings and nature at all levels – spiritual, physical and intellectual which calls for a balance. He is able to capture the beauty of nature present in creepers, plants and trees and even in wild animals. In the prologue of the play there is a beautiful description of the summer season in the song of actress. Every act has its setting amidst nature and nature has played an important role like the human characters in making the drama a great example of ecological balance. The protection and the growth of nature is highly essential for peaceful survival of human world. His study of nature and the way he has portrayed the nature is unparallel in ancient literature. He has been hailed as the poet of nature and the play is a message for the world regarding our relation with the environment, we live in.

Key words: Nature, human beings, ecological balance, co-existence, ancient literature.

Kalidas is indisputably the greatest ancient poet in Sanskrit literature. Of the three plays written by him, *Abhijnana Shakuntalam* is considered as Kalidas's magnum opus. Each of his works has been expressed against the background of nature. He has used nature and its beauty to ornate his works. It enables the reader to actually realize the scenic beauty of Indian flora and fauna and other natural phenomenon. The description of natural events is interesting because of its association with human events. Kalidas is fond of portraying nature as partaking in human emotions and feelings directly. The characters in his play are also sensitive towards the natural world. The play shows the exuberance of his imagination and his profound knowledge of nature and human relationship. Every act of *Abhijnana Sakuntalam*, except the fifth act, has vivid description of nature. The way Kalidas has described the nature and human relationship reminds us of our age-old tradition of coexistence of both and perfect harmony between the two as depicted in our ancient scriptures and holy books. All our ancient literature serves as vast reservoirs of knowledge related to everything environment, whether it is about maintaining ecological balance or weather cycles or protecting earth, nature and environment. In Vedic period people believed in nature and natural phenomenon. People in early days abided by Vedic laws and refrained from harmful practices to preserve and sustain nature. Apart from the Vedic discourse, Panchatantra, Hitopadesa and some Purans are replete with stories of man befriending and talking to all kinds of animals, birds and even trees. The centuries old Jain and Buddhist traditions too enclose the principles of ecological harmony and sustainability. Thus, every

development around us that is all aspects of man-environment relationship has divine origin. More importantly, Kalidas's works reveal a deep sense of 'trusteeship' between human and nature. As agriculture was not developed, the natural resources were the sources of living. For everything we depend on nature. But this knowledge of man and nature relationship has not been popularised as it should be nor the present age is aware of it. So, in the last decades the ecology has become the subject of debate and deep concern among the intellectuals, scientists and statesmen. Number of seminars, discussions and awareness programmes, both at national and international level, have been organised to highlight the possible threats to the world of nature and the human life. We have developed a lot in different fields especially in the field of science and technology but our development has taken place at the cost of the nature. Unfortunately we have forgotten that we have a legacy of five thousand years which has taught us to love and live with nature. So our present concern about nature is not a new thinking rather a revival of what had been wisely thought much before by our ancestors. So in the present context the ecological study of Kalidas's *Abhijnana Sakuntalam* is seminal and relevant.

Kalidas's portrayal of nature reveals to us the inner significance of the world of nature and man's inherent relation with the nature. The photographic description of nature with all details makes the nature a thing of beauty and a source of joy forever. The play opens in an idyllic hermitage of sage Kanva where life moves in perfect harmony with nature and the hermitage located at the foothill of the Himalayas near the bank of river Malini is a place of peace, purity and tranquillity and there is no place for violence in it. Fruits and flowers bearing trees and creepers yield their crops for the inmates of the hermitage. Birds and animals find an ideal sanctuary here for they are fed with care and tenderness. In the first act of this play Anusuya, Priyamvada, Sakuntala were watering in the garden of Kanva. They took utmost care of their plants. The description of sharp blades of Darbha grass, creepers like Navamalika and trees like Kesara and the hovering Bhramara, dense shade of the Saptaparna trees, a thickly interwoven creeper-bower present in the forest remind us of the forgotten days when human beings were living in the lap of nature. Sakuntala's presence in a creeper-bower enclosed by canes on the bank of river Malini and the fragrance of the lotuses that comes through cool breezes not only tells about Kalidas's poetic sensibility but also some of the beautiful objects present in the nature. In this context the appreciation of king Dushyanta seeing the natural beauty and serenity of the hermitage is noteworthy. He says that the heaven will be eclipsed by the hermitage as seat of peace and bliss. Among kavyas the drama is the most charming. Among dramas the *Abhijnana Sakuntalam* is especially charming. Among the acts the fourth act is the best. Because the way the nature has shared emotions and feelings with human being at the time of joy and sorrow is admirably described in the fourth act of this play. The description of farewell scene is heart touching for the mention of deep affection expressed by animals, plants, trees and creepers. The female deer have dropped their cud of Darbha grass, the peacocks have given up their dancing, the creepers shed tears in form of yellow leaves to express their grief at the time of departure of Sakuntala.

The grass drops from the feeding doe;
The peahen stops her dance;
Pale, trembling leaves are falling slow,
The tears of clinging plants,

The female bee seated on a flower does not drink honey from the flower and waits Sakuntala to come which exhibits a kind of attachment between animals and humans. The sixth act gives the picture of Pramadvana blooming with spring. Trees like Mandara, Kalpavrksha and Asoka and lakes like golden daffodils multiply the beauty of the nature seen around the hermitage of Sage Marica. The description of casket of palm-leaves hanging from the branch of the mango-tree, the wreath of bakula-flowers capable of lasting for a period of time and retaining its odour is an indication of the splendid beauty the nature has been created with by the God. Kalidas has presented Sakuntala as the daughter of nature and the nature responds to humanity in meaningful way. Every tree, every creeper, even sprout including animals has expressed love for her in different ways. The foliage of Kesara trees invites her. The young deer pulls her garment not to allow her to leave the hermitage and the deer who drinks only from Sakuntala's hands throws away the half-eaten morsels of Darbha grass knowing that she is leaving this hermitage for some other places. The sheldrake does not respond to the call of his mate from behind the lotus leaf. He drops the lily from his bill and turns on Sakuntala with a look of grief. Sakuntala here is moved to tears at the young deer's unwillingness to part from her. So Kashyap says to her that you have adopted him, and he would never leave you willingly. The world of nature around the hermitage is busy in preparing Sakuntala for her departure as the mother decorates her daughter while sending to her in-law's house. Nature offers Sakuntala 'an auspicious silk garments white as moon, another tree distilled the lac-dye so excellent to stain her feet, ornaments like a bracelet of lotus-stalk and different flowers. Trees afford thick shade to Sakuntala, on the way to Dushyant's palace, to mitigate the heat of sun's rays. Sakuntala is not only grieved at the separation from the penance forests, but also the penance forests are seen in the same condition. Similarly, Sakuntala loves nature so deeply that she never drinks water without watering the trees. She never picks tender sprout in spite of her love for flowers and attends upon the trees with sisterly affection. She writes a love letter on a lotus leaf. She covers her breasts with lotus-leaves, sleeps on a bed of flowers and wears a bracelet of lotus-stalk. Sakuntala and Jasmine are constantly brought together as sisters born of same mother-nature. She addresses Jasmine creeper as Vanajyotsna, the moonlight of the forest and embraces at the time of her departure and requests her friends to take care of it. The love birds suspend their love-making for a while to bid farewell to Sakuntala. The affection between Nature and Sakuntala is so deep that Kanva requests nature to allow Sakuntala to leave for her husband's place. At this, the cuckoo's sweet voice is heard as a mark of permission to leave the hermitage. It seems as if the nature is more active and visible than Kanva and other inmates of the hermitage in giving a tender farewell to Sakuntala, the child of nature.

She would never drink till she had wet
Your roots, a sister's duty,
Nor pluck your flowers; she loves you yet
Far more than selfish beauty.
The trees are answering your prayer
In cooing cuckoo-song,
Bidding Sakuntala farewell,
Their sister for so long.

Sakuntala behaves like a foster mother of a female deer abandoned by her own mother. She affectionately reared it with handful of rice. She used to apply the oil of ingudi-fruits to the mouth of fawn pricked by sharp points of Darbha grass. She is also very much anxious about the pregnant deer and wants her father, Kashyap, to let her know as soon as it delivers its baby. Kalidas not only reveals our emotional relation with the plants and animals but also hints at the presence of various medicinal plants in nature which act as life-saving drugs for human beings like Vishalyakarani, Mruthasanjeevani, Sandhanakarani and Savarnyakarani plants, grown in Gandhamardan mountain and brought by Lord Hanuman, which saved the life Lord Lakshman as mentioned in the great epic of The Ramayan. Even the present life-saving drugs used for the treatment of fatal diseases are prepared from herbs and plants like the ancient Ayurveda medicines. Rig Veda contains 23 hymns that praise the medicinal plants. So, our ancestors have never thought of man and nature as being apart from one another. The saints and hermits lived in the midst of nature and worshipped animals, plants and trees like gods and goddesses as the saint Kashyap in this drama considered the trees of penance grove dearer than Sakuntala. Unless nature is nurtured properly, it will be a disaster for us. The play also reveals that nature and human beings need cooperation of each other. They depend on each other for their survival. Kalidas's nature shares our sorrows and sufferings and rejoices in our happy moments. Killing of animals was never allowed in our tradition and culture which has been reflected in all his works. King Dushyant was cautioned not to kill any animal within the precincts of the hermitage when he was pursuing to kill a deer. Sarvadamana did not tolerate for teasing the cub of a lion. Kalidas was opposed to the teasing of animals. The forest was the safest place for human beings, animals and the nature. All were living together with exchange of mutual love and affection and protecting each other at the time of need. Like Vedic Rishi who had always stressed the need for planting of trees and avoiding the cutting of trees, Kalidas was also opposed to cutting even a poisonous tree in the forest. As every member in our family is important for us so also is every plant or tree for Kalidas. Birds and beasts behave as family members of the sage. Sakuntala's dedication and commitment to nature and animals is a symbolic gesture of our tradition and culture which is based on the concept that God is omnipresent in different forms. If we look at Hinduism, we worship sun, wind, land, trees, plants and water which is the very base of human survival. Likewise respect and conservation of wildlife is part of our cultural ethos. Nature and culture become intertwined. But our present approach to environment as a whole is a complete departure from our tradition and

culture. In name of the development we are cutting down trees indiscriminately and mercilessly killing animals which are causing ecological disaster. So, it is a fact that maximum environmental hazards occur in modern society due to human activities. When their natural habitats are under threat, the wild animals turn violent and trespass into towns and cities. But in the peaceful environment even fierce animals forget their violent instincts. Kalidas has suggested that the animals are also a major part of our environment like trees and plants and their preservation and protection is not merely a conservation practice but a religious duty which has been mentioned in Atharvaveda. According to Atharvaveda, "Let there be peace in the heaven, the earth, the atmosphere, the water, the herb, and the vegetation, among the divine beings and in Brahman, the absolute reality, let everything be at peace and in peace. Only then we will find peace."

The behaviour and attitude of Sakuntala also indicates that the nature has the power to teach humility and discipline to human beings. The author of the Ramayan was Valmiki who was, in early life, a hunter according to legend. He turned to asceticism and lived in the forest in his ashram and he became a great sage. With the development of science, the contributions of the nature have been undermined. Whatever is considered as the gift of science, the raw materials are directly or indirectly collected from the nature. Human beings only sculpt them into shape. Nature is a friend, philosopher and guide and a pool of nectar that has attracted saints and hermits to live being surrounded by it.

The type of humanisation of nature which we find in Abhijnana Sakuntalam is unparalleled and reveals that nature and human beings are inseparable entities of God's creation. Kalidas was well aware of the facts that trees and plants are the major components of environment. Therefore, he gives much emphasis on their protection. It is an attempt of Kalidas to sensitize us about our relationship with nature and duties to protect it. In this work of Kalidas we have innumerable moral lessons to reduce these problems. A glimpse of life of ancient people indicates that they were living in good harmony with nature. The nature is the best source of everything that human beings need to survive, be it air, water, food, shelter, medicine and many other things. According to William Cowper, "God made the country and manmade the town" and this is reason for which nature is more beautiful and attractive than the towns and cities. We can not create artificial forests but not hills and mountains, rivers and seas, clouds and rains, the melodious voice of cuckoo and the beauty of a peacock or deer nor can we lend charm to things we are trying to create imitating the nature. When we are tired of life, we rush to the places full of natural beauties to escape the harsh realities of life. What Abhijnana Sakuntalam expresses is that nature is a safe and peaceful abode for human beings and maintains ecological balance of the world. In the Isopanisada it is mentioned that God is present in each and every part of His creation which indicates that one should not dare to disturb the environment as it is one of the manifestations of God. The ecology is a major theme of the play and the understanding of the play will remain incomplete without studying ecology in the present context and the world will miss a great message left by Kalidas in this play. The message related to environment and the emotion expressed by nature and other

characters in the farewell scene have been artistically blended which touches the heart of the readers and brings changes in their concern for the environment. So, Indians pay compliments to Kalidas in the way English people pay to Shakespeare. He is also ranked at par with Dante and Goethe. This play also makes us feel that Kalidas was not only a prince of poets or eminent dramatist but also an unrecognised environmentalist of his time. ■

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Internalization of Racist Ideology and Double Oppression: A Study of Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*

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The radical women's liberation movement of the 1960s which fought for the freedom of women from economic, political and social oppression had been criticised to be class conscious and elitist, not adhering to the plight of lower class, non-white women. The notions of equally oppressed women have been a topic of endless debate. In the 1980s, the coloured women formed their own group called the Black Feminists, who condemned the radical feminists to be racists. Feminism have been criticised by the black feminists to advocate only the dominant feminist discourse of the white women and ignored women's reality and its truthfulness to the lived experiences of women in a patriarchal, white supremacists, capitalist society which sustains itself on class oppression and racism. Feminism became an advocacy of the dominant values and a means to support class interest. Black feminism evolved from this need to resist hegemonic dominance within feminist discourse in order to re-examine, criticize and explore new possibilities

The paper analyzes and highlights the internalization of racist ideology as depicted in works of literature such as Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (1970) and how it affects the psyche of victims who are non-white and vulnerable minors. The consciousness of double oppression or double consciousness is explained by W.E.B Du Bios as a peculiar sensation, "this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity" (Du Bios 14). The victimization by the superior class is not only depicted in the adults who are most able to comprehend it; but the younger generations are the most vulnerable.

Key words: Feminism, Double Oppression, Double Consciousness, Black Feminism, Internalization of Racist Ideology.

The radical women's liberation movement of the 1960s which fought for the freedom of women from economic, political and social oppression had been criticised to be class conscious and elitist, not adhering to the plight of lower class, non-white women. The notions of equally oppressed women have been a topic of endless debate. The women's

liberation movement have had tremendous achievement on the economic liberation for women which ushered the so called Bourgeois Feminism of economic independence in a capitalist society; but this has also been criticised by Socialist Feminist who gave importance not only to gender but also to the interrelatedness of class and gender oppression.

In the 1980s, the coloured women formed their own group called the Black Feminists, who condemned the radical feminists to be racists. Black Feminists groups were concerned with the establishment of a feminism that would include race, ethnicity and class differences along with sex as the basis of their analysis of women. Black feminists revealed how black women have been victims of exploitation and objectification more than the white women have been.

Another important aspect of Black Feminism is a concern for retaining their racial and ethnic roots, preserving the cultural history of their mothers which had been erased from history under the white supremacist oppression. Black feminists had to choose between a white patriarchal world and a brown matriarchal world and this choice in favour of the latter was at the heart of their struggle. On the issue of racism bell hooks¹ argues in her book *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Centre* (2000):

The women's liberation movement has not only been structured on a narrow platform, it primarily called attention to issues relevant primarily to women (mostly white) with class privilege...Radical/revolutionary feminist thinkers who wanted to talk about gender from a race-sex-class perspective were accused of being traitors, destroying the movement, shifting the focus. In those days black women/ women of colour were often encouraged by white comrades to talk about race while our ideas about all other aspects of feminist movement were ignored (hooks xii).

Feminism have been criticised by the black feminists to advocate only the dominant feminist discourse of the white women and ignored women's reality and its truthfulness to the lived experiences of women in a patriarchal, white supremacists, capitalist society which sustains itself on class oppression and racism. bell hooks writes of this as,

Racism abounds in the writings of White Feminists, reinforcing white supremacy and negating the possibility that women will bond politically across ethnic and racial boundaries... Class struggle is inextricably bound to the struggle to end racism (hooks 3).

Feminism became an advocacy of the dominant values and a means to support class interest. Black feminism evolved from this need to resist hegemonic dominance within feminist discourse in order to re-examine, criticize and explore new possibilities. On critiquing this stifling nature of feminism and its apparent exclusion of racism, Bell Hooks argues that white feminist assumed that black women had not known sexist oppression until it was advocated by them. They could not imagine that Black Women and other women of colour

who lived daily in oppressive situations could understand what patriarchal subjugation is from lived experiences.

Black Feminism showed that they have been compelled to serve as the white woman's servant while her own children were starving at home. From the standpoint of the assumption of class and racial difference, white Feminists groups do not understand the interrelatedness of sex, race and gender and feminist analysis of women's lot tend to focus exclusively on gender. They bear the brunt of sexist, racist and classist oppression. African-American men maybe victimized by racism, but at the same time sexism allows them to act as exploiters of women. In parallel to this white women maybe victimized by sexism but racism allows them to oppress Black people.

The issue of racism had been sidelined in feminist theoretical praxis as it had not been the direct issue relating to dominant feminist ideology. On racism being an integral part of feminism, bell hooks argues,

Racism is fundamentally a feminist issue because it is so interconnected with sexist oppression. In the west philosophical foundations of racist and sexist ideology are similar (53).

The internalization of racist ideology is depicted in works of literature such as Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (1970). The novel tells the story of a people whose lives are shaped by external forces which are re-presented through the story of the Breedloves, a family which is disintegrated by a force which they cannot comprehend. It is this advocacy of the goodness of everything white and its internalization that the Breedloves succumbs to. In a society which condemns the Breedloves as,

They were poor and black and believed they were ugly...no one could have convinced them that they were not relentlessly and aggressively ugly (Morrison 28).

It is this unquestioning acceptance of what 'the master' had bestowed upon them which made them ugly not for the sake of being ugly alone. The narrator comments,

You look at them and wondered why they were so ugly...then you realise it came from conviction (28).

This consciousness of double oppression or double consciousness is explained by W.E.B Du Bios as a peculiar sensation, "this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity" (Du Bios 14).

For Cholly, the father, this conviction was meted out through violence towards his wife. Being a victim of racist bullying in his early teens, he had learned early on in life to displace his anger and helplessness towards weaker objects. He displaces his hatred of the white men on Darlene his then sexual partner and later on physically abuses his wife.

Having not received maternal love and being rejected by his gambling father, he had never understood what human bonding is. This made him,

Dangerously free. Free to feel whatever he felt-fear, guilt, shame, love, grief, pity. Free to be tender and violent. (Morrison 125)

The source of his freedom can be traced to the annihilation of his being, family, community and the history of his people. It is this state of freedom to have “reactions based on what he feels at the moment” (127) that made him incestuously involved with his daughter Pecola. This victimization by the superior class is not only depicted in the adults who are most able to comprehend it; but the younger generations are the most vulnerable. Being a female child, Pecola cannot say anything about her parent’s constant fighting and has to endure them silently. On one instance she had to imagine herself to disappear in order to escape the violence that she witnessed. She prays, “Please God...please make me disappear” (33), but her eyes would fail to disappear. Apart from the excruciating pain that her parent’s violence inflicts on her, racist abuse seem to be meted out most directly on Pecola, her ugliness is repeated in various instances in which it seems to be the main cause of the abuses that she received.

Since, mass culture promotes white beauty and blue eyes, her only freedom or chance of getting respect and identity is through identifying herself with these pre-conceived notions of beauty.

Each night, without fail she prayed for blue eyes (Morrison 35).

When she went to buy the Mary Jane candy, the shopkeeper Mr Yacobowski failed to see her and when she talks to him he looked through, ignoring the fact that Pecola is her customer. This clearly depicts racist discrimination even to a child who is in no condition to harm the ‘white’ elder.

In the description and names of the three whores who lived above the Breedloves’ storefront house, their names Poland, China and Maginot Line,

Morrison literalizes the novels overall conflation of black female bodies as the site of Fascist invasion of one kind or another, as the terrain on which is mapped the encroachment and colonization of African-American experiences, particularly those of its women, by seeming hegemonic white culture (Kuenz 421).

The three women have also internalized dominant stereotypical images of women and know well that their bodies are objects to men and they “hate all men.” Their obsession with the body and adherence to the dominant culture’s concept of beauty is seen when China with a flick of the wrist can convert herself from one feminine type to another. One minute she has “surprised eyebrows,” next minute she has “cupid –bow-mouth” of a starlet and next “oriental eyebrows.”

Pauline remembers the intra racial-discrimination as, “it was hard to get to know folks up here . . . Northern colored folk was different too . . . No better than whites for their meanness. They could make you feel just as no count. That was the loneliest time of my life” (Morrison 91). Housework was not able to fill the loneliness in her life. She tried to become fashionable but felt “uncomfortable with the few black women she met”, who were amused because she “did not straightened her hair” and when she wore make up as they did “it came off rather badly” (92). She had internalized the white values about appearances and gave more importance to clothing for which she would ask her husband for more money which led to severe physical fights, “She merely wanted other women to cast favourable glances at her” (92).

In her story of how she had her baby, she tells of how the doctor explained to the young students she would “deliver right away with no pain. Just like horses” (Morrison 97). She was in pain, about to deliver a baby but the doctor never asked her whether she had pains but went on to the others asking them whether they were in pain or not. On this Pauline angrily said,

I hurt just like them white women. Just ‘cause I wasn’t hooping and hollering before didn’t mean I wasn’t feeling pain (97).

The other white women having babies along with Pauline may have been oppressed by patriarchy at home but they need not go through such humiliation as Pauline simply because they had white skin. As for Pauline she is physically abused by Cholly at home and mistreated by others outside her home. She worked day jobs in the home of White folks where her mistreatment and oppression is clearly seen. The racist and superior classist attitude of a white woman is clearly seen when Pauline is deprived of her pay of eight dollars just because she could not obey the clever and wise white woman’s advice that she should leave Cholly and demand alimony. While the white woman is perplexed over the fact that her brother had not invited her to a party, Pauline faced the problem of her gas line being cut off just because the White Woman refuses to give her the eight dollars worth of labour only because she told Pauline that she shouldn’t let a man take advantage of her and that it was a man’s job to pay the bills which Pauline’s circumstances did not allow her. The White Woman did not understand that Pauline had to make a living for her family in a society in which the strings of economic reins were pulled by such people as herself whom the white supremacist capitalist society had bestowed the power to employ and un-employ a woman as Pauline. Pauline’s future could not be made by a mere divorce; it was a question of survival by any means in a society which did not want to privilege her only because of the colour of her skin.

As Pauline had to feed her family because her drunken husband could not be relied on, she found work in the home of the Fisher’s. She neglected her house, her husband and her children so much so as to slap Pecola when out of curiosity she accidentally spilled the blue berry sauce on the floor in the Fisher’s kitchen to serve the whims of a little spoiled white girl. She abused her own daughter as a White Woman who lives in the house,

Crazy fool...my floor, mess... look what you...work...get on out...now that...crazy...my floor, my floor...my floor (Morrison 85).

On this the narrator comments that her “words were hotter and darker than the smoking berries,” and that “the honey in her words” to the little white girl “complemented the sundown spilling on the lake” (85).

Pecola is raped by her own father as it is the only way he knows how to communicate his emotions and sees Pecola only through the eyes of female objectification by the male. For Pecola with the pressure of being convicted ugly, she had to find self-identification only through the possession of ‘blue eyes.’ This pain is doubled through the traumatic experience of her rape; her wish for annihilation finally came through when the only way of coping with her trauma is through complete self annihilation, where she is the only one who can see her blue eyes. At a moment where community of women are to come together to save victims like Pecola, instead they,

Felt wholesome after we cleaned ourselves of her. We were so beautiful when we stood astride their ugliness. Her simplicity decorated us, her guilt sanctified us, her pain made us glow with health. Even her waking dreams we used-to silence our nightmares (Morrison 163).

In a community without anyone to see her innocence and understand that she bears the same burden as the others who are unaware that her traumatic experience could become the nightmare of anyone within the same community Pecola made, “bird like gestures, walking up and down, her head jerking to the beat of a drummer so distant only she could hear” (162). Victims of racist and sexist ideology like Pecola wants to rise above the pit of their victimization but the society in which she lives would not allow it. Being a victim of double oppression of race and sex in which the class struggle is an intrinsic element because she is poor, in a capitalist society, her only way of gaining freedom is to sink into the numbness of schizophrenia. The effect of double oppression on victims like Pecola has a debilitating psychological effect which brings about a distorted consciousness of the self and an alienated self consciousness.

Morrison through her portrayal of the physical and psychological effect of racism shows how it is inextricable from sexist ideology and thereby makes the novel a testament of the double oppression of Black American women which rightly advocates the need of establishing a feminist discourse of their own terms. As bell hooks argues,

To develop political solidarity among women, feminist activists cannot bond on the terms set by the dominant ideology of the culture. We must define our own terms...we can bond on the basis of our political commitment to a feminist movement that aims to end sexist oppression (hooks 47).

The need to establish a feminist discourse which is not based on the dominant culture’s ideology which excludes issues of class and race, but which embraces all women of colour

and class and which is sensitive to the lived reality of women from every background is not only the prerogative of Black American women, but also the need of all women in the diverse world of differences in race, class, colour, caste and creed in its commitment for equality and commitment to end sexist oppression. ■

END NOTES

¹bell hooks is the pseudonym of the writer Gloria Jean Watkins. Hooks assumed her pseudonym, the name of her great-grandmother, to honour female legacies; she preferred to spell it in all lowercase letters to focus attention on her message rather than herself. For more information refer to web <https://www.britannica.com/biography/bell-hooks>

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Principles, Practices and Pertinent Issues of Repatriation: SriLankan Refugees in Tamilnadu (1984-2015 A.D).

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After the end of civil war in Sri Lanka, a number of Tamils live in refugee camps in the southernmost part of the peninsular India, who were proportionally high in Tamil country. There were several agencies both national and international level to assist the voluntary repatriation in the case of Sri Lankan refugees. Over the years the government of India had been undertaking number of schemes including Visa fee waiver scheme, for the return of refugees to the homeland. However, the recent studies indicate that the majority of the issues and its challenges are adhered by refugees in social and personal level but not merely by policy issues so that it creates exorbitant delay to getting the desired results. Most of the Tamil refugees struggle to make decision to repatriate in Sri Lanka and are rather disappointed with their situation. This is somewhat due to the lack of a clear repatriation process and the inadequacy of state institutions both host country and home country. If the repatriation process and relationship are maintained better, it would be of great significance for the development programs with refugee perspective. This article reveals the existing principles, practices and major issues pertaining to Sri Lankan Tamils in India for repatriation.

Key words: Refugees, Repatriation, National, International, Principles, Challenges, Schemes.

Introduction:

Repatriation means the act of returning to the country of origin. United Nation General Assembly stated: "The main task concerning displaced persons is to encourage and assist in every way possible their early return to their country of origin."¹ This is a common idea which also has some fact in it. When the civil war or internal violence that under controlled to force exodus take away, almost all the refugees are predictable to return to their own country and may begin to reconstruct their normal life.² However, in a certain situation, refugees would find it difficult to go home, even if they wanted to go with the support of NGO's.³ This study tries to identify the causes and situation by looking at the repatriation of Sri Lankan Tamils from their asylum in India. This apart it evaluates on the evolutionary growth of repatriation principles, challenges, experiments and its benefits in

the case of Tamil refugees. Currently, there are 64,208 refugees living in 107 government-run camps and at least 40,000 refugees are estimated to be lived outside the camps across Tamil Nadu, according to the Organization for Eelam Refugees Rehabilitation (OERR),⁴

Objectives of the study

The objective of the study is to assess the performance of the government's both the host country and the home country in terms of its measures on repatriation considering with the international covenants. While making investigation, the existing principles and challenges of repatriation are to be analyzed.

Methodology

In pursuing the study, archival sources have been used to a great extent. The Government's Annuals, Reviews, Reports, Files, Records, Gazettes constitute the primary sources. Manuals and gazetteers, essays and articles in contemporary Journals, News papers and the books appended to the references form the secondary sources of the study. Apart from historical method, critical analysis has also been attempted.

Since 1980s there were more casualties but not exact figures of death, injury and displacement. Particularly Tamil people was forced to run away during the periods of violence and displaced from areas of cruel fighting or multi-ethnic areas. In May 2009, a 30 year long civil war in Sri Lanka ended with a military victory by the government forces over the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).⁵ Since the war ended, the felicitation of refugee return has come on the political agenda. Throughout the War, number of Tamil people fled to other countries, as refugees especially to South Asia, Europe, North America and Australia mainly in India. In 2009 more than 1,25,000 Sri Lankan Tamils resided in India, of whom around 75,000 lived in refugee camps throughout Tamil Nadu.⁶ The official policies of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as well as the Indian and Sri Lankan government had given much facilitation for the voluntary return of this refugees.⁷

When Tamil refugees planned to start the repatriation process to Sri Lanka, they had faced many challenges like personal tragedies, divided families; physical and psychological wounds in the war had created bad impression among them to follow up. The children who were born in the camps had travelled to the country for the first time and faced multilevel challenges while returning home. In the early 1990s, especially after the assassination of the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991, a controversy erupted over reports of sections of refugees being sent back 'forcibly'. Consequently, under the government of India, the Prime Minister Narasimha Rao, agreed to allow representation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR) to screen refugees to ascertain the voluntary nature of the repatriation.⁸ The Indian Government had been taking steps to facilitate voluntary repatriation. Several measures have under taken to the repatriation. Visa fee waiver and overstay penalty was also granted to non-camp refugees on a case-to-case basis.

Visa fee Waiver Scheme

This scheme offers a waiver of Visa fee overstay penalty, meant for expediting the voluntary repatriation of non-camp refugees from Sri Lanka. This scheme is only applicable to those who came to India prior to January, 2015. Accordingly the recent study estimates that the state has 34,385 refugees staying outside the camps. This waiver scheme was formulated only in December 2015. Several causes are found for the subdued response to the scheme like the lack of awareness, the cumbersome power, the desire of the sections of the refugees to acquire citizenship and also the subsequent blasts in Sri Lanka.⁹

Nature of Repatriation:

The basis of refugee security is the custom of non-refoulement. Codified in Article 33 of 1951, the UN Refugee Convention, it entails that “no signing state shall eject or return a refugee in any way whatever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be endangered.” That code was more protected by Article 5 of the 1969 Organization of African Unity (OAU) Refugee Convention, which specifies that “the basically voluntary character of repatriation shall be respected in all cases and no refugee shall be repatriated against his will.” The OAU Settlement also announces the notion of “safety” to the legal and normative agenda of refugee repatriation, stating that “the country of asylum, in relationship with the country of origin, shall make sufficient preparations for the safe return of refugees who request repatriation.”¹⁰ However, India is not party to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol and does not have a nationwide refugee protection structure. Though, India remains to provide asylum to a large number of refugees from neighboring States and respects UNHCR’s obligation for other nationals, primarily Sri Lanka.¹¹ After the war ended in Sri Lanka, The Department of Rehabilitation has taken advantage for Voluntary Repatriation of refugees back to Sri Lanka with the financial assistance of UNHCR. UNHCR has been endorsed to interview the refugees recognized after receiving required permission from the Government of India. On the basis of confirmation and recommendation by UNHCR, the details of Sri Lankan Refugees voluntarily repatriated during this period are given below:

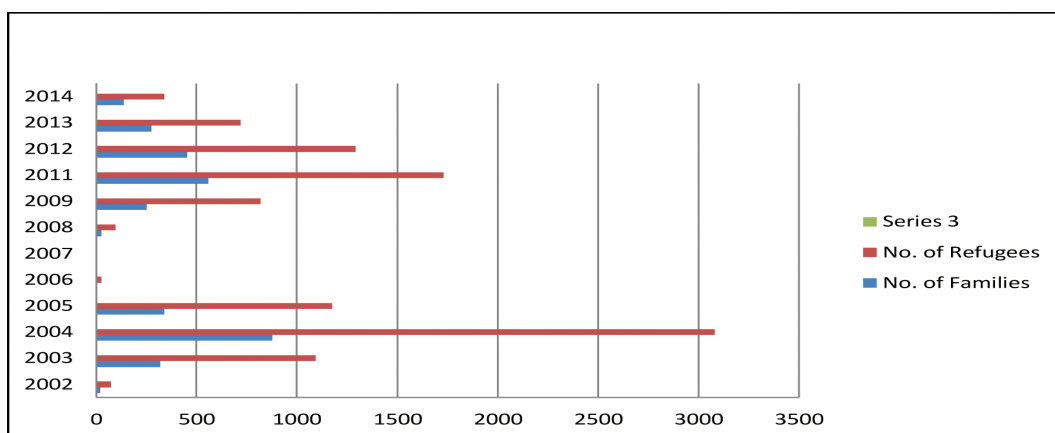


Table 1: Number of families and number of Refugees (2002 to 2015)

Year	No. of Families	No. of Refugees
2002	20	71
2003	317	1092
2004	875	3078
2005	339	1173
2006	5	27
2007	0	0
2008	25	95
2009	252	818
2010	0	0
2011	557	1728
2012	453	1291
2013	273	718
2014	137	338
2015	151	315
Total	3404	10,744

Source: *Ministry of Resettlement, Sri Lanka, 2015.*

According to numbers from both the Sri Lankan Ministry of Resettlement and local non-governmental organizations only about 10744 persons have returned until 2015 with annual numbers declining from 3,078 returnees in 2004 to 338 in 2014¹². The reasons and issues to return their home land are identified based on social and personal level. The recent study reveals that the unwillingness to return is primarily based on these legal difficulties as well as low expectations and lack of social support.¹³ These two reasons indicate that the repatriation process operates at both social level and personal level. It works to build the peace in a war affected territory at socio-economic and personal level which helps to protect the rights of the affected people since they are not refugees anymore. It is worth mentioning here that the UN has appointed a special organization known as the UNHCR to tackle the repatriation situations that keep arising in the world constantly.

Social level:

Social instruments of repatriation behold in the fields of family, community relations, health, education and religious affairs.¹⁴ Researchers found that “the attitude of the local community towards returnees has a great influence on returnees’ capability to reintegrate”.¹⁵ As a result repatriation is not possible at all the time to return one’s hometown as the places may still be insecure, properties or the sources of income that were controlled by the military had been ruined. Though the Indian refugee law enacts certain limitations, the refugees are under fear of persecution.¹⁶ The next important social feature is the living environment. Researchers identified that if they had returned their home land they would have to relearn the old ways of life, for example agriculture or cattle rising¹⁷ because for three decades

they were accommodated in thickly settled camps and are now challenged with rural settings.

Personal level:

Nearly three decades after sheltering in India, a majority of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees were in dilemma in going back to their country despite normalcy in their war-torn island nation. Understanding the uncertainty over a peaceful future back home as well as the consequences of returning to India again is the major restrictions for them. Sri Lankan Tamils had found Tamil Nadu to be a safe haven to live. War between the Sri Lankan military and the LTTE came to an end in 2009, the idea of returning to their homeland had emerged in the minds of many of the refugees in the 112 camps across the state. This effort also witnessed innumerable complications and so that they were not pleased with their present situation in Sri Lanka. A 65 year old farmer, along with his family lived in the camp articulated that they had been facing number of problems relating to their livelihood. They did not have any sufficient place to live in Sri Lanka even moved back to their home country after the end of the war.¹⁸

Major Obstacles

Many non-camp refugees while shifting from one place to another do not register themselves with the local police stations for a variety of reasons, though registration is mandatory. The Sri Lankan Government is directing the return of all refugees to the home country, but the governmental procedure of applying for permission in India which can take more than a year and also have the limitations to the return travel (there is currently no ferry service and returnees are restricted to 30kg per person when taking a plane to Sri Lanka). There are still more than 65,000 refugees accommodated in 107 government-run camps in the state of Tamil Nadu. A refugee in the camp said *“The only good thing in Sri Lanka is, it is our native country. But in India even though we are labeled refugees there are many benefits such as in hospital services, education facilities, etc.”*¹⁹

After the end of the civil war in 2009, then President Mahinda Rajapaksa undertook several developmental activities such as building roads, providing electricity and restoring railway networks. However, it is necessary to initiate the infrastructural facilities at the moment at any cost where the area razed by instant bombing in the war. But it was not sufficient to win over the Tamil people residing there. The government's version of development did not speak to the everyday concerns of Tamils yearning for a decent living, and a life without fear amid curbs by a powerful and omnipresent military. The Tamils expressed their protest at every opportunity in 2013 provincial election and the 2015 presidential poll and thus Mahinda Rajapaksa was unseated from power.²⁰

Though repatriation may be an informal mission for them because of the help of NGOs, like UNHCR, OfEER etc. the refugees are very cautious in moving out of India, as they cannot be accepted as refugees again if they wish to return here in case of critical situation in Sri Lanka. An NGO called Child Fund India recently set up a help center in Alandurai, Coimbatore, camp to offer a clear picture of the conditions in Sri Lanka to those

who wanted to move back home. The refugees have been trusting on these involvements to agree about their future plan. One of the Refugees in the camp said “I have no idea if I can get a normal life there. I have a lot of questions to be explained before returning. If I am not fulfilled, I will not go back, said a 25 year old woman. Persons who returned quite recently and were still struggling to cope with differences, organization of documents and finding employment have expressed positive feelings when talking about their situation in exile.²¹

Conclusion

The decision to return is far from straightforwardness and refugees use various ways to assess the situation in their home country including the contact with friends and family at home or through the media. In the period from 2009 to 2016 around 10,000 refugees have returned from India to Sri Lanka .The refugee camps offer basic facilities and refugees do not have to pay rent, electricity, water and some food rations. The services provided by NGOs were a great relief in the challenging conditions. But if they returned to home land, they have to depend on their own risk. On the other hand Sri Lankan refugees are facing numerous limitations concerning autonomy of movement and access to service and journeys outside the camp residents may have to apply for special authorizations from the security apparatus. More than a decade after the civil war ended in Sri Lanka, the Tamil people in the Northern Province continue to emphasise the need for jobs, livelihoods, and social support. Therefore, we must recognize the dilemma of the refugees with regards to their unending process of repatriation and to be understood the lukewarm attempts of the postwar recovery in Sri Lanka. ■

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Prevalence of Rationality of Technology in George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty Four*

Minakshi Talukdar

This paper seeks to explore technological rationality and instrumentalised mentalities that create one dimensional thinking society in George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty Four* (1949). The paper will address the issue from the perspective of Herbert Marcuse's One-Dimensional Man. Marcuse was one of the influential members of Frankfurt School of Critical Theory. George Orwell ridicules the government policies that makes an individual mentally docile and cripples his free thoughts and imagination and need to be independent.

Key words: Indoctrination, totalitarian authority, docility, rational technology, one-dimensional thinking .

Introduction:

Technology in today's world is itself a revolution, it has become an inseparable part of daily life, it determines human behaviour, a way of lifestyle that shapes and reshapes the overall personality of modern man. The result of such experience in life develops one-dimensional thinking or illusory reality that boils down physically in the imagination through socio-political domination of scientific authority. An illusory transcendental world is created that addicts the individual and the failure of intelligence of individual is the result. The most liberal form of society is a democracy as it facilitates individuals with freedom for critical thinking but it is one-dimensional thinking that facilitates totalitarian socio-political domination of individuals even in such highly developed industrialized societies. An individual's capacity to think without any restriction is diminished by one-dimensional thinking. An individual's power to resist such domination becomes paralysed because his imagination is hindered. The most serious affect is it creates alienation in an individual.

Our universe is a paradox. Coexistence of opposites characterises this universe. If there is truth, there is also untruth. Man being a part of nature is intimately connected to universe that makes him autonomous which is dear to him. His clear reason makes him free of all weaknesses that hinders his inner power to be manifested. Technology, economics and state focuses on capitalism and outcome of it is industrialized society that invests

human mind , private spaces of individuals to serve its narrow interests.

Nineteen Eighty Four (1949) is set in a totalitarian state called Oceania , the society of this state is based on a policy of division. The dominant group of the society i.e, the inner party divides the society to control the economy for their interests through technological rationality. Time and place graph of the novel portrays a mechanical society of action .Twentieth century London is portrayed as futuristic city ,the third most populous province, Air-strip One in Oceania, where technology is a routine factor in individual's life. The hero of the novel, Winston Smith ,an isolated individual of high-tech society whose inner conflict and his struggle with his last tinge of his lost values, of trying to be autonomous individual which clashes with technical society that has been producing one dimensional man. He is Orwell's the Last Man in Europe, through his consciousness the novelists makes us to see Marcuse's One- Dimensional Man. The novelist sketches the personality of the hero in complete opposition of the technological rationality prevalent in the state. In spite of the poster "Big Brother is Watching you " outside his apartment and twenty four hour tele screen inside his apartment and the gleaming architecture of Ministry of Truth with conflicting slogans of the state and other ministries of the state that dominates the war affected landscape of London, Winston Smith is found to be interested in writing diary to direct his repressive thoughts of hatred for technological rationality symbolized by the poster of Big Brother. His act of writing a diary is a natural man's love for freedom of expression. His professional life as an employee in Records Department is also featured by his intense desire for freedom of all technical things.

Technology as human activity acts as social domination. It is profitable for capitalists private ownership and control of means of production. Man is abstract labour power. He is seen as raw material."Scientific rationality results in a specific societal organisation precisely because it projects mere form ...which can be bent to practically all ends"(One *Dimensional Man*.151).A glance at Winston's working place Record Department makes it clear that employees of that department are made mentally docile through control, classification and regulation of space, time and human development and its dynamics.Winston Smith is enclosed contained within no permeable Ministry of Truth, a factory that produces truth in Oceania.Authority's purpose is to control rebellion. Record Department is divided into smaller and smaller units which is a functional site that allow Winston Smith and other workers of that department to be more easily supervised individually .It also makes them become more economically useful. The model of Record Department is that of industrial division of labour where one part of the Ministry of Truth is responsible for only one aspect of means of production .George Orwell's depiction of an industrialised society is summed up in the following words :

The Ministry of Truth contained, it was said, three thousand rooms above ground level, and corresponding ramifications below. Scattered about London there were just three other buildings of similar appearance and size. So completely did they

dwarf the surrounding architecture that from the roof of Victory Mansions you could see all four of them simultaneously. They were the homes of the four Ministries between which the entire apparatus of government was divided: the Ministry of Truth, which concerned itself with news, entertainment, education, and the fine arts; the Ministry of peace, which maintained law and order; and the Ministry of plenty, which was responsible for economic affairs. Their names, in Newspeak: Minitrue, Minipax, Miniluv, and Miniplenty.

The Ministry of Love was the really frightening one. There were no windows in at all. Winston had never been inside the Ministry of Love, nor within half a kilometre of it. It was a place impossible to enter except on official business, and then only by penetrating through a maze of barbed-wire entanglements, steel doors, and hidden machine-gun nests. Even the streets leading up to its outer barriers were roamed by gorilla-faced guards in black uniforms, armed with jointed truncheons. (*Nineteen Eighty Four*,5)

The architecture of Oceania isolates workers by dividing space into cubicles that are constantly watched by officials for movements in, out and within. This totalitarian authority's surveillance system based on documentation and registration of citizens and consequent reduction of individuals to mere code numbers like 6079, which is Winston Smith. This eliminates the name and identity of the subject in the process. By enclosing, segmenting, observing, evaluating and documenting, the authority of Oceania establishes an excellent example of societal organisation. Unlike traditional prisons whose intention is to enclose prisoners and hide them in darkness, the totalitarian authority of Oceania uses modern architecture to make privatized prison which not only encloses Oceania's individuals but also keep them in full view as they are controlled by surveillance.

Oceania's collective mass are basically One- dimensional thinking men which hinders their imagination and critical reason through technology and technological rationality that limits the freedom of individual."There is only one dimension of reality and it is where and every and in every forms"(*One-Dimensional Man*,13). They accept the attitudes, habits, intellectual and emotional reactions unquestionably and unresistibly provided to them by the authority through means of communication, information, entertainment etc. Their acceptance is gullible because they find it pleasant to be bound with the authority and when it passes from hand to hand it becomes a life style which is considered as good and hence it itself militates against qualitative change. Thus the authority's implicit agenda to indoctrinate mass becomes successful without publicity. Individuals become controllable unit in this society, formal logic dominates the mentality of individuals. The world portrayed to them is one dimensional. Two Minutes Hate ritual is a part of everyday life in Oceania. The face of Emmanuel Goldstein, a figure who is portrayed as enemy of the people is made to appear in the telescreen to internalise hatred in the minds of individuals and the face of Big Brother to feel love for Big Brother. Emmanuel Goldstein's is shown as an animal, he bleats in the screen like a sheep while Big Brother's image is shown in high definition

where individual run in front of the screen and calls him "My Savior". The frenzy of the masses reach its zenith with the chant of Big Brother "B-B!...B-B!...B-B!" (*Nineteen Eighty Four*, 16). Winston Smith is conscious of the docility of individuals and domination of authority and feels hatred towards Big Brother but soon his hatred too turns into adoration for Big Brother. Announcement from telescreen in Oceania starts with morning calisthenics, a habit authority impose on citizens through technological rationality. Telescreen barks anytime and everytime with fake information about military victories followed by the reduction of ration and enhancement of ration alternatively. Like an animal Winston's co workers Parson, Syme gullibly believe in such announcements. The stupid parson and the intelligent Syme equally accepted the news, Winston wonders is he all alone? The authority set up a whole department, Records Department to produce information and entertainment in the form of newspapers, textbooks, films, novels and telescreen programmes for the consumer i.e., the citizens of Oceania which indoctrinate the entire categories of citizens without a voice of opposition. Winston's interrogation of an old man about the life before revolution results in frustration and more helplessness in Winston as the senior citizen could not remember anything about past.

The lifestyle of proles in the novel, who may be considered as proletariats or working class, are no less miserable than outer party members, they are considered "natural inferior." They are not even counted as human beings rather subjected as animals. They are so irrelevant that the authority even does not care to know them in a real sense. Their living standard is compared to "cattle turn loose upon the plains of Argentina". Orwell's comparison of proles with the animals reminds one of the plight of lower animals in *Animal Farm* (1945). In the name of readjustment frequent reduction of ration is a common phenomenon for lower classes in Oceania as well as lower animals in *Animal Farm*. In spite of numerous shortages in low quality basic needs the propaganda of Big Brother and the propagandistic pig Squealer of Napoleon. Authority does not fail to persuade the proles and lower animals of *Animal Farm* by altering past and manipulating facts and figures. The propaganda of both the authorities are ever successful in proving that the living standards of the subjects are far better under present authority than the past. Hungry, confused subjects can only understand their harsh plight, hunger, cold, hard work are their realities yet happy to believe that they are not enslaved. So short is their life span that it reminds us of the nursery rhyme of Solomon Grundy, born, grown up physically, married, took ill, died and buried that is metaphorically he lives his life in a week. Day and night they are cheated by sensual pleasures like cheap pornography supplied from the prolesec department of the party. Fleshly life they live without any higher aim. Devoid of intellectual growth their mind are directed towards sensual pleasures and never to higher ideals like religion politics as a result it becomes easy on the part of the authority to control them, rule them by filling with "primitive patriotism" so that they can "accept larger working hours or shorter rations."

Their ignorance become the strength of the authority. That is why authority's

slogan IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH, it does all to keep the proles mentally ignorant and make them slaves to the baser instincts. They are mere puppets in the hands of authority. Authority do not find it important to surveil them or interfere with them through civil police. Only a number of thought police are used to spread pseudo propaganda” and marking down and eliminating the few individuals who were judged capable of becoming dangerous”. Morally degraded they have been only becoming criminals since when no body knows and no body cares. No effort is made to make them disciplined like party members. Their loyalty is not necessary, they are not suspected, they are free but free to be degraded, miserable and ignorant and hence the slogan of the party-” proles and animals are free”(72). To flourish well, a class needs to acquire wisdom, power, wealth and service. Wisdom makes the foundation of culture, power protects, wealth disseminates culture and service helps in continuing the whole social order systematically.

Proles of Oceania are deprived of all the four and hence paralysed totally. They are mere puppets in the hands of the authority, they submit themselves mechanically and unquestioningly to the authority. Freedom comes from wisdom, where there is no wisdom there is no freedom. The totalitarian authority of Oceania aims to make freedom obsolete from human history as this alone can help them retain power.

Winston Smith’s imagination of a Golden Country of love and freedom with his beloved is the solution to break the technological rationality prevalent in whole Oceania. To set Oceania free unconditionally Winston imagines Proles as the only hope. He reads a book *The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism* to materialise his imagination to be autonomous. His recurring dream of his childhood with his family is a symbol of love, loyalty, care of family life as he believes his mother and sister’s life is sacrificed to save his life and he longs for such relationship which cease to exist in present Oceania because authority indoctrinates children at an early age, punishes lovers for being passionate in relationships, separates workers from each other. Alas! Winston Smith is totally defeated in the hands of authority and his loss is a warning to the world and alarm to the individual to become change that is humanitarian.

Our planet has become a strange dystopia today which is plagued by the bad but we should also remember that the only hope for millennia is to be saved by the good and the same goodness still exists within us, individual’s rise in consciousness, free thinking, can defeat this gloomy period of history dominated by the greedy authority. Capitalists’ profit maximisation principle has never recognised the dignity of the proletarians and formal science’s rationality calls for annihilation of life as we know on this planet, the replacement of Man with the cyborg. Orwell’s novel *Nineteen Eighty Four* (1949) is thus an attempt to create awareness so that humanity can be saved before it is annihilated, the proverbial dooms day or too little too late.

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Mahatma Gandhi's Philosophy of Non-Violence

Soma Bhattacharjee

Mahatma Gandhi's fight against apartheid in South Africa and his movement against the British government in India were guided by his notion of non-violence or passive resistance. In his autobiography, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Gandhi mentions that he never lied and never took the help of unfair means, not even when on an occasion one of his teachers prompted (under a seemingly unavoidable circumstance) him to do so. For him, truth force and love force were extremely important and he became a champion of passive resistance or non-violence on the strength of the forces of truth and love. In all his movements, whether against apartheid in South Africa, or the British in India in the name of *Satyagraha* Movement or Salt March, or Civil Disobedience Movement, or Quit India Movement, Gandhi's strength was his path of non-violence. According to him, passive resistance is an extremely powerful weapon with which one can weaken the opponent in a non-violent way. Passive resistance or non-violence, as he refers to in *Hind Swaraj* or *Indian Home Rule*, is the best way to register one's protest against the authority. However, non-violence involves personal suffering.

Key words: Peace, Non-violence, Truth Force, Love Force, Soul Force

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, popularly known as Mahatma Gandhi, is regarded as a champion of *ahimsa* or non-violence. He was a lawyer by profession and an anti-colonial nationalist. Mahatma Gandhi went to South Africa in 1893 as a professional lawyer. In South Africa, Gandhi registered his voice of protest against apartheid. His stay in South Africa for a long time, spanning over twenty one years, made him involve in mass movement in that country and in a campaign for civil rights he first employed non-violent protest as a mechanism. Gandhi returned to India in 1915 and started to organize farmers and urban labourers to protest against excessive land-tax and all forms of discrimination prevailing in India. His movement for the mass and his acceptance among the mass helped him in assuming leadership of the Indian National Congress in 1921. He stood against issues like poverty, curtailment of women's rights, discrimination on the basis of religion, untouchability and he aimed at achieving *Swaraj* or self rule.

Mahatma Gandhi adopted non-violence or passive resistance or *ahimsa* in India as his means to launch his protest against the policies of the imperial British Government. It is important to understand Gandhi's stand on non-violence or *ahimsa*. In *Hind Swaraj* or

Indian Home Rule, Gandhi spoke about the idea of passive resistance, and its association with love force, truth force, and soul force. In fact, Gandhi advocated that passive resistance is based on the forces mentioned above. He added, “The force of love is the same as the force of the soul or truth” (Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj* 63). He further added, “Passive resistance is a method of securing rights by personal suffering, it is the reverse of resistance by arms. When I refuse to do a thing that is repugnant to my conscience, I use soul-force” (Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj* 64). Thus, Gandhi meant that non-violence involved personal suffering and use of arm force did not have any place in his concept of passive resistance or non-violence. Then Gandhi added, “... true men disregard unjust commands” (Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj* 68). Gandhi viewed that a true man could never follow unjust command and he would use non-violence as a weapon against unjust command. Describing the concept of passive resistance, he further added, “We cease to co-operate.... This is passive resistance” (Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj* 68). So, Mahatma Gandhi’s concept of passive resistance is the other name for non-cooperation.

Gandhi mentioned that to be a passive resister is a big thing. According to him, one needed to be physically and mentally strong in order to practice passive resistance, “It is difficult to become passive resister unless the body is trained” (Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj* 68). Thus, passive resistance does not only refer to be non-violent when someone attacks one, it is rather a philosophy that is to be followed and practiced. Passive resisters, according to Gandhi, “have to observe perfect chastity, adopt poverty, follow truth, and cultivate fearlessness” (Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj* 68-69). He further added, “Passive resistance cannot proceed a step without fearlessness” (Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj* 69). It means that a person who is a passive resister follows truth and he is fearless at every situation. He also viewed, “Passive resistance has been described ... as truth-force. Truth, therefore, has necessarily to be followed and that at any cost” (Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj* 69). And his philosophy of non-violence had its basis on its being truthful. Gandhi could not compromise with truth at any cost. Gandhi strongly advocated for passive resistance because he believed that force is not the solution to any problem, rather, he believed in the saying, “Those that take the sword shall perish by the sword” (Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj* 63).

Mahatma Gandhi’s idea of passive resistance is closely associated with his idea of truth force. In his autobiography, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Gandhi mentioned that he never lied and never took the help of unfair means, not even when on an occasion one of his teachers (under a seemingly unavoidable circumstance) prompted him to do so. For him, truth force is of utmost importance in life. He said, “I never could learn the art of ‘Copying’” (Gandhi, *The Story* 18). He was highly inspired by the legends of truthfulness of *Harashchandra* of *Markandeya Purana* and he used to think, “Why should not all be truthful like Harishchandra?” (Gandhi, *The Story* 19). For him, truth force and love force were extremely important and he became a champion of passive resistance or non-violence on the strength of the forces of truth and love.

Gandhi has always been appreciated for his philosophy of non-violence. Edward Thompson mentions, “Gandhi will be remembered as one of the very few who have set the stamp of an idea on an epoch. That idea is non-violence” (298). Gandhi and non-violence were like the two sides of the same coin. Gandhi was ready to sacrifice everything for truth force and love force which are the basis of his idea of non-violence. Speaking of Gandhi’s notion of non-violence, Raghavan Iyer mentions, “... when he [Gandhi] had read the *Gita* in 1889 he had not thought much about *ahimsa*. Later on, he based his concept of *ahimsa* on the *Gita* and linked it to the idea of non-attachment and freedom from hatred, pride and anger” (179). Therefore, Gandhi’s non-violence is to be understood in the line of his understanding of the *Gita*. Thus, his non-violence not only suggests passive-resistance, it also suggests non-attachment and therefore freedom from fear, ego etc.

Gandhi, in 1916, distinguished between the negative and positive meaning of *ahimsa*. Gandhi viewed:

In its negative form it [*ahimsa*] means not injuring any living being whether by body or mind. I may not, therefore, hurt the person of any wrong-doer or bear any ill-will to him and so cause him mental suffering....In its positive form, *Ahimsa* means the largest love, the greatest charity. I am a follower of *Ahimsa*, I must love my enemy or a stranger to meThis active *Ahimsa* necessarily includes truth and fearlessness (Gandhi, “Letter”).

According to Gandhi, *ahimsa* does not only mean non-killing; rather it also means non-harassment. In fact, harassment could be a worse form of *himsa*. According to Gandhi, the idea of *ahimsa* is “... hurt by every evil thought, by undue haste, by lying, by hatred, by wishing ill to anybody, and by our holding on to what the world needs” (Gandhi, *Yeravda Mandir*). Thus, Gandhi practiced non-violence in thought and action.

According to Raghavan Iyer, to Gandhi “*Ahimsa* implies not merely a certain attitude of detached sympathy toward an enemy, but also the denial of the very existence of an enemy” (180). Gandhi was brave and courageous enough to deny the existence of enemy. In other words, he was not prepared to give importance to his enemies. In a tone of comparison, Gandhi viewed, “Non-violence is without exception superior to violence, i.e., the power at the disposal of a non-violent person is always greater than he would have if he was violent” (Iyer 180). This shows that Gandhi was aware that people might take up violent means, but he was also sure that non-violent way was more powerful than the violent one.

Gandhi was aware of the fact that *himsa* is unavoidable and therefore he used a negative word *ahimsa* or non-violence. He mentioned, “The world is not entirely governed by logic. Life itself involves some kind of violence and we have to choose the path of least violence” (Gandhi, *Harijan* of 1938). Once Gandhi advocated the extermination of pests and killing of a rabid dog and he was severely criticized for suggesting these violent acts. He responded to the criticism in the following words, “If I wish to be an agriculturist I

will have to use the minimum unavoidable violence in order to protect my fields To allow crops to be eaten away by animals in the name of *ahimsa* while there is a famine in the land is certainly a sin. Evil and good are relative terms. What is good under certain conditions can become an evil or a sin under a different set of conditions” (Gandhi, *Harijan* of June 1946). In a different context, he spoke in a similar tone, “Even manslaughter may be necessary in certain cases. Suppose a man runs amuck and goes furiously about sword in hand, and killing anyone that comes in his way, and no one dares to capture him alive. Anyone who dispatches this lunatic will earn the gratitude of the community and be regarded as a benevolent man” (Gandhi, *Young India* Vol. 2). Thus, Gandhi’s non-violence was not a blind adherence to non-violence when the lives of human beings were in danger. His non-violence was aimed at serving higher goals.

Gandhi’s opposition to enter the Legislative Councils in 1924 perturbed Motilal Nehru. He could not accept Gandhi’s decision of not entering the Council as part of his theory of *ahimsa*. The reason behind such decision was that Gandhi regarded the alien rule as satanic rule and could not participate in it. Reverend B de Ligt also opined against Gandhi’s theory of *ahimsa* regarding this as untenable. Gandhi responded to Ligt by saying that all efforts to end any war will prove futile until the issue of exploitation of the so-called weaker section is addressed to. In other words, Gandhi wanted to convey that violent action could not bring in peace but understanding the real cause of war and addressing that would bring in peace or solution to the problems faced by humanity.

Non-violence means of protest was Gandhi’s main weapon against the British. Gandhi addressed his followers on the eve of historic *Dandi March* on 11th March 1930 thus:

.... Today I shall confine myself to what you should do after my companions and I are arrested. But let there be not a semblance of breach of peace even after all of us have been arrested. We have resolved to utilize all our resources in the pursuit of an exclusively nonviolent struggle. Let no one commit a wrong in anger. This is my hope and prayer. I wish these words of mine reached every nook and corner of the land.” (Tendulkar 28).

Gandhi was not sure as how would the British react to the *Dandi March* but considering that the worst might happen, he cautioned his countrymen not to take resort to violence even if that became inevitable to them. He believed that the essence of his struggle was non-violence and he wanted the essence to be maintained under any circumstance. Gandhi’s approach towards non-violence never changed. Even after a decade of the said speech, Gandhi, on the eve of Quit India Movement, i.e., on 8th August 1942, delivered the Quit India Speech, part of which reads thus:

Let me ... assure that I am the same Gandhi as I was in 1920. I have not changed in any fundamental respect. I attach the same importance to non-violence that I did then. If at all, my emphasis on it has grown stronger. There is no real contradiction

between the present resolution and my previous writings and utterances....I want you to know and feel that there is nothing but purest *Ahimsa* in all that I am saying and doing today. The draft resolution of the Working Committee is based on *Ahimsa*, the contemplated struggle similarly has its roots in *Ahimsa*. If, therefore, there is any among you who has lost faith in *Ahimsa* or is wearied of it, let him not vote for this resolution.... Ours is not a drive for power, but purely a non-violent fight for India's independence (Gandhi, Quit India Speech).

Gandhi, thus, made it clear to the Indians that the movement aimed at India's independence, and that was to be earned only on the path of non-violence. Gandhi delivered another speech on the eve of his Last Fast on 12th January 1948, part of which reads, "... Here is, however, a fast which a votary of non-violence sometimes feels impelled to undertake by way of protest against some wrong done by society, and this he does when as a votary of *Ahimsa* he has no other remedy left" (Gandhi, *Harijan* of January 1948). Gandhi was one of the important forces in compelling the British to quit India and his strength was non-violence. And non-violence was not only a weapon for him against the British. It was a philosophy with him and so he continued with this philosophy even after the independence of India.

Gandhi opined that most people are violent in nature and "*Himsa* does not need to be taught. Man as animal is violent but as spirit is non-violent. The moment he awakens to the spirit within he cannot remain violent". Gandhi added, "It may be long before the law of love will be recognized in international affairs" and further added, "... we could see how the world is moving steadily to realize that between nation and nation, as between man and man, force has failed to solve problems" (Gandhi, *Young India*, June 1919). His categorical tone is heard in 1946, "Unless now the world adopts non-violence, it will spell certain suicide for mankind" (*Harijan*, September 1946). The whole life of Gandhi was devoted to non-violence. ■

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The Naga Diasporic Experience: A Study of TemsulaAo's *These Hills Called Home: Stories from a War Zone*.

T ImsunaroAo

Rosaline Jamir

TemsulaAo the author of *These Hills Called Home: Stories from a War Zone*, is a well-known writer from Nagaland of North-East India and is a recipient of India's prestigious Padmashree award, for her contribution to the fields of Literature and Education. Like most post-colonial narratives, TemsulaAo's *These Hills Called Home: Stories from a War Zone* describes the Naga struggle written with extreme fervor, by memory and imagination. The stories are a true to life description of the Naga underground movement. The conflict is between the peace loving tribal freedom fighters and the Indian military forces who, trample upon the Nagas with terrible cruelty. Against the backdrop of this horror, the stories are set in the villages and mini towns of Nagaland.

This paper attempts to study the diasporic dimensions of TemsulaAo who migrated from the Indian state of Nagaland to Meghalaya. TemsulaAo narrates the loss of their homeland and all else, due to enforced migration and exhibit the original exilic resonances of the diasporic experience. Here the word 'exile' has been used in the sense implying a, forced rift between the self and the home. In relation to the text, *These Hills Called Home: Stories from a War Zone* the paper will trace how the writer TemsulaAo, articulate diasporic experiences of exile, loss, pain and create possibilities of a Naga diaspora in India.

Key words: diaspora, loss, pain, sense of belonging, imagination, relocation.

Diaspora comes from an ancient Greek word meaning "to scatter about." And that's exactly what the people of a diaspora do — they scatter from their homeland to places across the globe, for reasons of being exiled, occupation of their motherland by foreign forces, better education/job opportunities etc. though the yearning for their own motherland prevails forever.

Driven by her personal experience of disappointments TemsulaAo's stories depict the journey of Nagas from villages to towns, from rustic innocence to urban shrewd experiences, from farming/cultivation within peaceful isolated homes in hills to transport them in a crowded, horrible and violent war zone. TemsulaAo recalls the 'hills' where she

once enjoyed fish curry made by her mother for they have become a memoir of a war zone. The write weaves her story of loss; a public sphere the writer imagines her home through a rich aesthetic sphere. The aesthetics of Naga oral literature become at once the canvas on which the dynamic mind of TemsulaAo render her imaginary portrait of Nagaland. It also makes her stories an exploration of her ethnicity.

Years after the migration of Nagas into the other states of India, TemsulaAo in *These Hills Called Home: Stories from a War Zone* wishes to recapture the pain following the struggle for self-determination launched by the people of Nagaland against the Indian Union. Her stories attempt to make the new generations of Nagas realize the necessity to preserve the Naga way of life against the invasion of migration and adaptation of metropolitan modernization of India. TemsulaAo's stories exhibit her desire to create the imaginary Nagaland that she has lost and that which she wishes to recreate through her stories. TemsulaAo depicts like many diasporic writers a fundamental ambivalence, which entails that the diasporic subjects are forced to look into two directions; towards a historical-cultural identity and towards the society of relocation. Diasporic writing emanates from this duality; it is a recollection of the lost historical-cultural connection and a retrieval of the same through the very act of writing amidst a society of relocation. Temsula remembers Nagaland as a land where gunshots light up the sky, where only blood and fire embolden the life of the ordinary people. The stories of TemsulaAo desire to hark back to the traditional Naga essences of life emanates from the pain of forceful exile from Nagaland and the fear of losing the Naga traits, culture and traditions at the prospect of acculturation. In the story *The Jungle Major* TemsulaAo writes how the initial stages of dislocation of the Nagas began with a method called 'grouping' where the Indian army would dislodge villagers from their ancestral sites and keep them in confines. The Nagas felt that they were being forcefully uprooted. As the villages became hub of terror attacks several Nagas who wished to avoid the violence migrated into towns. But their infant attempts at relinquishing there insular rustic life met a major obstacle and that being the new and varied neighborhood. The Nagas felt alienated in their host town as it accommodated 'outsiders' who held important positions and whom the newly settling Nagas viewed as the dominant other. The homogeneous Naga tribal life was sacrificed to an assorted lifestyle. TemsulaAo talking about life pastoral life in Nagaland the protagonist and the antagonist are inexorably mixed up. As the book's sub title puts it, TemsulaAo is writing stories from a war zone and in the process is able to portray some memorable characters.

In the short story *The Curfew man* for instance, a hapless man who was a star basketball player during his youthtimes injures himself and having becoming ineligible for any other job, becomes a government informer. He does well for a while but then he is literally caught between the devil and the deep sea, not knowing where to go. One day his nemesis catches up with him as the underground take their revenge himself leaving him completely useless to both those over-ground and underground.

In *The Last Song*, Apenyo, a young Naga woman is raped and killed inside a church by Indian soldiers. Eventually, her story becomes an eerie folktale among the storytellers of her tribe. In *An Old Man Remembers*, Imtisashi, a former Naga underground soldier, finally explains his violent past to his grandson. *Shadows* is about the adventures of a group of young Naga soldiers who are drawn into a tragic power struggle between Hoito, their unit commander, and Imli, the new recruit.

The titular *Soaba* (meaning ‘idiot’ in the Ao-Naga dialect), a mentally-retarded orphan boy falls victim to the drunken rage of a pompous Naga lackey of the Indian Army. Punaba, of *The Jungle Major*, is an ugly unassuming Ao-Naga man who joins the Naga underground resistance. But the story is really about his beautiful wife, Khatila, whose quick thinking saves him from being captured by the Indian soldiers.

Satamba is *The Curfew Man*, a government informant who roams the town beyond the Army-imposed curfew hours, so he can spy on his fellow Nagas on behalf of his Indian Army employers.

There is a similar theme in the final story, *A New Chapter*. Nungsang is a member of a new social group - army contractors (Nagas and other ethnic groups) who supply groceries, livestock and other necessities to the Indian Army divisions stationed in Nagaland to deal with the Naga problem. Nungsang’s rise to political prominence within the social elite comes at a price - the honesty which initially kept him from ascending up the ranks is replaced by an ever-increasing acceptance of corruption and compromise.

In *The Pot Maker*, Arenla, a skilled potter, refuses to teach her daughter, Sentila, the craft of pottery because it is no longer an economically viable activity in their village. There is tension between Arenla who despises her traditional craft, and the untutored Sentila who yearns to make pots like her mother. This reversal of attitudes is significant, in terms of the traditions of the Changki Village of that era. From the story itself, it is clear that Changki women were famous for making sturdy pots admired and bartered for by other villages. Also, in the distant past, headhunting parties spared the village from attacks as all the skilled potters of the tribe lived there. Thus, for a mother to refuse to teach her skills to her daughter is considered not only a denial of traditional values but also a threat to the security of the village. Already, one can spy the gradual weakening of the hold traditions have on a person like Arenla, who is instinctively aware of the impact those far-off events will have on her way of life.

Through stories Temsula Ao tries to retain her cultural identity as a Naga. The stories echo the writer’s sense of belonging to her native Nagaland. This peripatetic journey of the writer from Nagaland to another state and back again to Nagaland through her writing bears semblance to Agha Shahid Ali’s migration from Kashmir to America and back again to Kashmir through his poetry. Ali’s third collection of poetry, *The Country Without a Post Office* contains poems related to exile, yearning, and the loss of home and country. For Ali, “home” largely refers to an “imaginary homeland” laden with diasporic feelings. The title

poem, “The Country Without a Post Office”, was derived from an incident that occurred in 1990, when Kashmir rebelled against Indian rule, resulting in hundreds of gruesome and violent deaths, fires, and mass rapes. For seven months, there was no mail delivered in Kashmir, because of political turmoil gripping the land. There had been a total breakdown of state machinery. Shahid writes about longing and the struggle to understand what is happening in his home and his heart...

Let me cry out in that void, say it as I can. I write on that void:
Kashmir, Kaschmir, Cashmere, Qashmir, Cashmir, Cashmire,
Kashmere, Cachemire, Cushmeer, Cachmiere, Cašmir. Or Cauchemar
in a sea of stories? Or: Kacmir, Kaschemir, Kasmere, Kachmire,
Kasmir. Kerseymere? (*Ali:1997*)

Slowly the narrator descends into madness, ending with a personal thought that he would like to live forever.

The poem brought Ali critical praises where the poet envisions the devastation of his homeland, moving from the realm of the personal to an expansive poetry that soothes emotions and sentiments in the midst of political violence and tragedy.

Such physical dislocation and mental relocation in the fashion of Agha Shahid Ali can also term TamsulaAo as a writer of hyphenated identity possessing a Naga-Indian-Naga identity. But a hyphenated identity does not rescue the Nagas from their struggle for a legitimate identity. Here TamsulaAo's idea can be understood, where she notes that though every year thousands of Nagas migrate to metropolis city like Delhi or Mumbai in search of jobs and education, yet it is still a constraint for anyone from Nagaland to think of himself as an Indian, thus in international conferences and workshops it has been noticed that the Nagas introduce themselves as Nagas from Nagaland. TamsulaAo's stories have been addressed to these young migrating Nagas who have been disabled in several ways due to their 'the sudden displacement' from 'placid rural habitats to a world of conflict and confusion is urban settlements'. TamsulaAo believes that vitality in the life of these migrating young Nagas can be restored only if they remember the years of turmoil that raged in their land and try to make of 'sense of the impact left by the struggle on their lives' TamsulaAo reminds the young Nagas that they might migrate on their volition but they will never be able to exorcise the ghost of the Naga revolution that altered the lives of the Nagas and banished them from their homes. In a situation where several Nagas are migrating from Nagaland the hills of Nagaland has enabled the writer to make a symbolic journey through the difficult terrain of the Naga psyche who's racial memories must to be stirred by nostalgia for an ideal Nagaland. The Nagaland where women would again take up pot making and weaving, where Nagas negating compulsions of Christianity would revive their ethnic rites and once again feel the purity in their nakedness and where Nagas would restore their racial virtues of living in harmony with man and nature.

Living in the state of Meghalaya TemsulaAo the writer is a representative of the Naga diaspora. TemsulaAo constructs a part of intra-national diaspora and her stories provoke a critical enquiry into the migration of Nagas beyond habituated ideas of spatial movement through landscapes and cultures. TemsulaAo succeeds in maintaining a distance from opining while bringing forth the pain and suffering of the Naga people as a community and shaking the readers' conscience. TemsulaAo, give her writings a certain depth; of serenity in the North-East mountain streams, the immense silence of its forests and the ray of love and hope in the human spirit surging with fresh ideas.....perhaps a beckoning to the young Nagas who have left their Nagaland in search of green pastures. More so a reminder that there is no place like home, an abode that has so much better to offer. ■

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Picture of Post-War British Youth in the Selected Plays of John Osborne

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John Osborne, an English playwright of the 20th century, skillfully portrays the pitiable plight of the underprivileged in England, their anger, poverty and confession through theatrical performances. In his plays, he has represented his heroes' resistance against social and political systems to make a better British Society because they face identity crisis, class-conflict and other social injustices. The real cause for such inner disagreement may be as a result of the fact that Osborne's heroes come to the Society with some pre-conceived values which do not match with the available social reality. It brings in them, a sense of meaninglessness which in turn accounts a lot of discontentment and disagreement within. The feeling of anger originates a bitter discontentment and frustration. Mr. Osborne has vocalised his anger at those with the power to make things better so that everyone would know about tragedies and do something to relieve them. He has used the emotion of anger to create three effective protagonists. Primarily, he has formed his successful use of emotion in *Look Back in Anger* in the character of Jimmy Porter and has used emotion in the creation of other protagonists, only with some slight variations; so that Archie Rice in *The Entertainer* and Luther from the play of the same name are propagations of the Porter anger. This paper deals with the situation in Post-war Britain and its reflection in literary works. Emphasis is put on the society, its problems and disappointments. Several works are analysed to find the reasons for anger within the society. He has used his art of exploring drama as "the most concrete form" to recreate human situations, human relationships. He concentrated on every detail of the setting of his plays to make his drama "a concrete representation of action" and "a simulation of reality".

Key words: *anger, resistance, class-conflict, discontentment, frustration*

Post-war literature tries human enhancement through various forms of Literature. Especially, Drama becomes special medium which is used to reflect the human enhancement vividly. Anger becomes a natural response in such times, since it is converted into modes of resistance. Indeed, anger can be defined as "a violent, revengeful emotion that one feels about an action or, situation which one considers unacceptable, unfair, cruel or insulting and about the person responsible for it". To psychologists, anger becomes an emotional

state, varying in intensity from mild generation to rage and fury, that can be converted to aggressive behaviour. So, aggression is regarded as a way of expressing anger and anger is one of the possible modes of resistance. Frustration and aggression are linked with each other in order to maintain a cause-effect relationship. This paper attempts to delineate how the heroes of Osborne confront a lot of paranoia in the prevailing Post-war British Society, which accounts an emotional imbalance in their psychic response to reality. It serves to delve into the nature of psychic distemper; and the different manifestations it takes. The cause for such inner disagreement may be as a result of the fact that Osborne's heroes come in the society with some pre-conceived values which do not match with the available social reality. The consciousness of the failure of their conviction vis-à-vis the existing reality, brings in them, a sense of meaninglessness which in turn accounts a lot of discontentment and disagreement within. The feeling of anger originates a bitter discontentment and frustration. This bitter discontentment and frustration are portrayed in the form of modes of resistance in the dramas of John Osborne.

At the outset, it is evident that Jimmy, the protagonist of *Look Back in Anger* becomes a confused and self-contradictory person. The stage direction depicts significant insight into his character:

Jimmy.....is a disconcerting mixture of society and cheerful malice, of tenderness and free-booting cruelty, restless, importunate, full of pride a combination which alienates the sensitive and insensitive alike. (*Look Back in Anger*, Pp. 9-10)

Sometimes it is observed that Jimmy expresses love and tenderness towards his wife, yet his anger and resistance preponderates the earlier. The situation forces him to change his soft and tender feelings into anger and he opposes when Alison informs that she has invited her actress friend Helena to stay with them. Jimmy displays an incredible fit of anger so much so that what he declares is not only charitable but borders on misogyny:

Alison: So I said she could come here until she fixes something else.

Mrs. Drury's got a spare room downstairs.

Jimmy: Why not have her in here? Did you tell her to bring her armour? Because she is going to need it!

Alison :(Vehemently) Oh why don't you shut you, please!

Jimmy: Oh, my dear wife, you have got so much to learn, I only hope you learnt it one day. If you something-something would happen to you, and wake you out of your beauty sleep! (coming in close to her) if you would have a child and it would die....

(*Look Back in Anger*, p.37)

It is viewed that Jimmy has incongruities and conflicts in himself who may also cause angry feelings; as Berkowitz demands, “Psychological discomfort can procedure the aggression activating negative effect” (*Examination and Reformulation*, p.70). He has affection for Alison but he despises her while rejection her social organs. He dislikes Alison’s middle class, manners and friends and makes fun of them: “Oh dear, Oh dear! My wife’s friends! Pass Lady Bracknell the Cucumber Sandwiches, will you?” (*Look Back in Anger*, p.51)

However, as Trussler demands, “his ethical system is a sentimentalized working-class Puritanism that he is almost Victorian in his insistence upon keeping a sexual relationship in its proper place in bed”. He abhors Alison’s mother but he has compassion for her father though he is apparently in many ways the representative of everything Jimmy is disinterested in it might be due to the fact that people from previous generation such as Colonel Redfern and his own father had the enthusiasm and at least had the causes to die for Jimmy tells Cliff:

Jimmy: I had to admit it, but I think I can understand how her daddy must have felt when he came back from India, after all those years away. The old Edwardian brigades do make their belief little world look pretty tempting, all home-made cake and croquet, bright ideas, bright uniforms. Always the same picture; high summer, the long days in the sun, slim volumes of verse, crisp linen, the smell of starch.....What a romantic picture. If you have no world of your own, it’s pretty dreary living in the American Age- unless you an American of course.

(*Look Back in Anger*, p.17)

It is sure that Jimmy is nostalgic about the good old days of England because he is the representative of a generation, who has to handle the disappointments and difficulties left from World War II. However, unlike his generation he is attempting to stay alive. As McCarthy claims:

He is fighting to keep Alison awake, to keep himself and Cliff awake, as though all three were in the grip of a deadly coma or narcosis that had been spread over all of England by the gases emancipating from the press, the clergy, the political parties, the B.B.C.(152)

It can be implied that Jimmy is frustrated due to the fact that he cannot alert the people he cares about. For example, Alison’s inertness can be regarded as a barrier for Jimmy, keeping him from fulfilling expectation to make her more active. As Berkowitz demands:

“People become angry and aggressive on being kept from reaching desired goal to the extent that they think that someone had intentionally and unfairly prevented them”. It is called “aggression or anger- provoking situation”.

(*Examination and Reformulation*, p.63)

Jimmy perceives that Alison remains silent intentionally in order to make him angry. Her timidity can be considered as a reaction to Jimmy's aggressive behaviour. Indeed, Jimmy's anger is as a consequence of his frustration in every walk of his life. He is frustrated because he is running a Candy stall in spite of his University degree; he is disappointed owing to his middle class wife's passivity; he is frustrated because of the fact that people whom he loves do not try to share his pain; he is frustrated and he considers that there was nothing his generation could do except for taking nostalgically for the good old days. Sometimes his anger looks like to have no proper grounding. His anger is often disproportionate to the facts; after looking what Eliot would call "Objective Correlative" (Eliot, *Hamlet and His Problems*, P.20). Thus, the anger and cause at times look correlation. Helena is also mystified with Jimmy's vehemence:

Helena: She (Alison) simply said that she is going to Church with me. I don't see why that calls for this incredible outburst.

Jimmy: Don't you? Perhaps you are not as clever as I thought.

(*Look Back in Anger*, p.54)

The same kind of maladjusted self has been depicted in *The Entertainer*. Archie Rice, a famous character in the play, has similar fashion like Pamela. His alcoholism serves as the direct cause and effect of inner discord. Osborne's use of alcohol and sex serves as obsessive symbols of self-immersion in the play. Archie is cognizant of his abnormality. He discloses it to Phoebe:

Archie ...say aren't you glad. You are normal? I have always been a seven day a week man myself, haven't I phoebe? A seven day a week man. I always needed a jump at the end of the day and at the beginning too usually.....Don't look so sacred, love. Archie is drunk again. (*The Entertainer*, p.73)

This displays the extent of dissolution through which his personality has suffered. He is habituated to take bottles of drink. It looks like as if life for him is nothing but drink. Alcohol for him is regarded as life elixir which can relieve him through the tension. His conversation with Frank and Jean discloses:

Jean: What is the matter with you, Archie?

Frank: Why don't you leave him alone?

Archie: That is right, why don't you leave your old man alone?

Jean: You have been left alone all right!

Archie: Shall I tell you all my life I have been searching for something. I have been searching for a draught Bass you can drink all the evening without running off every ten minutes that you can get drunk on without feeling sick, and all for four pence. Now the man who could offer me all of that would

really get my vote. He really would. Oh, well, I could always make a woman better than I could make a point.

Jean: you know, Archie, you are a bit of bastard.

Phoebe: Jean.....

(The Entertainer, p.76)

The animal something Archie points to the animal drive which gives 'life force' is not originated from within; it's in a slothful state, activated only through draught Bass when confronted with the serious problems of life. When Brother Bill has booked tickets and makes arrangement for Archie to migrate to Canada, Archie's response is astoundingly worthless, but the ironic undertone is unavoidable:

Brother Bill: Look Archie. This is the lost time for you. It has got to be Canada. You and Frank and Phoebe can also get out together. You and Frank and Phoebe can also get out together. Your passages are all booked....You can get out and start a new life, the three of you.

Archie: You can't get draught Bass in Toronto. I have tried it.

(The Entertainer, p.84)

One really, admires if anyone with his mind in the right place will ever reply so triflingly to a situation like this. Drink and sex don't imply any mental abnormality in themselves. But obsessive sex and alcoholism undoubtedly do. Archie's obsessive sex followed by his obsession for drink is indicative of a deep psychic void. It looks like as if he tries to oblivate his inadequacies by being immersed in alcohol and tries to give outlet to his restrained energies which don't get absorbed through sex. Normal man does not permit such scope to drinks to surround his life, as Archie does.

Luther is one of those plays of Osborne, where we find unreasonable individualism at its most protests. Luther, the individual is not fully free of discord and distemper. Though polish with, what Osborne calls, religious experience, *Luther* is a play of an individual's resistance against society, religion and civilization. Of all Osborne's heroes, Martin Luther performs some credibility in bringing the political and religious authority to their knees. Luther's energy and heroism are noteworthy. He wears the ring of the Doctor of Divinity at the age of twenty-nine. And by thirty-four he has overthrown all Germany by his inflaming thesis on indulgence. By one stroke he quivers both the spiritual and temporal world of their foundation. Cardinal Cajetan, the Papal legate, witnesses to this....

Cajetan: My son you have upset all Germany with your disputes about indulgences, I know you are a very learned doctor of the Holy Scriptures, and that you have already aroused some supporters.

(Luther, p.68)

Brother Weinand proves that Martin is a remarkable person:

Brother Weinand: Martin is a brilliant man. We are all not as gifted as he is. (Luther, p.32)

Though Martin is a brilliant man, he is not free from psychic in equilibrium. We observe Martin Luther a strange mixture of opposed values. He, as we observe in the play, believes in order but breaks it himself. It is his trust in authority yet cannot submit himself to it. He believes home and enters into the Holy orders but unashamedly returns to family life.

Martin's father, Hans wished Martin to become a lawyer. The conversation between the son and the father makes the statement more obvious. Martin is depicted as a very successful man of the world in the play *Luther*:

Martin: And don't say I could have been a lawyer.

Hans: Well, so you could have been. You could have been better than that. You could have been a burgomaster, you could have been a magistrate, you could have been a chancellor, you could have been anything?

(Luther, p.39)

The contemporary industrial society of Britain in the fifties was a society deeply divided against itself. The World War II reduced Britain from its imperial position and power to that of a second class power and its impact on the British society was deep. The conservative party gave way to the labour party in 1945 and brought a great hope for a new brave Britain among the working classes that is to the middle classes or young people. They wanted a new society, a society not dominated by class system and class culture but a society complete with its values and material needs of the entire population. The concept of the welfare state was heralded as a real revolution with a promise of distribution of national wealth and welfare among the people. The growth of industries, chances of free education up to the highest levels, organization of the health services and insurance schemes were emerging. On the other side, there was a neglect of lower middle class and old people, jobs were only open to the exclusive groups of classes; these conditions arouse bitterness and brought frustration among the unprivileged youth. They felt that they had been cheated and given false hopes and found themselves as a members trapped into a frame of class and hierarchy. Osborne's strength completely relies on his power to give a convincing structure to the contemporary feelings of the frustrated post-war generations. Therefore, a close analysis of the psychic states of Osborne's heroes proves the fact that these characters are educated and civilised though they are (as in most cases) out of focus with their social-moral reality. They do not understand the totality of the obtaining situation, nor do they have any vista of history in the triumphal march of time. They notice the social reality from their pill-boxes, often stinky and airless, observing a hostile situation, as it were and have resource to private and personal security measures. In their cases, they regard withdrawal to their disjointed state enough. Withdrawal is not the whole thing with them. They throw their banal logic with blameworthy force on the immediate surroundings in such a manner that their

cacophonous psychic states they assume an inequilibrium of mind that disrupts the idea of peaceful social reconstruction. They fail to observe the order of life around and project their own fragmented consciousness. They gain nothing; not even a philosophy of psychic turmoil to guard them against the available social logic. They admit the society to do things for them; they have no contribution to society. Their language indicates the failure, their existence an entombed incoherence foredoomed by their own illogic. Here, the dramatist could undertake to suggest remedies for social ills in his plays, but there is still the risk of didactic introduced hindering art. The stage is not always suitable place from which to propagate the clues of social ills by agitating feeling. The Angry dramatist gained a better reaction from his audience through his shock strategies. Though Osborne was not a politician or sociologist, his dramatic art was not merely limited to purely personal complaints. The dramatist identified himself with the human conditions and raised his work into the realm of the universal even though anger might be the prevalent theme and mood of his plays. ■

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Paradoxes in the Poetics of Exile: Reading George Lamming's *The Pleasures of Exile*

Stuti Khare

George Lamming's *The Pleasures of Exile* is a powerful, celebrated text in the domain of postcolonial theory. It makes us reflect on the complex nature of a writer's imagination that germinates in the contexts of exile - a condition of living with the past of the native culture and a confrontation with the new symbolic order. In this text, he deliberates on the complexities of the originating sources from which the postcolonial writer's imagination draws the material for his creativity. His basic formulation is that a writer who has been exiled from his native cultural context, uses the past, the history as well as the mythology to create textualities that blur the boundaries between history and mythology, past and present, intellect and emotion. The history and the myth, though they seem to be paradoxical in nature, in fact nourish, nurture and enrich the literary text. In this paper, I have attempted to examine George Lamming's *The Pleasures of Exile* to analyze the conditions of the context of exile that constitute the writer's imagination. The paradoxes of exile become the points of origin for the creative imagination, even though apparently it might seem that the lack of rootedness in the native context creates silence and confusion.

Key words: *Postcolonialism, history, myth, paradoxes of exile, master-slave dialectics.*

A postcolonial writer works within the framework of paradoxes. The poetics of exile is the guiding principle that nurtures the author's creativity. The diasporic writings have redefined the concepts of master/slave, self and other. The history as constructed by the Diaspora is an imaginative narrative of the past. In fact, for the Diaspora, the past itself functions as an agency to create the time and space that was uncorrupted, pristine, in perfect harmony with the self. The displacement brings the disjunction. But the displacement is the basic condition of human life. It is this displacement that brings human beings in relation to the other – the other subject, culture, language. The diasporic subject, displaced with his own Symbolic, encounters the alien Symbolic that resists the identification of the subject with the Symbolic. But this lack – the lack of identification and non-integration of the subject with the Symbolic is also the force that compels the genesis of more narratives – the incoherent narratives. The encounter with the Other forces the human being to narrate, and when he narrates, the elements of history and myth collapse, giving birth to a narrative that we call the Diaspora. In this paper, the paradoxes of history and narrative, self and other, master and slave have been analyzed from the perspectives of the diasporic self.

George Lamming's writings, especially *The Pleasures of Exile*, exploit these paradoxes more creatively than what has been done by other writers. In my paper, I intend to analyze the trope of exile using the insights of George Lamming, one of the most highly celebrated Caribbean writers, who seeks to deconstruct the colonial version of the Caribbean history and create what Helen Tiffin calls a 'canonical counter discourse.' He endeavours to recreate the past that was shaped by the West European Colonial discourse and also the distant unhistorical past for which myth is his only guide. It is this mythical reconstruction which, on the one hand, is used as history (fact) and, on the other, narrated as literature (fiction). This conjoining of history and myth creates the language that becomes the knowledge framework to make sense of the master-slave dialectic – the dialectic that serves as the model of the past, the present and future.

For this project, he (re)reads Shakespeare's *The Tempest* as a representative text of the colonizer to dismantle the assumed authenticity and hegemony of the European canon. In his seminal work, *Pleasures of Exile*, he explores the relationship of Prospero and Caliban in terms of the cultural experience of colonialism by creating the archetypal metaphor of the Master and the slave. My attempt will be to explore the paradoxes that inform the revolutionary aesthetics of Lamming.

George Lamming was born in Barbados, migrated to Britain in 1950 and became a broadcaster for the BBC. He considers himself "both a colonial and exiled descendent of Caliban in the twentieth century" and states in clear terms: "My subject is the migration of the West Indian Writer, as colonial and exile, from his native kingdom, once inhabited by Caliban, to the tempestuous island of Prospero's and his language". (Lamming 13)

A pertinent issue that we need to reflect on is - why exile has become a necessary condition and a shared experience of the Caribbean writers like Frantz Fanon, V.S. Naipaul, George Padmore, Paul Marshall and others. Is it a compulsion, or a choice, or a compulsive choice for the Caribbean to emigrate? In this context, it would be worthwhile to quote the postcolonial critics Radhika Mohanram and Gita Rajan, who observe that the phenomenon of exile is a recurrent pattern in the Caribbean discourse:

Like the heroes of Lamming and Naipaul, the heroines of Rhys, and Hodge, and Kincaid bring their life story to a closure by embarking upon a journey that takes them away from their island homes. Journeys, in fact, crisscross the varying fabric of West Indian fiction. The journey motif, it can be said, signifies the instability of existence in the West Indies whose humanity haunted by dreams of a better future, must drift towards the old colonizer, or toward North America, the new equalizer. (Mohanram and Rajan 4)

Geographically, Caribbean refers to all island nations of the Caribbean Sea and territories on the surrounding South and Central American mainland. It is a vast expanse of territories that stretches from Haiti in the North, to Barbados, more than a hundred miles south. On this land, the Europeans lured both by "adventure and greed," arrived like "an epidemic ignorant of its specific target" (Lamming 17) and the indigenous Carib and Arawak Indian,

the original dwellers, “living by their own lights before the European adventure” were lost in “a blind, wild forest of blood”. (17)

The New World of the Caribbean was created by “a fantastic human migration” consisting of “deported crooks and criminals, defeated soldiers and Royalist gentlemen fleeing from Europe, slaves from the West Coast of Africa, East Indians, Chinese, Corsicans, and Portuguese.” In an alien land, such heterogeneous population assembled in “a violent rhythm of race and religion” (Lamming 17). They all shared a similar experience of slavery, racial subjugation and dispossession, creating a “sad and hopeful epic of discovery and migration” (Lamming 17). The colonized location of the society rendered the environment hostile for the creative artist. The reasons for this phenomenon of migration, thus, may be attributed to the instability of existence, the “inescapable desire to flee not only an oppressive past or present but also an oppressive psyche, the need to break out of a choking self that is urgent” (Lauhan 50). The desire to escape the persecuting, oppressive past germinated an intense desire to recreate the fantasy of the imagined primordial, pristine past, pre-existing the invasion of the colonizers.

In this saga of displacement, there is no historical record of the Caribbean islands before Columbus’ famous discovery. What we have in the name of history is the discourse/ history colonized by the Europeans - colonized either by sword or by language, in fact, more by language. Consequently, the task of the writer who seeks to reconstruct the history of his native land becomes an uphill task. The “backward glance” is painful for it has nothing to offer but “a vision of the bush, primitive, intractable, night black in its accessibility” (Lamming 33). He has to rewrite history on the basis of imagination and experience, for the colonizers “barely acknowledged memories of a history which had generated an epoch of colonial violence” (Schwarz xviii). In this context, Lamming cites Hegel asserting the monolithic authority and the spiritual legacy of European culture:

Africa proper, as far as History goes back, has remained shut up; ... the land of childhood, which lying beyond the days of self-conscious history, is enveloped in the dark mantle of night. What we properly understand by Africa, is the unhistorical, undeveloped Spirit. The History of the World travels from East to West for Europe is *absolutely the end of History, Asia the beginning*. (Hegel qtd. in Lamming 32)

In order to create a counter-discourse, the writer has to deconstruct the existing one and in this venture “legend” is the only guide. The consequent paradox is that of history and myth. Myth is believed to be fictitious in nature, the product of man’s emotion and imagination, a sacred narrative embodying a commonly held belief. The actual existence of myth is not verifiable and, as such, it has apparently no relationship with reality. It originates in the imagination of the author - the imagination that is embedded in the power-structures of the society that creates and lives the myth. However, a myth has always played a role in the creation of a kind of grand past that is taken to be real. History is commonly perceived as a record of facts, but now, in these poststructuralist times, we know that history is also a narrative, a text that has been appropriated both by the natives and the colonizers to create a past which

they can connect and identify with. Issues of identity and belonging are thus closely related to history and myth. Myth reverberates in our historical present, our collective imagination is infused with myth to such an extent that our past is created, validated and legitimized through the agency of myth, though unconsciously. Thus, history and myth become the co-texts, nurturing each other. This becomes especially relevant in the case of the exile narratives because, in the absence of recorded history, myth becomes the agency to create the pre-Colombian and pre-Proserponic past of the Caribbean. As Lamming observes:

...Myth is most difficult to dislodge. It may be modified by circumstances, exploited or concealed by the behaviour each chooses for particular situations; but it is there, a part of the actual textual of behaviour itself. It is akin to the nutritive function of milk which all sorts of men receive at birth. It is myth as the source of spiritual fords absorbed, and learnt for exercise in future. (Lamming 26)

I have already mentioned that *The Pleasure of Exile* is one of the first texts to reinterpret *The Tempest* through the lens of postcolonial story. It would be worthwhile to give a brief discussion of Hegel's master-slave dialectic in the context, a paradigm of two individuals bound to each other in a relationship of dependence. The historical tropes of dominance and obedience, of emancipation and bondage are inextricably intertwined, despite their contradictory implications. The master wins his freedom through the willingness to risk his life and not to submit to the other out of a fear of death. The slave, through work and discipline, transforms his subservience into a mastery over his environment and realizes himself. This dialectic informs the narrative of Prospero and Caliban, the two mythologized identities - Prospero, the product of England's experiment in colonization - using his legacy of language and sword to conquer Caliban, "Carib Indian; and Caliban, the mild fruit of nature", the language-less aboriginal who uses Prospero's gift of language to transform himself:

For Caliban is Man and other than Man. Caliban is his convert, colonized by language, and excluded by language. It is precisely this gift of language, this attempt at transformation which has brought about the pleasure and paradox of Caliban's exile. Exiled his gods, exiled nature, exiled from his own name! Yet Prospero is afraid of Caliban. He is afraid because he knows that his encounter with Caliban is, largely, his encounter with himself (Lamming15).

A very apparent paradox in the poetics of exile is the paradox of pleasure and pain. The experience of exile is both traumatic and pleasure, whether by choice or necessity. As Edward Said observes:

Exile is strangely compelling to think about but terrible to experience. It is the *unhealable rift* forced between a human being and a native place, between self and its true home: its *essential sadness can never be surmounted*. And while it is true that literature and history contain heroic, romantic, glorious, even triumphant episodes in an exile's life, these are no more than efforts meant to overcome the crippling sorrow of estrangement (Said 137).

Whether by choice, or necessity, exile is a condition of “terminal loss”, a loss of self and home, created by one’s culture and language. Severed from the roots and the past, from the culture and traditions, it becomes almost impossible for the exile to connect with the new surroundings - the land that offers no welcome to them. The exile tends to exit in “a discontinuous state of being” (Said 140) which is bound to make him “embittered, resigned, militant, critical and angry” (Nair 125).

However, despite being a calamity, exile also seems to be a liberating experience. It is a choice for several intellectuals like Lamming, for whom migration to the imperial centre becomes the “first leap to their free and full development” (Said). It serves as a refuge from the inhospitable environment back home, a means to stimulate their dormant energies, to give voice to their stifled voices:

By agreeing to alienate himself from the Caribbean, Caliban stepped out of his assigned cultural role. Only through alienation could alienation be undone: in colonizing Prospero’s island, he came into possession of the old magus’s relationship of authority to the Caribbean and the wider world (Drayton xiii).

The phenomenon of exile is inherently paradoxical. In life, to be alive, we have to suffer the primordial uprootedness from the past, but living in the present always forces us to connect with the past to make sense of our present. The present (the human life of the moment) separated from the past holds no value as the value of life emanates from the totality of life that exists and existed in the past. In the case of the exile, this metaphor of the past becomes more powerful because it gives him the capacity to expand and becomes the basis of his existence and creativity. This is the philosophical string that Lamming uses to create the poetics of exile. ■

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Developing Communicative Competence in Second Language for Rural College Students

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Language is one of the significant elements which help in communication activities. Learners have to utilize different types of English language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing for their proficiency and communication. Learning English is the best to improve one's life and set a smooth sailing in the society. Though officially English is an assistant language, it is the most important language of India. There are certain skills one must acquired and master over in order to make use of a language. These skills are considered as linguistics skills which can be developed through a lot of practice. The rural students have to face many obstacles in developing better communicative competence. This paper focuses on the four skills Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing.

Key words: learning, assistant language, important, four skills, rural students, better communication.

INTRODUCTION

Learning a second language is in effect learning the four skills namely, Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Listening and reading may be termed as passive or receptive or recognition skills while speaking and writing skills are termed as active or productive skills. Teaching and learning of a skill is a matter of practice. A good teacher will concentrate on imparting the four skills as language learning is skill oriented. In learning a language, the ability or skill in using the language is said that you are "to teach the language and not about the language". Learners have to acquire the four skills for developing better communicative competence. They are,

- i) Listening
- ii) Speaking
- iii) Reading
- iv) Writing

LISTENING

There are two important factors which decide the listening skill. They are interest and usefulness. One listens to anything in which he is interested and to that which he finds

useful. So if the teaching of English is made interesting and purposeful the teacher will be successful. There are three phases of listening. They are i) the initial phase ii) the middle phase iii) the final phase. In the initial phase the learner develops the skill of listening to various sounds and differentiates them. Speech sounds and instructions are to be taught in this phase. In this stage the skill of learning reaches the top. Rapid speeches and commentaries are understood. Indian students suffer from many weaknesses which hamper their ability to listen. They are exposed to inadequate range of words and phrases. Their ability to retain attention is poor. They are not able to follow the foreign pronunciation. If the speech is delivered fast they are not able to understand. The background noise troubles them often and they are not able to adjust to it.

Remedial measures for better listening

The listening skill of the learners can be developed by the following ways. The learners may be insisted to develop their vocabulary skill. Periodically dictations may be given in the classroom. Listening to broadcasts and commentaries will be of great help. Students should learn correct pronunciation for each word. The teacher must adjust his pace of speech to the standard of the student and gradually speed up. Teacher should make use of the specially prepared recordings for improving the listening skill of students.

In the learning, language practice in listening is the basis of everything. It is the first and foremost principle of language learning. Without it the whole foundation of language learning will be defective and weak.

SPEAKING

Speaking is an important skill which must be cultivated by all those who want to learn English as a first or second language or foreign language. Many go to spoken English classes for the purpose of learning but fail to acquire the skill. The main objective of teaching 'Spoken English' is to enable the students to speak correctly and properly. Helping them in using the words and phrases they have already learnt. Making them speak fluently and accurately. To help them master over English words with proper stress and intonation. Moreover making them expert in asking questions as well as answering the questions. Making them mastery of vocabulary and sentence structures. There are many barriers in preparing a student an effective speaker. Lack of exposure may be cited as the major barrier. Most of the students are not exposed to English speaking situations. There is not much of opportunity to speak in English as many communicate in their mother tongue. In order to make the students effective speakers of English, the following steps can be taken:

- i) Many students, who know English well, cannot speak it fluently because of their shyness. Hence, psychological barriers like shyness, hesitation, nervousness, fear, frustration etc. should be removed.
- ii) Proper drill must be given to those learners who have picked up wrong or strong regional pronunciation habits. Those habits must be drilled to remove such defects.

- iii) Thinking in English should be encouraged and adequate exposure and opportunities to listening and speaking of good English must be given to students.
- iv) Physical barriers like stammering and poor hearing must be looked into as early as possible.
- v) Grammatical patterns, structures and vocabulary must be mastered along with speech practice.

While giving practice in speaking, the learners may be given dialogues. Dialogues on simple, contextualised situations may be tried between pairs of students. The teacher should control and guide the students without curbing their freedom of expression. This will give the students enough opportunities to practise certain phonological, grammatical and lexical items. Good practice of dialogues makes the students confident in the use of language.

READING

Reading is decoding process. It is a process of looking at written symbols and translating it into a sound. Reading consists of symbol, sound and sense. It involves physical, intellectual and emotional reaction. The main objective to teach 'reading' is, to enable the students to read English with accuracy, fluency, and with correct pronunciation. Teachers should enable and encourage the students to enjoy reading with better understanding and help them use the ideas gained from reading to other situations.

Types of Reading:

There are two kinds of reading skills, the soft skill of reading aloud and reading silently. Loud reading is primarily an oral matter; it is closer to pronunciation than to comprehension. Only a few people are expected to read aloud, as a matter of daily routine: newsreaders, actors etc.

Silent Reading

The greatest amount of reading is done silently. It makes a survey of materials to be studied and to look through indexes etc. Skims the content and familiarises oneself with the material and its thought content. It also helps study the materials in depth. It makes the readers study the language in which the material is written from a literary or linguistic point of view. Apart from all above, silent reading saves the energy of the readers.

Loud Reading

Reading aloud sharpens the ears of the readers so that they are able to detect authentic dialogues and flowing narrative. It also helps improve their diction and expression, which they will then transfer into their speaking voice and writing voice. Reading aloud improves our visual memory and ability to see images in our mind.

Thus, reading is an important skill which a student should master, without which their

study becomes weak. It is important for those who study English as a second language, as they try to learn English as a library language.

WRITING

Writing is putting speech in the form of letters. It is also a collection and organization of ideas and experiences. The pupil must first master the mechanics of writing and then he has to learn how to put ideas and opinions in the form of paragraphs. Punctuation, spelling, Writing are always done with a purpose and usually for communicating with others. The first type of can be writing based on the text. Pupils are given completion or supply type of exercises based on the text. Then they answer short comprehension questions.

Oral practice before writing work is very important. First, all necessary ideas are given by the students along with the essential words connected with the topic. Then they are arranged in the form of an outline. The learners should be encouraged to consult the dictionary while doing self-correction.

CONCLUSION

English is considered as elixir of life to the students who come from rural background and who are unable to use a “link language” in English classrooms. English is a daily needed tool in the academic field of students. Further, English is not merely to develop in learner’s ability to use grammar accuracy but to deliver something in regular conversations. In most of the educational institutions where English is medium of instruction the learners should be aware of the basic concepts in English. In academic level, students are required to deal with class lectures of faculty members, lab instructions, lab reports, experimental records and even the assessment tests. Internet in the modern scenario provides ample of chances and information to learn communicative enhancements. After the completion of degree program, students are forced to interact among co-workers and fellow staff members at work place from all over the world. Therefore, communicative competence plays a prominent role in the academic life of students. ■

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Man's Loss vs. Satan's Loss: A Study of the Concept of Loss in John Milton's *Paradise Lost*

RuuletoVakha

Rosaline Jamir

A reading of John Milton's *Paradise Lost* with the title and the theme of loss in mind brings us back to the question: Paradise Lost? Whose loss – Man's or Satan's or to some extent of the myriad of Fallen Angels, the so called "Heaven's fugitives? Everyone loses! However, the one big difference is that Satan(and the Fallen Angels)suffers loss-permanent, whereas Man's loss is temporary and redeemable. What, how and why they lose and how each of them responds to the sentences handed down to the mat once becomes central to an understanding of the poem. The mystery of why Satan must lose beyond redemption in spite of being an Archangel in heaven before his fall and Man must find redemption in spite of being God's most beloved creation in Eden after his fall is a key point in Milton's work. The issue of loss one way or the other can be seen reflected in many of his works. From personal losses in different facets of life to a general witnessing of his contemporary world fast losing faith and questioning the ways of God, Milton voices out his disappointment and frustrations only to come to an unwavering reconciliation with Godtime and again. His hallmark in justifying God and his ways is through a recurring comparison and contrast, direct and indirect, of the loss of Man and Satan. This paper examines and analyzes how Milton achieved this end by making a comparative study of the loss of Man and Satan and its different outcomes respectively. In short, to validate Milton's one pronounced aim in writing *Paradise Lost*, to "justify the ways of God to men", is to compare and contrast the loss of Man and Satan.

Key words: Loss, paradise, sin, punishment, Man, Satan, God, Jesus, justification, redemption

Paradise and Loss:

The idea of a paradise is central to every religion, so is the idea of loss. In religious parlance, paradise is the end reward of a good life, of all that is good after this life, of all that is not hell, eternal bliss whether of place or state of mind or both, creator and creation united and in company with each other for eternity. As it is with everything else, it is God who is the creator of paradise too. On the other hand, every religion at some point of time deals with the phenomenon of why, how and what we lost or loses in this life followed by

the consequences eternal into the afterlife. Loss of paradise means ending up in hell, eternal damnation, everlasting misery and so and so forth. The concept of paradise and loss (hell) is fundamental to all religions. In line with Milton's masterpiece, this article will focus on the Christian perspective where Satan has lost and already fallen beyond redemption; Man also has lost but temporarily, no doubt his fate is redeemable; his doom is but a parody of Satan's.

The idea of loss and its different shades and implications is and has always been a part and parcel of human existence. A number of interesting and varying meanings can be had when we examine the definitions of loss and its different forms – material, physical, moral, spiritual, religious etc. To list some very generalized examples we may look at the following universal occurrences – something had and lost, a coin dropped and never found again, a pen broken and losing its utility, losing a football match, a country ruined, a wasted day, a man lost in his joy or sadness, a leader losing his supporters, a God-forsaken man lost of meaning in life, a man coming short of a biblical virtue etc; some temporary, some permanent; some redeemable, some never to be made good again. Religiously speaking, loss is always to do with the individual and his God and ultimately the soul; at the end of the day it is always a question of the eternal, physically as well as spiritually. Here, man has nothing to lose but what was and is already offered or guaranteed to him by God in the first place. In Christianity ultimately it is always and only the soul to lose; whereas in some religions loss may be reflected in some physical forms as well even in the afterlife. Paradise and its subsequent end whether lost or gained remains one of the basic foundations of all religions. For Christianity, from which Milton's poem is based, it is the one goal in the end.

In Christian perspective it is such a beautiful paradox to see that for man to have come into this world is to have already lost paradise even before we were born in the same way that we are also saved even before we were formed! Milton's projection of Man and Satan vis-à-vis their fate and reactions shows the stark contrast between their losses. Both have lost paradise; however Satan loses more for it is understood that he was in the very presence of God before his fall. The paradise he lost, it is assumed was God's very own dwelling – heaven, something more than Eden but headlong cast out and never to be redeemed. For man, it is Eden that he loses but is given this earth right away to be redeemed again through Christ. It is also interesting to note that for man after earth he is to witness only one of these places – heaven or hell; but for Satan he is witness of all – heaven, chaos, hell, earth. To have been in heaven, to have revolted for its supremacy, expelled and punished for eternity is what makes Satan always the biggest loser. Man's got a bus to catch, his paradise awaits him; Satan's already dumped, his paradise is no more.

Milton's Loss and Reconciliation:

The different areas and aspects of life where Milton himself experienced loss on a personal level may be taken as representative of his state of mind and contemporary environment in general. An insight into his understanding of loss in different facets of life

and constant advocacy for redemption in all of this is inevitable. Milton's introductory statement and chief purpose of *Paradise Lost* is to show God's providence

And justify the ways of God to men. (i. 26)

How he validated this professed goal by applying it on himself despite facing a number of failures and disappointments in his life is a key element in his poems. His loss of vision, failure in political ambitions, loss of faith on the Church of England, communal impurities of the puritans, dissatisfaction with the monarchical set-up, condemnation and near death persecution after the Restoration and a persistent generalized displeasure with the England of the period would constantly trouble him but despite all this his unwavering faith and ultimate reconciliation with God becomes the focal point of all his works. His sonnet "On His Blindness" ending on a final and positive note in spite of his bitter misfortune is perhaps one of the best examples to show his reconciliation with "the ways of God." It can simply be assumed that only a man, a poet of Milton's personality, deeply learned on the misfortunes and hardships of life but equally poised with an understanding of God's ways could have written such an epic masterpiece as *Paradise Lost*.

Milton's main loss in life, is that of his vision and its resultant threat to his chief ambition in life "that one Talent", the poetic vocation. His reaction to his losses is one of understanding and reassurance, surrendering to God and patiently acknowledging his providence. His unwavering faith is constant and whatever be the case, for Milton the ways of God are unquestioned and stand justified.

Comparison and Contrast of Satan's Loss and Man's Loss:

While Man's loss and Satan's loss may have quite a few things in common, it is clearly more noticeable of the stark differences between them. And it is these differences that make the tragedy of Man a parody of Satan's eternal fate, especially in the punishment of Satan and the role of Jesus, the Messiah. The following table may be considered as a precursor to an understanding of the loss of Man and Satan and the resultant outcomes thereafter, showing the similarities and dissimilarities between Man and Satan.

Events	Satan	Man
Creation	In Heaven, for Heaven	In Eden, for Eden
Origin of sin:	Pride, envy, want of power, to overthrow God, sin originates in the self, at the time of Satan's sin Man is nowhere	Desire for knowledge and Godhead, sin originates because of deception by the already fallen Devil
The act of sin:	Revolt, conspired with his follower-angels, war against God, Man has nothing to do with Satan's sin	Eating of the forbidden fruit, disobedience to God, Satan has everything to do with Man's sin

Punishment:	Expulsion from heaven, Eternal condemnation and suffering, hell, no redemption	Exile from Eden, placed on earth with tasks, earthly death, assurance of redemption
What is lost:	Heaven, God's presence, permanent loss of paradise	Eden, God's bond, temporary loss of paradise
Aftermath reaction:	Defiant at God, to pursue eternal war and damnation, accepts hell to reign over it	Fear to face God, hiding, penitent, new order given, accepts God's rule
After condemnation:	Angelic powers retained and myriads of fallen angels still following him, left to his own device, helpless and hopeless, hell for a place, to rule in hell	Alone, powerless and mortal but given thorough guidance and provision, hope, earthly life to win heaven
Physical manifestation	'How changed', from light to darkness, monster, fallen spirit in 'darkness visible', serpent, mind unchanged	Retained God's image, made mortal and will return to dust, renewed mind
Jesus' role/ place:	Jesus as punisher, final judgment, dreaded adversary	Jesus as savior, salvation, opposite of Satan
Earthly while	Satan the inflictor, culprit; Satan nothing to lose or at least no more, no worse than hell. To deceive mankind his sole goal	Man the struggler, prey, victim-victor; everything to lose, to be saved his sole purpose, regain paradise

Table 1: Comparison and contrast of Satan's loss and Man's loss

Satan's Loss

In Milton's poem Satan is simply presented as the condemned archangel in all his fallen heroics. By the opening of the poem in Book I, Satan is already well established and revoltingly portrayed to be the nemesis of God. Satan's loss is the ultimate definition of loss. He lost heaven 'the real thing', as in God's abode where he was supposed to be choir master and adore God. His sin originated in himself from a sense of selfish pride and envy. His want of power betrays him at an attempt to overthrow God in the 'heavenly war'. But as the poem shows, his enterprise was a defeated venture from the very beginning. His conspiracy and revolt with his follower-angels against God is the fruit of his sinful desire for the autonomy of heaven, his war with God is the origination of sin. His revolt is his loss.

Considering Satan as the embodiment and source of all evil, his reaction at his defeat by God and the punishment that befalls him as portrayed throughout the book, most famously in Book I, is the very allegory of himself by himself, even for himself. He becomes a paradoxical sort of self-allegory of evil. His defiance makes him all the more evil. His decision to pursue eternal war and damnation irrespective of his condemnation in hell is

almost unbelievable, how he welcomes hell to reign over it and considers it to be a better choice than to serve in heaven is too good to be true. Whoever has found this resolution of Satan to be inspirational and justified, even in the least of its implications, has miserably failed to understand hell. To have sighted any ground in his famous line

Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heav'n. (i. 264)

is to have simply underestimated the unimaginable enormity of the torture of hell, the lake of fire. For what is hell to be king of, or to be proud of! It is only madness and evil personified, self-deception at its best. Satan's defiance when beaten down to its primary meaning is simply a case of the well known adage of the sour grapes. And to feel better reigning in hell must be the epitome of the phrase 'easier said than done', it is comical, it is repulsive. Heaven is forever barred from him, expelled; earth is not his to keep; thus what more can the Devil say at the taste of defeat! On the other hand, his self-deception is so powerfully drawn by Milton that readers themselves are frequently at risk of been deceived if not carefully read from Milton's very own point of view.

The cosmic places in Satan's passport (other than heaven), the 'Angelic powers' that he retained and last but not the least, the myriads of fallen angels still behind him, may have worked to his initial authority-bluffing. But, with all his powers, he is left to his own designs and devices, helpless and hopeless. His all too familiar outlandish proclamation:

"All is not lost; the unconquerable Will
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield" (i.106 - 108)

and the like after his defeat, are far from any kind of self-vindication, but rather ever recurring reminders of his fallen state. That he is on earth as a reject of heaven preying on man is in itself a bitter sign of his suffering and despair.

In due course of Satan's loss, as also is in the case of Man's, it is imperative to bring in the role of Jesus in their respective standings as well, albeit in opposites. Here, for Satan, Jesus is the punisher, the one final judgment to come and end all his evil designs and imprison him for good in hell. It is Jesus who becomes the one antidote to all his evil plans, in Eden as well as on earth. Satan's plan to avenge God is put to naught by Jesus. The big irony is that the Jesus who punishes him is the Jesus who defends and saves mankind. The prey that he sought out to destroy is the object that Jesus sought out and volunteered to redeem. It is to the confusion of Satan that his selected game to avenge God is made the substance of his own downfall with the entry of Jesus. For Satan, Jesus becomes the embodiment of all his failures.

Man's Loss

Unlike Satan, whose high sounding speeches and roving actions pervade the poem, Man's characterization is rather quiet and subdued even though he is the marked subject of Milton's poem. He is the relatively submissive questioner, given more to listening to the

events that circle round him from the angels' narratives. His origin as can be understood takes place in Eden, molded out of its very soil and breathed into life by God himself. It is interesting to see that if God is the omniscient master of all, Man was also created master of Eden from the very beginning – a semblance not just of image but also of a mini-representational role!

The fall of man is presented in the most romantic tones. Man's punishment is expulsion from Eden but not into hell or another place of eternal torture for that matter, it finds him being placed on earth with tasks and responsibilities ever so mild and partial when compared to Satan's, making it a comedy of what Satan got. Even his expulsion appears not so much a reason based on his eating of the fruit but the greater and graver danger that he posed to himself and God with the second forbidden tree – the Tree of Life! Had it not been for the Tree of Life, maybe Eden was still his to keep in the face of his repentance. His fall no doubt is a result of his sin and he becomes mortal but even his earthly death is only a remedy and the ultimate path back to his redemption, to heaven.

The immediate reaction of Man after he commits his sin is the ensuing fear to face God; it is by default of his disobedience that he goes into hiding. Adam and Eve's blaming of each other and thence passing on the guilt to the crafty serpent is not unexpected. But unlike Satan, they are repentant and submissive. In many ways Man's loss is just too temporary and even non-existent provided he accepts the Messiah and is saved. What Man loses in the chain of all these events is but a parody of what Satan loses at the other end. Eden slips out from his grasp but he is right away given the possession of this earth, a second Eden of sorts, situated next only to heaven. Besides, Man is placed on earth with all the provision of regaining paradise even before he is shown out of it! At first it looks like his bond with God is torn and will never be the same again, but on second consideration it is not very far from the truth to say that the bond is rebuilt and turns out to be better than the first; admittedly, who are we mortals to judge better or worse of this divine entity but then the strong suggestion is that Man lost Eden and gained heaven. Accordingly, in Milton's poem the temporary loss of paradise is beaten down into a journey of Man, represented by the Israelites, traversing through the different periods of the Bible, an adventure of mortal habitation upon this world with all its ups and downs, but as early as in Book III itself the assurance that with the voluntary sacrifice of the Son of God, Man's redemption will be complete again makes the loss of man almost irrelevant. In the end, the question of what did man lose may find no answer at all. Why did he lose and how did he lose is clear, but what did he lose is rather uncertain for it is already made good again all thanks to Jesus who is

Both Ransom and Redeemer voluntary (x. 62)

Thus, Man's loss is nothing compared to Satan's loss! In the light of this observation, in typical Miltonic expression, Man has all to feel for God's mercy justified and Satan to feel condemned. His innocence was violated and it sounded tragedy but in due course of his repentance, the salvation that comes his way makes him lose nothing.

As has been cited before, the role of Jesus in the aftermath of the fall of Man and Satan assumes superlative contradictions. The nature of total opposites that Jesus renders to Man and Satan respectively is what cuts them worlds apart. Sinners both, but to Man Jesus is the Lamb, the Savior; to Satan, the nemesis, the punisher. To mankind Jesus is the peacemaker, the reuniting bridge between Man and God. To Satan Jesus is the antithesis, the one who puts all his plans, his revenge to zilch. If to have lost paradise is what makes Man and Satan common, the sinning and the punishment; God's conduct towards Man is way too partial –and Jesus is the reason, it is simply Jesus! When A.G. George, in his insightful book *Milton and the Nature of Man*, put up the question: “Was Adam “fallen” before he fell?” (George: 1974) He was not very far from asking in the same tone: “Was not Adam saved before he fell?” The mystery is simply answered once the mention of Jesus, the Son of God, is made.

God's Ways and Man

The big question after the poem ends is whether Milton's pronounced aim in writing his masterpiece – to “justify the ways of God to men” – is accomplished or not. And this can be answered by comparing and contrasting the losses of Man and Satan as has been discussed already. It is worth pointing out here that every reader of Milton must understand how all the actors in the poem played out their roles of their own free will, free to act and freely acting. The cycle of the free act of God, of Satan, of the Fallen Angels, of Man, of Jesus and then back to God and everyone; everything happened of the personage's own volition. Satan revolted freely, God created freely, Man ate the forbidden fruit freely, Jesus volunteered to redeem Man freely; all that happened, every thought, every speech, every action that comes from the respective actors are unhindered by any of the other characters. It is through this free will, these free acts before and even after the fall (to this day!) that Milton's mission is accomplished. God's ways are left to Man and Satan to choose; but his love, his mercy in treating Man, in making him always the object of his highest love and grace in the person of Jesus is what Milton shows to justify God's providence for men.

After Thought: Conclusion

Today Man is the target, the prey, the victim and the victor, all boiling down to a point of win or loss of paradise against Satan's plans! To be saved is his sole purpose, to regain paradise. Compared to Satan Man has everything to lose with paradise in sight. Man's loss in the past will have no bearing in the future if he once accepts Christ and is saved; his loss is always in the past tense. Man will not lose at all provided he accepts Jesus and allows Him to shepherd him. ■

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Indo-Raj Syncretism and the Modern 'Sarbojonin' Durga Puja: A Cultural Study

Subhadeep Paul

This paper attempts a cultural analysis of how the modern-day Sarbojonin (community) Durga Puja has a culturo-historical legacy that ought to be examined from the cross-over of power at the Battle of Plassey, subsequent to which, story goes that Clive's Persian interpreter and clerk, a zamindar named Nabakrishna Deb (pronounced 'Nubkissen' by the British) advised Clive to make arrangements for ceremonial thanksgiving to MaaDurga instead of the Lord. Since prior to Plassey, NawabSirajud-Daulah is said to have destroyed the sole church in Calcutta, a Christian celebration could not meet with success. Besides, a grand puja ceremony would naturally facilitate Indo-British socio-political relations. Concocted (by Deb himself?!) or real, this story was the foundation of the historic "Company Pujo", i.e. the Shobhabazar mansion Pujo that continues till today and whose critical construct has been expanded, modified and repackaged in the modern-day *Sharad* or Autumnal Puja. This paper sketches the historical allegory; the story inside the history of how the contemporary Durga Puja that has emerged as the "most important festival of the Hindu Bengalis", has carved out a mainstream 'muscular' identity, alternate to Vedic and Adivasi traditions. This paper highlights, as TapanRaychaudhuri observes, how the cult of conspicuous consumption, instead of the cult of Bhakti, infused the Durga Puja with a spirit of urbanity, resulting in *ade rigueur* of syncretic sophistication. Its derivative of cosmopolitan generality survives till today. On a politico-cultural note, the paper also sketches how and why the mandate of the comprador zamindari class has survived through the Congress and Communist eras in West Bengal up till the present TMC regime, where the subalternization and generalization of the Puja demonstrate the hedonistic Autumn festival candour surviving from the days of the Raj.

Key Words: Durga Puja, Syncretism, Zamindar/-i, Raj

According to Subhamoy Das in his article for ThoughtCo. entitled 'The History and Origin of the Durga Puja Festival'¹, "The baro-yaari puja gave way to the sarbajanin or community puja in 1910, when the Sanatan Dharmotsahini Sabha organized the first truly community puja in Baghbazar in Kolkata with full public contribution, public control and public participation" (N. Pag). M. D. Muthukumaraswamy and Molly Kaushal in their book *Folklore, Public Sphere, and Civil Society*² mention that the present mode of the

Bengali Durga Puja is also the dominant mode of Bengali Durga Puja in the sense that it is the public version of this religious festival. The institution of the community Durga Puja in the 18th and the 19th century Bengal contributed vigorously to the development of Hindu Bengali culture. This paper seeks to examine the modalities of different phases of cultural syncretism through which the modern-day 'Sarbojonin Durga Puja' has been handed down to the contemporary milieu.

Notes Tapati Guha-Thakurta in her web-article in *The Hindu* entitled 'Durga, didi and the new-age puja'³, that the Durga Puja as we find it today "is overcome by a new kind of anxiety" (N. Pag) owing to "a different edge to her current trepidations" (Ibid). In fact, it is no longer about clear autumnal skies, street tableaux and grand architectural abodes to boot but also about the changing landscape of cultural politics that surrounds the Puja. The Durga Puja has witnessed a high degree of cultural adaptation, so much so that Guha-Thakurta is prompted to admit to this massive if not Kafkaesque transformation: "The religiosity of her worship has always freely blended with the sociability of a larger cultural and communitarian celebration" (Ibid). The Durga Puja today is broader and bigger than ever before and the fact that it falls under the umbrella of a majoritarian religion like Hinduism is not justification enough. This paper critically traces back the trajectory of the Durga Puja today as ensconced under the established rubric of a 'Sarbojanin Utsab', to the time of Maharaja Nabakrishna Deb (also known as Raja Nabakrishna Deb, archaic spelling Nubkissen) (1733–1797), the founder of the Shovabazar Raj family, who set a pattern for the puja in terms of a fashion/status symbol among the upcoming merchant class of Kolkata, in particular the highfalutin manner in which it incorporated the ruling British under Lord Clive, that earned it the popular (albeit notorious) title – the 'Company Puja'.

According to popular folklore, the landlords of Dinajpur and Malda is said to have initiated the first Durga Puja in Bengal. But it is also often cited that Raja Kangshanarayan of Taherpur or Bhabananda Mazumdar of Nadiya organized the first Sharadiya or Autumn Durga Puja in Bengal in c. 1606. This puja was far different in nature and character from the 'Baro-Yaari' Durga Puja that set the trend for the beginning of mass celebrations that remains till today. It is said that some twelve friends of Guptipara in Hooghly, West Bengal, collaborated and collected contributions from local residents to conduct the first community puja called the 'baro-yaari' puja, or the 'twelve-pal' puja, in 1790. According to Somendra Chandra Nandy in 'Durga Puja: A Rational Approach'⁴ published in *The Statesman Festival*, 1991, this model type puja is said to have been brought to Kolkata in 1832 by Raja Harinath of Cossimbazar, who performed the Durga Puja at his ancestral home in Murshidabad from 1824 to 1831. Much later, around 1910, the baro-yaari puja gave way to the sarbojanin or community puja, which meant that the scale of the puja now became even bigger and far grander than before. The magnitude of the puja, in terms of both size and grandeur keeps mounting annually till today, as more and more appendages of cultural politics seem to keep getting attached to it. In 1910, the Sanatan Dharmotsahini Sabha organized the first truly community puja in Baghbazar in Kolkata with bursting public contribution, control

and participation. Muthukumaraswamy and Kaushal note that the dominant mode of Bengali Durga Puja is the 'public' version' (N. Pag). The institution of the community Durga Puja in the 18th and the 19th century Bengal contributed vigorously to the development of Hindu Bengali culture.

But before becoming the most celebrated public event in the Hindu calendar and transcending from a religious festival to a secular carnival, the Puja was an extremely localised affair. The onset of the Puja is said to revolve around a fabled myth, the historicity of which is not fully authenticated but remains popular nonetheless. The story goes that the roots of the Sarbajanin Durga Puja can be traced back to the aftermath of the Battle of Plassey in 1757. Lord Clive, post Plassey, was at the helm of great power and prestige, and thereby greatly desirous of offering his benedictions in the name of the Lord Almighty. What naturally would have ensued was a Christian festival of a very high calibre right at the heart of metropolitan Bengal. But the natural outcome underwent an unforeseen modulation. Clive's Persian interpreter and clerk, Nabakrishna Deb, a prominent Zamindar in Bengal, took this as a golden opportunity to placate the Viceroy General. Deb is said to have invited Clive to a grand celebration at his Shobhabazar Mansion, namely the celebration of the Durga Puja. Clive was said to be unsure about his standing on this invitation because he hailed from a different religious faith. But Deb is said to have assured him that differences in cultural politics and religious ethics could be suitably "managed". The managing was said to have been done in the most pompous manner as Nabakrishna ('Nubkissen' for the British) made re-arrangements for ceremonial thanksgiving on a secular scale to MaaDurga. This marked the turn for the Durga Puja to turn in favour of cultural syncretism. The ritualistic obeisance was outsmarted by the compulsion for festive revelry. Notes Sukanta Chaudhuri in *Calcutta: the Living City*: "[H]igh level British officials regularly attend Durga Pujas organized by influential Bengalis and British soldiers actually participate in the pujas, have praised, and even salute the deity, but 'the most amazing act of worship was performed by the East India Company itself: in 1765 it offered a thanksgiving Puja, no doubt as a politic act to appease its Hindu subjects, on obtaining the Diwani of Bengal' "⁵ (Chaudhuri N. Pag). Chaudhuri goes on to state that even the Company auditor-general John Chips organized Durga Puja at his Birbhum office. Only after 1840, when a law was circulated by the government banning such official participation in native festivities, did this trend change.

Critics observe that much of the story concerning the clandestine yet possible association between Clive and Deb is concocted and most plausibly, it was fabricated and propagated by none other than Deb himself to twist matters to his advantage. It is an extravagant tale no doubt; an interesting interstice between nativism and cosmopolitanism. But sometimes, even fictions become formidably life-like. The only evidence to substantiate Deb's claim (or for that matter his family's) is an anonymous painting probably commissioned by the mentor himself. Historical data is not coterminous with Deb's claim either. Deb became Clive's 'munshi' after Plassey. Deb's ascendancy, in terms of the rise of his status is recorded only after 1775 and coincides with the hanging of Maharaja

Nandakumar, making the buzz seem further flawed. It remains crystal clear that Deb's stature as a celebrity icon of his times, if examined critically, posits him as one of the biggest traitors, no less than Mir Zafar. But while Mir Zafar and JagatSheth are vilified for turning India to a British colony, Deb's prestige, on the contrary, amplified, probably due to his standing as a zamindar. Notes Dibyendu Banerjee in his web article 'Palaces of the Rich and Famous of Colonial Calcutta – ShobhabazarRajbari' in *Noise Break*⁶ that “. . . after the death of Sirajud-Daulah, Deb along with Mir Jafar, Amir Beg and Ramchand Roy acquired a huge sum of money, not less than eight crore or eighty million rupees worth of treasures, from some unknown secret treasury” (N. Pag). In the West Bengal Tourism promotional campaign 'Beautiful Bengal', it is mentioned that Nabakrishna Deb (1733-97) earned the titled of Raja and was considered to be 'Calcutta's premier zamindar' in his heyday. Though built by Sobharam Ghosh in the early 18th century, Deb came to acquire the property around 1757, making suitable additions and alterations upon the palace. Most prominently, the 'Thakur Dalan', said to have been completed in a meagre three months' time set the ground for the lavish Durga Puja that took shape as a grandiose festival. The lavishness was endemic, not only in North Kolkata terms but throughout the city. The present heirs of the Deb family claim that other pujas in the city and especially around the vicinity of the ShobhabazarRajbari could only begin after the inaugural cannon was fired from Nabakrishna's palace cannon. It goes to prove that proximity to the colonial masters evidently gave Deb a command that made him far superior than his peers. Notes Dibyendu Banerjee that the very architectural get-up of the mansion reflected a cultural syncretism that had its own banner and manner of cultural politics:

Though it was originally a “Saat-Mahala” house, today nothing but the courtyard along with the “Thakur Dalan” of the Rajbari remains intact. The “SaatKhilan Thakur Dalan”, otherwise known as “The NaatMandir”, with multi-foolate arches, were supported on pairs of squared pilasters (rectangular column, especially one projecting from a wall). Pairs of columns with plain shafts rose up between the arches for the support of the Entablature, comprising the main beam (architrave), frieze, and cornice above. The double storey wings on either side of the courtyard connected the Thakur Dalan with the “NaachGhar” to the south. A set of eight Majestic Tuscan columns supported a wide projecting cornice at the roof level. Two rows of foliated arches at the northern end provided access to the Nabaratna Temple at the rear. The Nabaratna Temple is housed by the family deity of “RadhaGobinda” which has been worshipped by the family for about 250 years. The roof of the NaachGhar has caved in and very little of the superstructure remains today, except for the huge courtyard that still remains intact as the dumb witness of its glorious past” (N. Pag).

It should be mentioned in this connection that the original palace building featured Mughal and Bengali-styled temple architecture but some exclusive portions such as the Palladian-

style loggia at the entrance, accompanied by the twin ionic columns on the either side, reveal a tendency to cater to a taste in Western sophistication. When the Mughal emperor Shah Alam transferred the rights of tax collection to Lord Clive, it was inevitable that the landlord class, i.e. the land-owning would be running after the master-class for attention. Deb proved himself a forerunner in this regard, and the Company Durga Puja became a prelude and a pretext for securing bigger vested interests down the line. The one thing that is aptly clear, however, is that Deb himself drew certain benefits from such a fabricated story. The Deb family, even today, pride on their declared Indo-Raj connections and the tempo of the once vaunted ‘Company Pujo’.

It is therefore interesting to note that the trend toward amplifying the Durga Puja beyond a ritualistic calendar date festival into something of a cultural phenomenon, was initiated by the myths surrounding this speculative, fabricated story. Suyashi Smridhi in her article ‘History of Durga Puja in Bengal: Since the Battle of Plassey’⁷, refers to Saugata Bhaduri’s essay ‘Of Public Sphere and Sacred Space: Origin of Community Durga Puja in Bengal’ where Bhaduri notes that although the worship of female deities covers the whole of Bengali history, the cult of Durga emerges only during the latter half of the 18th century, in sync with the rise of British economic and cultural monopoly over Indian soil and also as a result of the cleansing of Mohammedan influence. The latter instance has been pointed out by historian Robert Orme who indicted Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah for not only appropriating “every portion of wealth” in his province but also maintaining the order of oppression to perfection and keeping Hindus under absolute authority, as was the case during certain phases of the Mughal rule. At one point, even the Nawabs supported the zamindars, in a bid to be independent of “an over-arching Mughal control” (Smridhi N. Pag). The zamindars always moulded themselves according to the character of the ruling class. Initially, the zamindars modelled themselves on their Muslim patrons but later their cultural pomp became relatively Anglicised. The native-Imperial connection helped account for a Hindu religious revivalism, as Islamic censure was curbed. The festival tax on the Hindus was considerably relaxed (if not abolished) under the Company’s regime in 1765. Incidentally in the year 1772 the tax was completely abolished by Governor General Warren Hastings. The Puja came to be synonymous and symbolic of power (not ironical given the fact that Durga herself is the Goddess of Shakti) – Imperial power itself, the power of having connections with the empowered Subject, the nexus between political power and economic hegemony and particularly, as Smridhi notes, “a symbol of power that the Hindus could somewhat exercise only under the British. The Durga Puja, in this sense was not just a religious festival. Whatever be the credibility of the Clive-Deb nexus, the semi fact or inflated fiction did serve as an exemplar for the Hindu zamindar class zealous to “carve a space in the state apparatus under British administration by trying to appease them through their inclusion in the festive activities. And the British did happily participate. Much had to do with the fact that extravaganza became regular as British participation mounted. British tolerance and interest meant that financiers from all backgrounds (middle men, merchants, traders, translators – all wanted the enhancement of their social status through hobnobbing

with the British. The fanfare and enthusiasm lasted till the 1830s, after which colonial participation in native festivities were outlawed.

Changing topography of the socio-political milieu and alterations in economic expansion affected the reception of the Durga Puja. Critics have even claimed that it became a bulwark against contending political claims preceding and during the Raj Era. Going down the annals of history, the one thing that is certain is that the Durga Puja as a matter of community or public fanfare before the mid-18th century, hardly finds open mention. The two instances that however stand out, are that of Raja Kamsanarayan and the Lakshminath Ganguly Puja. The former organised a grand Puja of the goddess to commemorate his accession in 1583, while the latter concerned the zamindari of Barisha in 1610. This is not to say that there was any lack of lavishness in the way Hindus organised pilgrimages, marriages and funerary processions, before the heyday of the British. But the nature of the Puja, in terms of the dynamic of Bakhtin's 'carnavalesque', the festivity became "a Hindu manoeuvre to subvert the state apparatus" (Ibid). The zamindars were also assured that the British gave them considerable free play in religious observance. The Puja was also an occasion where tax reliefs and extra allowances could be secured in the name of placating the colonial masters. By 1793, the Permanent Settlement was ensured and many a zamindar found himself indebted. The festival celebrations functioned as "a safety net whereby each zamindari exploited British leniency while according funds for the festival" (Ibid). The best example available today is Thomas William's painting housed in the Victoria Memorial Hall, Kolkata, depicting the immersion of the idol in the 1810 time phase – something William must have witnessed during his boat ride with Daniel in 1788. It cannot be ruled out that this was also an Orientalist spectacle for the coloniser, for which Tapan Raychaudhuri rightly points out that "Conspicuous consumption rather than display of bhakti" became "the central motif of these urban festivals" (Ibid). Moreover, both the urban and the rural elite of Bengal severed the umbilical cord with the village folk who had maintained the ethos of the Pujas in a different manner.

The most noticeable trait of the Pujas is the spirit of competitiveness that was fostered among the native elite class, who realised that wealth (whether in terms of acquisition or consumption) revolved around the sahibs. The British exemplified themselves as generous by socialising with the native elites, while the latter increased their status by rubbing shoulders with the master class. In the present milieu, this competitiveness is seen shifting paradigm but whose nature remains the same. In terms of 'pandal' aesthetics, building welfare for the local community, securing an edge over other clubs, et al, and the spirit of this competitiveness is very evident.

The Sarbajanin Durga Puja, thus came to be recognised as the 'public' puja by 1910, when the Sanatan Dharmotsahni Sabha organised the first truly community puja in Baghbazar, Kolkata. The ethos of this puja noticeably was in maintaining the standards of the zamindari puja but raising funds from a variegated exchequer. In short, the public (more specifically, the community concerned) had every say in the puja – from the perspective of

contribution, control and participation. Story goes that the twelve friends in Guptipara near the Hooghly River, who are said to have started the BaroyaariDurga Puja, began the contemporary standard practice of collecting funds from the residents and inmates and organising the true community puja as handed down today. In Bangla, 'baro-yaari' would imply the puja conducted by twelve pals/friends. This was in 1790. Subsequently, the Cossimbazar Rajas imported the baaro-yaari fête to Kolkata, where Raja Harinath is said to have performed the puja at his ancestral house from 1824-1831 (but discontinued in 1832, for some reason). Harinath's son Krishnanath, however, revived the puja in 1842, this time too with the help of eleven other friends. In the 20th century milieu, even twelve friends perhaps fell short to amass the massive funding required to sponsor a puja of this stature, keeping all the pomp and extravaganza intact. This is why the Baro-yaari Puja metamorphosed into the Sarbajanin Puja, which finally became fully open to the body politic at large.

This rather chequered history of the SarbajaninDurga Puja's context is understandably contentious at times but relatively considered, the trajectory of its evolution in the present form is no doubt a matter of alternate influences that have played a decisive role in shaping its character. In fact, the symbolic connection between the cult of the Mother and the project of nationalism underwent an intertwined modulation that transformed the nature of the Durga Puja even further. BhudevMukhopadhyay and Bankim Chandra Chatterjee commented on the idea of the Nation as Mother that subsequently was picked up, modified and deified in the paintings of Ravi Verma and cult movies like Mother India. Critical references to Chatterjee's novel *Anandamath* show fictionalised depiction of the classic story of the Mother-goddess, later to be transmuted into the Motherland. The 'santans' (children) to the Divine Mother – the ten armed goddess, the defender of the fort, which in allegorical terms, could also refer to resistance to alien invasions. In terms of its celebration paradigm, however, the Durga Puja underwent a curious adjustment of Oriental and Occidental cultural influences, which in turn benefitted in the formation of a secular character of the Puja concerned. In the present day context, there are scores of examples of SarbajaninDurga Pujas, self-styled as theme-pujas, giving them an iconoclastic appeal of their own.

SudiptaGarai in an article for Abhijna e-museum notes: "[W]ith the increase of the affluent 'babu' culture, the number of pujas started increasing (during the Raj) in order to please the officials" (Ibid). The spirit of the Babu culture is evidenced even today in terms of the opulence that the SarbojoninDurga Puja has come to acquire. The intervention of corporate houses keeps increasing every year, although the first enterprise in this sector was as early as 1985, with Asian Paints SarradSamman starting a contest. Image, pandal, lighting, aesthetics, social welfare – the SarbojoninDurga Puja is now a sponsored mega-event. The Bengali community had to loosen hold over the Durga Puja as other communities too began taking an interest in the fanfare and spectacle that revolves around it. From colonialist involvement of yesteryears till the capitalist intervention of today, the

SarbojoninDurga Puja has kept evolving – its exteriority changing but its quintessence remaining unchanged. This has also made the Puja postmodernist in many senses, justifying its every transformation according to what Frederic Jameson has defined as ‘the cultural logic of late capitalism.’

Conclusively, one must admit that the SarbojoninDurga Puja as in the present day context is indeed facing a massive makeover with cultural and political factors interplaying with each other. In the same decisive article for *The Hindumentioned* earlier in this paper, TapatiGuhaThakurta notes that despite all such multifarious influences assaulting her original identity, “the goddess is being a good sport about it all” (N. Pag). GuhaThakurta observes that in present day Bengal, especially in Kolkata, secularisation and popularisation of different itemised and specific festivities; deities such as Shitala, Tara Ma, Raksha Kali, Shani Puja and the recent popularisation of Khoonti Puja and Hanuman Puja, is modulating the tempo of the Durga Puja as well. The clay modellers of Kumartuli are not benefitting anywhere compared to the neighbourhood clubs, who, according to GuhaThakurta, “enjoy the largesse of the ruling party and are controlled by political patrons, big and small. As a result, a trend for what GuhaThakurta brands as ‘Aesthetic Assault’ is sweeping the metropolis where popular art is merging with illuminations, architectural replicas, theme parks and folk-art villages” (N Pag). This beautification drive is propelled by populist politics that has conditioned the ostentation in terms of a multicultural, consumerist and globalised sociability, compelling the idols to “morph to suit the current fads”, while simultaneously “humanised and domesticated” to mutate into “the most sought-after advertising icon of the season” (Ibid). The Pujas today is swinging between “brashness and gimmickry” on one hand and taking the “artistic turn” whereby the goddess’s “ephemeral images and abodes” were projected as coveted art collectables. The SarbojoninDurga Puja has witnessed mutable appropriations of cultural profiles in different political milieus – starting from the Congress nationalists in the 30s and 40s, Youth Congress activities in the 60s and 70s, the Left Front’s prolonged regime (where an ambivalent stance was maintained), the TMC regime today that has incorporated the Pujas within the folds of its privatised socio-political ambit and finally the infiltrations of the Hindu right-wing within and without the State of West Bengal getting desperate to earn their claims on the Pujas. What the future holds for the SarbajaninDurga Puja, it is understandable that there will be further cultural cross-overs and spill-overs and offering her devotees renewed configurations “dissolving all boundaries between modes of festivities and modes of governance” (Ibid). ■

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Alice Sebold's *Lucky* – A Journey from Devitalizing Depression to Revitalizing Revival

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Alice Sebold is one of the well-known contemporary American Literature. She has registered all her thoughts, struggles in her literary discourses. Her debut novel is *The Lovely Bones* (2002), and her second novel is *The Almost Moon* (2007). *Lucky* (1999) is her memoir written about the aftermath of her rape. Alice Sebold starts her memoir by describing the events happen to her while she has been raped by a man named Gregory Madison when she is in her freshman year at Syracuse University. But she is allowed to live by her rapist, after severe injuries, cuts and bruises. Later when she approaches to give the complaint in the police station, one of the policemen calls her to be *Lucky* to be alive.

Alice Sebold expects someone has to hear her story but no one is there and it leads to psychological depression. Alice Sebold delineates the reality in the society. In *Lucky* Alice Sebold expresses all the happenings of her life from her childhood to adulthood. She tells everything about her school and college life and a lot about her friends and how they changed after her assault.

Without any reason, Madison has demolished the beautiful life of Alice. After the assault the rapist has left the place and it does not create any harm or loss in his life. But the girl's life is completely deteriorated after the evil blow. The victim must undergo physiological and psychological disturbances. Alice Sebold suffers from Social phobia. Each and every day people visit Alice's house to hear her whereabouts. In the beginning, Alice suffers a lot to meet people because of their judgment about her. The visits of neighbours and other people do not give any relaxation, instead she feels sick and dread to meet people. Almost she is dead. Fear and anxiety plays a major role in *Lucky*.

Freud states that anxiety is that "fundamental phenomenon and the central problem of neurosis" (qtd in Spielberger and Reheiser 272). Aftermath of Alice's rape she always senses a kind of fear without any real cause. She is affected by Anthrophobia. If a person is affected by Anthrophobia, the individual would fear for everything. Alice feels panic about her close friends, relatives, and neighbours. She considers them as strangers. At home too, she is not ready to see or talk to her family members.

Not every rape survivors could recover soon from their trauma; they need sufficient time to recover themselves from the shock. The victims can lead normal life, only if they have positive vibrations around them. They should keep people around them with noble nature. The victims have to undergo many phases to come out of their wounds and at the same time they should take possible steps to rejuvenate their body and mind. Alice's parents allow her to continue her studies. In her institution, everyone is shocked to see Alice. Gradually she receives proper recognition from her companion. She is also ready to lead a normal life. The primary priority of Alice's entry to college is to attend Tess Gallagher's poetry workshop and Tobias Wolff's fiction workshop. When Alice enters into Tess Gallagher's poetry workshop, Tess asks her to read the poem written by her in front of the audience. He is the first person who asks Alice Sebold to express her feelings. Through that poem Tess' makes Alice express her emotions and desire. Such motivation sprinkles all her emotions and she starts to enter her creative venture.

Alice Sebold becomes a determined achiever. She is motivated by her professors Tess Gallagher and Tobias Wolf. Tess has advised Alice to pour all her emotions into her writings, which would bring her a great relief and she could lead a peaceful life. Alice Sebold's poem receives the number of comments, among all Tess appreciates Alice by saying that, "“now that's the ticket,”" (*Lucky* 108). While attending Tobias Fiction Workshop, he motivates her to become a writer and advises her to ignore the negative part of her life. He tries to heal out the wound from Alice Sebold.

After the completion of all the enquiries and investigations, Alice's mind attains satisfaction by knowing that her rapist Gregory Madison is in Prison. She has defeated all her struggles and wins in her battles. Madison gets maximum sentence for raping a woman. Alice resumes her normal life as before. She starts her fashion and craze again. Even she has started to concentrate on her dieting plan and cautious about beauty tips. She resumes her teenage life. For her relaxation, she joins in a T-shirt shop as an employee, though she knows that that job does not relevant to her career, she does that for her relief. Later she works in the literary magazine, *The Review* and has been chosen as an editor in her senior year. Then she falls in love and starts to enjoy her life in the way, her friends do. Apart from all the problems Alice Sebold pushes herself hard to revitalize to survive on the Earth. She starts to find hope and determination for her survival at various levels.

During her tribulations she settles with the thought that, "I never questioned what was happening to me. It all seemed normal. Threat was everywhere. No place or person was safe. My life was different from other people; it was natural that I behaved differently." (*Lucky* 237). Alice Sebold's dread and tension help her to investigate her skills in another manner. She turns into an author with her experience and by the inspiration of her teachers. With the assistance of Tess, Alice goes to numerous workshops and submitted numerous works before the specialists. She receives both the positive and negative comments from the audience.

Alice Sebold fights with all her problems and finally proves that a person could attain her goal with her strong will power. She believes that she can encourage the people, particularly the rape victims to overcome their stresses through her buoyancy. She becomes a living role model to many young victims, who are struggling to move in their life. Alice has presented many numbers of motivational speeches to her readers. By depicting her story in her memoir, Alice proves that a person could accomplish her thoughts, if she really works hard with strong determination and perseverance. Though she does not have excellent childhood, she is aware of the society. She tries to take the responsibilities after her harassment. She endeavours to educate the young girls about the reality and works hard for their safety through her writings. ■

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Learning from Errors: An Analysis

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Pradip Sarkar

In a multi-lingual and multi-cultural country like India, English is one of the prime communicative languages. It is a medium of instruction and communication both nationally and internationally. That is why English is termed as lingua franca. Learning English is not as same as learning any other Indian languages. It creates sophophobia (fear of learning) into the Indian learners which results into numerous errors. This article offers an overview of the meaning and sources of errors, the ways of their occurrence, various theories of learning through errors, general patterns of errors in learning English and also depict teachers' role and pedagogical output. The purpose of this study is not just to add to the already large corpus of research work in the area of Errors in learning English but to trace the sources or the root causes of errors in students' learning and offer suggestions which will eventually improve the falling standard of English. Again, the study is relevant because it will inform students, teachers, and all stakeholders of education in India the actual learning problems of our students in English.

Key words: Interlanguage, English language learning, errors, patterns of errors, pedagogy.

Introduction

English is a skill subject. Like every language English also consists of four language skills namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. Again it deals with the system of phonology (sound system of a particular language), morphology (words what they are, their formation, various changes in their forms), semantics (deals with the meaning of words), and syntax (construction, arrangement of words into definite meaning conveyed i.e. phrases, formulas, sentences etc). To learn English one has to become competent of grammar, vocabulary, intonation, articulation, stress-pattern etc of the target language. Most of the Indian students are bi-lingual or multi-lingual. They mostly use regional languages or dialects. As English is a foreign language, it is a stranger to them. Learning English is not as same as learning any other Indian languages. It needs proper use of modern, innovative teaching methods and strategies, and other electronic devices. Spelling mistake, lack of vocabulary, grammatical error, use of traditional methods of teaching, lack of competent teachers create difficulty in learning English. Knowledge of the first language often interferes

into the learning of English. Thus learner's errors are seen as an integral part of language learning. Ferguson(1965) acknowledged that one among the main problems within the learning of a second language is that the interference caused by the structural differences between the language of the learner and therefore the second language.

Error

There is no doubt that committing errors is a natural thing because it is part of human behaviour. While learning a skill, e.g. driving a car, swimming, or using a language, learners make countless errors in their initial attempts. However, these errors taper off and are reduced progressively as the learner gains more experience and applies the necessary knowledge. But in the second language (L2) teaching and learning process error has always been regarded as an negative effect or result, even worth to be punished.

According to Corder (1967, p 167): "A learner's errors then, provide evidence of the system of the language that he is using. They are significant in three different ways. First to the teacher, in that they tell him is he undertakes a systematic analysis, how far towards the goal the learner has progressed...Second, they provide the researchers with evidence of how language is learned or acquired... Thirdly... they are indispensable to the learner himself, because we can regard the making of errors as a device used in order to learn."

Error and Mistake

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, error is "a mistake, especially one that can cause problems". Mistakes occur when one know a rule but violate it accidentally. A 'mistake' is a type of linguistic deviance, but it is a slip, the result of tiredness, emotional stress, nervousness, memory lapse or preoccupation with the subject. Native speakers also make mistakes. Mistakes are haphazard and unsystematic. The learner can oftentimes correct his own mistakes.

An error means unintentionally deviating from what's true. Errors are divided into two subcategories:

1. Errors in production : errors that appear while performing the tasks concerning productive skills (speaking, writing);
2. Errors in comprehension : errors that appear while performing the tasks concerning receptive skills (listening, reading).

Again errors can be divided into the following two categories:

1. Individual Errors: Individual errors are otherwise known as 'nonce' errors or erratic cases. Individual errors are common to both native and second language learners. They are due to nervous reaction to personal physiological or psychological conditions.

2. **General Errors:** General errors are common to all learners irrespective of differences in source language structures. These errors are similar to what may be termed language learning universal.

Thus, “Mistake” is connected with language performance, whereas “Error” is connected with language competence.

Corder (1981) clearly distinguishes between ‘errors’ and ‘mistakes’. He states that errors are ‘failures in competence’ whereas mistakes are ‘failures in performance’. (cited in Khansir 2008). That is to say, learners’ mistakes occur due to ‘memory lapses, physical states such as tiredness and psychological conditions such as strong emotion’ Corder (1981, p. 10). In other words, they occur when learners feel stressed, nervous, tired, anxious etc. Based on the distinction above, learners’ slips of tongue or pen are considered ‘mistakes’ not errors if they are self-corrected, i.e. without external help, whereas they are considered ‘errors’ if not.

Typology of Errors

Corder (1967) distinguishes two sorts of errors:

1. ‘Breach of the code’, which involves wrong application of grammatical rules, leading to ungrammatical constructions in learner’s performance, and
2. ‘Errors in the use of code’. It happens when learner use of the target language in inappropriate context though the development could also be perfectly grammatical.

Corder (1974: pp 145-48) identifies four types of grammatically correct but inappropriate use of constructions.

- a) Referential errors,
- b) Registeral errors,
- c) Social errors and
- d) Textual errors.

description of errors follows the categorization of errors such as grammatical errors which includes: Omission, wrong transformation, wrong plural formation, use of wrong verb forms etc. and similarly, the phonological, morphological and semantic errors with all sets of their sub-classes.

Errors of Performance and Errors of Competence

Corder (1971) classified errors into two types, namely,

1. Errors of Competence and
2. Errors of Performance

He also says that L2 learners can recognize and correct errors of performance, but not errors of competence. This can be taken as major factor differentiating both the types of errors mentioned above. (cited in Khansir 2008).

Sources of Errors

The sources of error might be psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic, epistemic or residing in the discourse structures.

Richards (1971), when trying to identify the causes of competence errors, speak of three types of errors:

1. Interference errors (which reflect the use of elements from one language to the other),
2. Intralingual errors (errors due to overgeneralization, or to ignorance of proper application of rules),
3. False concept hypothesis (when the learner builds hypothesis about the target language based on limited experience). (cited in Khansir 2008).

Touchie (1986. pp 77-79) viewed that there are mainly two major sources of errors in second language learning:

1. Interference from the native language
2. Intralingual and developmental factors.

The native language of learners plays a significant role in learning a second language (L2). The errors which occurs due to the influence of the native language are called interlingual errors. It is also called transfer or interference errors. While Intralingual and developmental errors are due to the difficulty of the second/target language.

Intralingual and developmental factors include the following (ibid):

1.Simplification: It is obvious that learners often choose simple forms and constructions instead of more complex ones.

Example : The use of simple present tense instead of the present perfect continuous tense.

2.Overgeneralization: Overgeneralization is the use of one form or construction in one context and extending its application to other contexts where it should not apply. Example: The use of *comed* and *goed* as the past tense forms of *come* and *go* .

Touchie (1986) also noted that simplification and overgeneralization are used by learners in order to reduce their linguistic burden.

3.Hypercorrection: Sometimes the zealous efforts of teachers in correcting their students' errors induce the scholars to form errors in otherwise correct forms. Stenson (1978) calls this hypercorrection error as "induced errors."

Example: The teacher's insistence that Arab ESL learners construct the phoneme /p/ correctly prompts them to always construct /p/ where the phoneme /b/ is required. Thus Arab ESL learners say /pɪt/ and /pætɪ/ rather than /bɪt/ and /bætɪ/.

4. Faulty teaching: It happens when the learners' errors are teacher-induced ones. It may be caused by the teacher, teaching materials, or the order of presentation. This factor is closely related to hypercorrection above. Sometimes, in the course of long teaching, teachers are even influenced by their pupils' errors.

5. Fossilization: It is found that some errors, specially errors in pronunciation, persist for long periods and become quite difficult to get rid of.

Example: Arab ESL learners' lack of distinction between *IpI* and *Ibl* in English.

6. Avoidance: It occurs when learners avoid syntactic structures due to their difficulty to produce and use simpler structures

7. Inadequate learning: It is mainly caused by ignorance of rule restrictions and incomplete learning.

8. False concepts hypothesized: False concepts means that there are errors which will be attributed to wrong hypotheses formed by the learners about the target language.

Example:

She is talk to the teacher. (wrong conception that *is* is the present tense marker)

It was happened last night. (wrong conception that *was* is the past tense marker)

Communal Pull

English, which is spoken outside the four walls of the classroom, that is, extra mural English can be a potential source of learners' errors. The language of the media, that is, the radio, the television and newspaper to a large extent, can also affect the learner's written and spoken English.

Pidgin English spoken in the community can also be one such source of errors. That is, if the learner lives in a language community where pidgin is in vogue or serves as the people's lingua-franca, there is the likelihood that people living in that community, including the second language learner, will speak pidgin English.

Perception-blind Spots

This refers to the inability of the L2 learner to auditorily perceive the new sounds heard in the target language. This occurs because the L2 Learner has been conditioned by his mother tongue sound system and therefore regards as relevant only the sound features of his L1. In such a situation he will disregard L2 sound features which are not distinctive in his L1. It must be stressed here that an unguided L2 learner may not even know that he has heard the wrong sound. Such a learner needs to be systematically de-conditioned to enable him perceive auditorily the correct phonological structures of the new language and this will require the efficiency of an experienced and competent teacher. This does not mean that after the learners' receptive experience has been developed he can speak acceptable English when he is left on his own.

Transfer of Training

In India, L2 learning generally takes place in the classroom. The teacher is the model in the classroom. In such a situation if the teacher or the model has faulty speech habits or his grasp of the English language is weak, particularly in grammar, he will transfer his deviant utterances or habits to the students. Faulty teaching methods and inappropriate teaching and learning materials (TLM) can also induce errors. Incompetent teachers cannot only be the source of some errors but they can also reinforce them.

Inconsistencies in the Target Language

This can be looked at in two areas; the orthography vis-à-vis the phonetic system and the syntax of the L2. The English language orthography does not always give clues to the pronunciation of words and this can be a source of confusion for the L2 learner, resulting in errors. As India is a multi-lingual country, the phonetic differences between the two orthographical systems often caused graphological and phonological confusion which are seen in the speaking and writing of Indian learners of English. For example, the Bengali student often find it difficult to pronounce the English letter /f/ properly because of their habit of making the bilabial sound of /f/, which will result in errors.

Pedagogical Significance of Learner's Error:

The study of learner's errors is very significant from the pedagogical point of view. It gives a guideline to the teacher/syllabus designer for designing a remedial course of the target language. They may evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching materials and the teaching methods/techniques they use. Learner's errors determine their difficulties which give insight to the teacher in solving the learners' problems.

The significance of learners' errors and mistakes in the process of learning English as a second language has been widely discussed by decades. Many educators and theorists in the field of errors analysis have focused on the significance of second language learners' errors.

According to Corder (1981: 10-11), the learner's errors are significant in the following ways:

1. To the researcher they supply evidence of the system of the language the learner is using at a specific point.
2. To the teacher in that tell him if he undertakes a systematic analysis as to how far the learner has progressed towards the goal and consequently what remains him to learn further.
3. They are indispensable to the learner. (cited in Khansir 2008).

The same is viewed by Hourani (2008), about the significance of learners' errors:

1. To the teachers, in that they tell them how far toward the goal the learners have advanced and consequently, what remains for them to learn.

2. To the researchers evidence of how language is learnt or acquired, what strategies or procedures the learners are employing in their discovery of the language.
3. To the learners themselves, because it is regarded that errors act as a device that the learners use in order to learn.

The significance of studying errors is explained by Corder as:

“There have always been two justifications proposed for the study of learners’ errors: the pedagogical justification, namely that a good understanding of the nature of error is necessary before a systematic means of eradicating them could be found, and the theoretical justification, which claims that a study of learners’ errors is part of the systematic study of the learners’ language which is itself necessary to an understanding of the process of second language acquisition” (Corder, 1982; 1). (cited in Khansir 2008).

Theories of Learning through Errors

A fear of errors in learning creates sophophobia among learners that typically diverts learning from highly productive generative strategies. An error avoidance strategy is even more harmful because generating errors—as long as corrective feedback is given—is actually beneficial to learning.

The Behaviorist Approach

Behaviorists believed that errors as a symbol of ineffective teaching or as evidence of failure. Skinner (1957), proponent of the behaviorist approach to learning, defined language as a “process of habit formation – the acquisition of a series of responses to external stimuli developed through a process mentioned as operant conditioning” (cited in Roberts & Griffiths, 2008, p. 282). Habits entail ‘over-learning’, which ensures that learning of latest habits as a results of proactive inhibition. Thus, the challenge facing the L2 learner is to beat the interference of L1 habits. They also view it as being due largely to maternal language interference that the teacher has did not predict and permit for when errors do occur. they’re to be remedied by attaining correct forms which is achieved by the utilization of intensive drilling or over teaching.

The Cognitive Approach

The main proponent of the cognitive view is Chomsky, who queried Skinner’s approach in his work of 1959. He states that learning was “a process of rule formation, that it’s a cognitive process”. It became clear that language learners form hypotheses, which aren’t completely random, but underlie certain rules. Out of this, Chomsky “postulated a species-specific (human), domain-specific (language), biological endowment: a genetically encoded predisposition to find out languages”. (cited in Adelman, B. E. 2017). Which is named Universal Grammar (UG). it’s also called Language Acquisition Device (LAD). It proposes that children are born with innate potentialities to find out any human language. Learning a language may be a psychological process which the power to find out grammar

is hard-wired into the brain. consistent with Chomsky, this Universal Grammar consists of a core of principles which encodes the main principles of a language and its grammatical structures into the child's brain that each one human languages share. While receiving language input, a learner is in a position to "glean enough evidence to 'trigger' the right setting of the parameter for that specific language" (ibid).

Contrastive Analysis Approach

C. C. Fries, an American linguist, initiated the study of contrastive linguistics in 1945. This assumption was haunted by Robert Lado in his book, "Linguistic Across Cultures" (1957) during which the theoretical foundation of C.A was laid down. Contrastive Analysis gained much important to research learner errors within the field of second language acquisition, during which two languages were systematically compared during the 40's and 50's.

Contrastive analysis is an approach generated from behaviorist learning theory. Through Contrastive analysis (CA), applied linguists sought to use the formal distinctions between the learners' first and second languages to predict errors. the essential concept behind Contrastive analysis was that a structural picture of any language might be constructed which could then be utilized in direct comparison with the structural picture of another language. Through a process of 'mapping' one system onto another, similarities and differences might be identified. Identifying the differences would cause a far better understanding of the issues that a learner of the actual L2 would face.

Bose (2005) mentioned that one among the explanations for learner errors is that the interference of his maternal language , which is described because the negative and positive transfer between the maternal language and therefore the target language. The negative transfer happens when the sorts of the target language and people of the learner's maternal language are different from one another whereas, the positive transfer between the maternal language and therefore the target language is analogous.

Contrastive Analysis (CA) was criticized by the proponents of error analysis. The rationale was that Contrastive Analysis specialise in differences between first language (L1) and the second language (L2) and ignore factors which can affect the second language learners' performance like his learning and communication strategies, training- procedures, overgeneralization, etc. It shows certain difficulties which don't actually apparent within the learner's performance and conversely and doesn't predicts many problems which are apparent in learner's actual performance. it's unfortunate that Contrastive Analysis within the 1970, replaced by other explanations of learning difficulties like error analysis and interlanguage.

The Error Analysis Approach:

The concept error analysis was first introduced by Fries (1945). But Lado (1957) who have claimed that foreign or second language learners' errors could be predicted on

the basis of the differences between the learners native and second languages. They have also suggested that where the aspects of the target language are similar to those of the learner's native language, learning will be easy; otherwise, it will be difficult and second language learners are expected to make errors .The field of error analysis in SLA was established in the 1970s by S. P. Corder and colleagues.

Corder (1974, p.125) stated that “The study of errors is part of the investigation of the process of language learning. In this respect it resembles methodologically the study of the acquisition of the mother tongue. It provides us with a picture of the linguistic development of a learner and may give us indications as to the learning process.”

Richards et al (1992) mentioned the study of errors are utilized in order to

1. Identify strategies which learners use in teaching ,
2. Identify the causes of learners' errors,
3. Obtain information on common difficulties in learning as an aid to teaching or in development of teaching materials (cited in Khansir 2008).

The Interlanguage Approach

The American linguist Larry Selinker (1972) coined the term ‘interlanguage’ to ask the systematic knowledge of an L2 which is independent of both these learner's L1 and therefore the target language. Interlanguage is neither the system of target language (L2) nor of the language (L1), but instead falls between the two; a linguistic stimuli surrounding them. this is often thanks to the very fact that in most cases, the utterances “of a second language learner [are] not just like the hypothesized corresponding set of utterances which might be produced by a speaker of the TL had he attempted to precise an equivalent meaning because the learner” (Selinker, 1972, p. 214). By gradual process of trial and error and hypothesis testing, learners ultimately achieve establishing closer to the system employed by native speakers of the language.

Brown (1994: 215) states that interlanguage refers to the “separateness of a second language learner's system, a system that has a structurally intermediate status between the native and target languages.” (cited in Khansir 2008).Selinker (1972) used the term fossilization to ask the tendency of the various learners to stop developing their interlanguage grammar within the direction of the target language. He identified five fossilization processes as follows:

1. Language Transfer: sometimes rules and sub-systems of the interlanguage may result from transfer from the first language.
2. Transfer of Training: Often it's found that, some elements of the interlanguage may result from specific features of the training process used to teach the second language.
3. Strategies of Second Language Learning: It is often found that, some elements of the interlanguage may result from a specific approach to the material to be learned.

4. Strategies of Second Language Communication: some elements of the interlanguage may result from specific ways people learn to talk with native speakers of the target language.
5. Overgeneralization of the Target Language Linguistic Materials: some elements of the interlanguage could even be the merchandise of overgeneralization of the principles and semantic features of the target language.

Miscellaneous

One should avoid errors at all stages of learning. Exercising the errors should make the errors themselves stronger. It will increase their probability of recurrence. A number of theories of learning and memory (Bandura 1986, Skinner 1953), suggests that errors are bad and should be avoided at all costs.

Stevenson & Stigler (1994, p. 193) note that, “Perhaps because of the strong influence of behaviouristic teaching, which says conditions should be arranged so that the learner avoids errors and makes only a reinforceable response, American teachers place little emphasis on the constructive use of errors as a teaching technique. Learning about what is wrong may hasten understanding of why the correct procedures are appropriate, but errors may also be interpreted as failure. And Americans, reluctant to have such interpretations made of their children’s performance, strive to avoid situations where this might happen.” The Japanese active learning approach well reflects the fundamental ideas of a learning-from errors approach. (as cited in Janet Metcalfe, 2016)

Ausubel (1968) often exhorted the dangers of errors in the process of learning. Allowing people to make errors encourages them to practice incorrect approaches. If such practice is continued for long time, it will be difficult to overwrite later with correct approaches. He used this reasoning to argue against an exploratory learning strategy.

Exploratory learning is based on constructivist theories of learning and teaching. Exploratory learning by its very nature mean that incorrect paths and faulty approaches and solutions would be encountered and entertained by the learner. Ausubel (and others) strictly viewed that active exploratory learning was to be avoided.

Similarly, Bandura (1986, p. 47) urged that learners should be “spared the costs and pain of faulty effort”. Instead they should receive the needed step-by-step guidance that results in flawless positive behavior modification. The correct execution of tasks should eliminate error rates. Right and positive feedback should be entertained by positive social reinforcement.

Stevenson & Stigler (1994) pointed out; praise reduces discussion and serves mainly to reinforce the teacher’s role as the authority who bestows rewards. Too much praise prevents students to think critically, reasoning, reconsider, evaluate, and explore their own thought processes. They viewed that, in Japan praise is rarely given. Japanese teachers often extended discussion of student’s errors, their probable causes, the route and reasons to the correct answer. Instead of beginning with teacher-directed class work and explication,

Japanese students first try to solve problems on their own, a process that is likely to be filled with false starts.

Sources of Errors in English

English is a skill subject. To gain mastery in English one has to become competent of four language skills namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. Again, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, punctuation, stress-pattern, articulation, intonation, phonology, morphology etc creates errors in learning. Few sources of errors in English grammar are mentioned below:

Spelling Error

Spelling Errors Due to the following:

1. Incorrect Pronunciation
2. confusion between Homophones
3. confusion over Double letter and Non- Double letter
4. lack of firm grasp of Word Division
5. Carelessness

Concord Errors

1. Singular Subject with Plural Verb
2. Plural Subject with Singular Verb
3. Concord Errors involving Tenses

Preposition Error

1. Wrong Selection of Preposition
2. Redundant Preposition

Vocabulary and Expression Errors

1. Wrong Lexical Items
2. Wrong Expression

Article Errors

1. Wrong use of Article
2. Omission of Article

Again errors in parts of speech, commensurate subject and verb, tense, number, use of prefix and suffixes, use of vocabulary, Genders (masculine and Feminine), synonym and Antonym etc. **Bahri. S. and Sugeng. B. (2009)** observed eight most common errors of students' writing: verb-tenses, articles, word forms, capital letters, punctuation, missing

words, spelling, and prepositions; Hariri (2012) investigated the most frequent part of errors in use of prepositions and articles. Erkaya, O. R. (2012) identified errors of grammar and syntax (Word choice, Article, Preposition, Punctuation, Singular/plural noun agreement, Spelling, Verb-tense, Sentence fragment, Subject-verb agreement). Owu-Ewie et al. (2017) identified major grammatical errors like agreement errors, tense errors, singular-plural (number) errors, prepositional errors, and article errors. Karim. A et al. (2018) identified common errors related to grammar, misinformation, disordering and overgeneralization. Grammatical errors consist of Subject-verb agreement error, Article error, Verb error, Pronoun error, Prepositional error, Tense error. Mohammed, M. Q. (2018) found that majority of Spelling errors are dyslexic errors, which relate to the first language interference.

General Guidelines

The following are general guidelines in correcting second language learning errors more effectively:

1. Teachers should correct errors affecting intelligibility. In other words, errors that interfere with the general meaning and understandability of utterances must be corrected.
2. Errors with high frequency and generality should be corrected more often than less frequent errors.
3. Teachers should put more emphasis on correcting errors affecting an outsized percentage of their students. This factor is clearly associated with the second factor mentioned above.
4. Irritating errors should be paid more attention to. This factor is related to the sociolinguistic aspect of language learning. Pupils who come from lower socioeconomic classes are conscious of their backwardness and very sensitive to teachers' ignorance and passivity.
5. Errors relevant to a pedagogical focus should receive more attention from the teacher than other errors.
6. Do not rebuke or show negative reinforcement for common errors.
7. Increase confidence level among the learners to cope up with the difficulties.
8. Encourage self-correction, peer-correction of errors rather than teacher-correction.
9. Ensure the learners that errors are common in learning. Everyone learners from errors.
10. Create a trauma-free, joyful learning environment in the class room.

Conclusion

In learning new language, learners make mistakes, thus it is important to accept them, learn from them and discover the reason why they make them, improve and move on. This study has given us a clear picture of the error patterns. The study has also attempted to trace the sources of errors in learning English, and the researcher has recommended some suggestions which when fully implemented would considerably improve the teaching and

learning of English. Therefore, we will be able to seriously tackle the falling standard of English in particular, and education in general in India. ■

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Woman Invincible: A Study of Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*

Pujaparna Dash

Amongst different genres of literature exploring the prevalent issues of women, the most dominant is the theme of victimization of women. They are stratified as the 'Second Sex' in a society riddled with male chauvinism. Margaret Atwood, the celebrated Canadian author while consistently refusing to be categorised as a 'Feminist', presents a frightening dystopia in her novel 'The Handmaid's Tale', wherein women and their destiny are governed by biological status and capabilities. Such a concept might seem farfetched and inapplicable in the real world, but nevertheless one cannot ignore the possibility of it ever happening. The stereotypical character demarcation experienced by women across the world, is mainly defined by social standards and traditions. However, what if these social standards and traditions defining a person's conduct, which in turn is mainly influenced by religion, legalizes the secondary position of women? Atwood gives a very disturbing and thought provoking answer to this question in her work 'The Handmaid's Tale'. In this article I have attempted to analyse the feminine destiny as represented by the dystopian society of 'Gilead'.

Key words: Margaret Atwood, Dystopia, Feminine Destiny.

The genre of Dystopian fiction believed to be pioneered by George Orwell's *1984* and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, emerged at the turn of the 20th century. While Utopian fiction embodied humanity's hope for society, Dystopian literature is characterised by dehumanization, totalitarian governments and other characters associated to a cataclysmic decline in society, embodied its exact opposite. One of the prominent writer of Canadian fiction Margaret Atwood describes Dystopia as a place where "power is absolute and control of sex is also stringent. [they] are places in which you don't like where you are; that's what they are by definition" (Dodson 99-100). Margaret Atwood's sixth novel, *The Handmaid's Tale* published in 1985 is one of the most popular as well as iconic literary fiction of the century. It has won the prestigious Governor General Award (1985), the Arthur C Clark Award (1987), was shortlisted for the 1986 Booker Prize, was made into a film directed by Volker Schlöndorff in 1990, a screenplay by Harold Pinter, and most recently turned into a highly acclaimed television series streamed by Hulu. It has become a representative symbol of female resistance with activists dressing up in the Handmaids uniform of formless red gown and the white veil in the streets while demonstrating against female oppressions in the society. *The Handmaid's Tale* is a dystrophic novel which Lucy

M. Freibert describes as “political-science fiction” (Freibert,1988, p.280). The novel narrates the experiences of Offred- a Handmaid, in ‘Gilead’ an imaginary dystopian fascist country.

Set in the 21st Century United States, in Cambridge, Massachusetts where after the nuclear age, Christian Fundamentalists have gained control of the whole of the United States and have turned it into a fascistic theocracy, ‘Gilead’- a totalitarian regime run on patriarchal lines derived from the Old Testament and 17th Century American Puritanism. In Gilead, individual freedom of choice is abolished and everyone has been drafted into the state service classified according to gender roles. Men are chiefly divided into six categories: The Commanders, the Eyes, the Angels, the Guardians, the Doctors and the Workers. Similarly women are divided into eight groups: the Wives, the Handmaids, the Aunts, the Marthas, the Econowives, the Unwomen, the Widows and the Prostitutes. Even though the Gilead following the concept of dystopia is an oppressive society, women are the worst affected, being valued according to their biological capabilities they are reduced to the status of objects rather than individual human beings. Following various epidemics, natural disaster, pollution, AIDs etc., the society of Gilead is threatened with extinction, to combat which the state comes up with specific demarcation for the role of women according to which biologically fertile women were captured and for this purpose they adopted a simple tactic “of declaring all second marriages and non - marital liaisons adulterous, arresting the female partners, and, on the grounds that they were morally unfit, confiscating the children they already had, who were adopted by childless couples of the upper echelons who were eager for progeny by any means” (Atwood, p.286). These women were captured, their identities erased and forced into the Handmaid category wherein they are nothing but “two legged womb” (Atwood, p.171). Building upon the Biblical story in Genesis according to which the childless Rachel, wife of Jacob, begs her husband to give her a child through her handmaid Bilhah. She says’ “Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her; And she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her. (Genesis, 30:1-3). Using this story in the Bible as religious justification, the Christian fundamentalist religiously certified the role of the handmaids in the Gilead society wherein Handmaids are assigned as sexual slaves to produce offspring for childless couples considered morally fit by the church to raise children. The Handmaids are made to follow strict rules and regulations, the defiance of which is death. They are made to wear a specific type of red dress designed to hide body contours and a white veil meant to prevent her from seeing and being seen and their sole role and responsibility is to provide a child to the couple assigned to them. This is their lot in life. She is not helping a couple out of her free will through various artificial forms of impregnations, in Gilead she is forced to physically serve the commander under the wives’ supervision, forced to meekly follow the legalized dehumanization and commodification of herself as dictated by the government. Prior to her copulation ceremony, scheduled during her monthly ovulation, she is bathed and dressed by the house Martha- the category of woman assigned to every household as a housekeeper. The ceremony is arranged and supervised by the wife of the Commander in which the Handmaid- de-sexed and dehumanized is made to be a passive participant. Through all these abuses, she is supposed

to pray to God to grant the couple a child through her and to harbour no ill feelings towards her oppressors, rather she is encouraged to view this as her heavenly duty.

Offred is the main protagonist and the spokesperson of the novel who recounts the events leading to her capture by the Gilead regime and her experiences there. These narratives of Offred are not written narratives (language and literacy were prohibited to women) but a series of tape recordings that are transcribed by years later by historians while researching the Republic of Gilead. Following the formation of the Gilead Government, a gradual set of rules were legalised according to which women were not allowed to have a job, own property or have a bank account. In the ensuing panic, chaos and fear, Offred – then known by the name of June, along with her husband and daughter attempted to flee Gilead but were captured and separated. After her capture she is forced into Leah and Rachel Centre – a centre for the Handmaids, wherein the captured women were indoctrinated the rules and regulation of their new identity – that of a handmaid. The ‘Aunt’s’ who were the one in charge of centre, forced women to accept and follow the new order through scriptures, coercion and violence. After the training June is allotted to a Commander named Fred and her name is changed to Offred which literally means offered to Fred.

Following Offred’s allotment to the commander’s house, she is forced to follow all the rules and regulations prescribed for the Handmaids. She is looked after by Martha, the caretaker of the house. She is fed at fixed times with what the authority regards as healthy food, made to follow the copulation ceremony under the scrutiny of the commander’s wife and forced into routine monthly health check-up. Offred mourns the loss of her family, the memories of which are growing increasingly fragmented surrenders, “I resign my body freely, to use of others, they can do what they like with me. I am object”. (Atwood, p.171). This line of Offred shows the loss of individual identity, alienation, hopelessness and resignation experienced by the Handmaids.

Offred is allowed outside the house for shopping with one other fellow Handmaid named Ofglen and that too only for the things for which she has been given a list and tokens – the replacement of currency. Apart from that small outing and the programmed copulation ceremonies, she is not allowed to do anything else. She is not allowed to read, write, sew, embroider, knit, wave, listen to music if fact anything else in her free time. She is supposed to pray endlessly to God to make her womb fertile and grant her with child so that she may be useful to the house she is assigned to. However, for Offred this endless free time is spent remembering her past life, her family, her friends. Being constantly monitored and denied free speech, Offred descends into a fog of depression and loses all hope. She says, “We are two - legged wombs, that’s all; sacred vessels, ambulatory chalices” (Atwood p128). During the Handmaid’s routine gatherings, presided over by the Aunts and the wives, certain Handmaid’s are lauded for their exemplary behaviour while some are criticised for their indiscretions. Even though every woman present in such gatherings, the Aunts, the Wives, the Handmaids, all had a previous life, a set of values before Gilead, but all of them have adapted themselves to Gilead’s demarcation of their role and have become the oppressor

and the oppressed. The Handmaid found guilty are publically killed by other Handmaids and the Handmaid praised for their duties are looked at with great envy by her fellow members. The gleeful enforcer of the oppressive rules – the Aunts and the Wives and the meek followers of the rules- the Handmaids are much more horrific than the actual physical act of oppression. Through their nuanced portrayal, Atwood seems to show a world where both men and women are caught up in a struggle to see “who can do what to whom and get away it, even as far as death”. (Atwood, p.169)

Despite the physical and mental abuse suffered by Offred, she falls in love with the chauffeur assigned to the house – Nick. Through her relationship with Nick, she goes through a gradual change, her passivity and hopelessness is replaced by hope and a will to survive, to resist her victimization though her resistance is passive it nevertheless is a step towards self-protection. She makes friends with fellow Handmaids, Ofglen in particular, starts conversing with the house Martha and through Ofglen supports the underground resistance to Gilead, all in the hope of being free one day. Even though her story is abruptly cut short with Ofglen’s suicide and the arrival of the guards in her room to take her away, accompanied by Nick, who asks Offred to have trust in him, the narrative ends with her departure from the commander’s house like a criminal. The fate of Offred remains unclear.

Through Offred is a victim of the regime, she tries to overcome her position of victimhood through love and language. In Gilead she is deprived of both her literacy and her language which is difficult to comprehend; because once a person possesses the skills of reading and speaking they cannot be taken away, however the means to utilize those skills can be taken away. That is what Gilead does. They made reading illegal for women and have taken extreme measures in order to follow through with this law. This particular form of victimization is commonly found in dystopias. As Stein points out, “to lose language is to lose subjectivity. Not surprisingly feminist dystopias often deal with women’s loss of language. Atwood’s novel inscribes a contemporary nightmare, the erasure of speech. Government restriction of speech and storytelling is an important theme in twentieth century dystopian fiction” (Stein, *Dystopia* 270). Offred consistently played word games in her mind in an effort to keep her intelligence and possibly her sanity. Offred says she would “repeat my former name, remind myself of what I once could do, how others saw me” (Atwood 126) or she would sneak butter in the toe of her shoe to use later as lotion: “As long as we do this, butter our skin to keep it soft, we can believe that we will someday get out, that we will be touched again, in love or desire. We have ceremonies of our own, private ones” (Atwood 125). The most prominent way through which Offred survives is by simply telling her story.” Her narrative itself is a criminal act. By narrating the story of the repressive republic of Gilead, the handmaid inscribes both her victimization and her resistance” (Stein, *Dystopia* 269). Offred seems aware of the significance of her narrative and relies on it as a sort of crutch to give her strength. She states: “By telling you anything at all I’m at least believing in you, I believe you’re there, I believe you into being. Because I’m telling this story I will your existence. I tell, therefore you are.” (Atwood 344).

In Atwood's words: "I made a rule for myself: I would not include anything that human beings had not already done in some other place or time, or for which the technology did not already exist. I did not wish to be accused of dark, twisted inventions, or of misrepresenting the human potential for deplorable behaviour." This assertion of Atwood while speaking of 'The Handmaid's Tale' does cast grim prophetic vision to her written words. Atwood explores the nuanced emotions of a woman imprisoned in oppressive stereotypes from which she struggles to create a space for herself. Offred's need to survive, the hope for herself are very cleverly narrated by Atwood through which she attempts to show the extent of human capacity, the capacity to oppress and the capacity to resist. Long before writing this novel she had stated that she does not believe in making a political stance in trying to make a change through her works. Now however Atwood believes that "writers are eye-witness, I witness" and that "If books in fact don't save the world, then nothing else can". After analysing her novel "The Handmaid's Tale", One cannot help but agree that despite the changes and progressions in time through which every society changes itself as it moves forward into development, women have been victims of the society in the past, they are victims now and will continue being victims if the situation does not change. Through this novel it seems Atwood is warning us through Gilead, and tries to make us aware of how close we are to total chaos. By extending her critical observations of the society into a fictional nightmare, Atwood warns us of nightmarish possibility. ■

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Portrayal of Women in Literature in English and Bengali films: A Quest for Converging and Diverging Ideologies

Tamali Neogi

Through a detail thematic analysis of three texts and three Bengali films (not adaptations) which from the aspect of time are linked to three waves of feminism, the author tries to find the paths of convergence and divergence between the ideologies developed in literature and their plausible reflection in Bengali films in relation to the portrayal of women. Interesting is the finding to see that women in Bengali films are portrayed in a more positive mode than in literature in English, which further is supposed to create a 'correct' impression about women, mostly in Bengali society and hopefully nationwide because of its greater reach as a medium.

Key words : literature, film, women, ideologies-converging, diverging

"In general, divergence of readings is more interesting than convergence...."

Jonathan Culler, *The Pursuit of Signs*, 51.

Literature and film do essentially share certain common aspects as both of them are super structures reflecting reality. Not surprisingly, both, the author and the director, at a specific historical period, may share the same goals and ideologies. "Cinema and literature constantly tend both to converge and to diverge, and not only in the case of film adaption" (Ed. Casetti 1999). However, the portrayal of women in cinema and literature is the biggest cliché to be addressed by the feminist literary criticism. Eventually in Indian context (Indian history of feminism traditionally indicates a division into three phases _first phase ranging from 1850s to 1915, the second from 1915 to 1947 and the third one from 1947 onwards), because of variations at the degree of growth, the history of feminism does not always reflect the same parameters of development as maintained in the westernized history of feminism, categorized into first(19th and early 20th century), second(up to 1970s) and third(1980s to 2012)waves. Viewing the portrayal of women in Bengali films and literature in English, the author of the present paper wishes to examine two specific aspects as follow: How do post-independent Bengali films(Bengali talkies got started in 1931 and in different opinion 1934) reflect the attitude of women towards acquiring their rights and moreover

the author aspires to perceive the gap between the global ideologies as developed in literature of certain period and their weird reflection in local Bengali films. Methodology comprises of the selection and critical thematic analysis of consecutively three literary texts and three Bengali films. Primarily these three texts can be regarded as representatives of past three waves of feminism (globally apprehended as first, second and third waves) so far as historicity of these texts are considered. The three texts are *The Glass Menagerie* of Tennessee Williams (1945), *Draupadi* of Mahasweta Devi (1978) and *Bravely Fought the Queen* of Mahesh Dattani (1991). The three most eminent Bengali film directors _ Satyajit Ray, Aparna Sen and Rituparna Ghosh, are selected as the collective consciousness of those three waves of the globalized version of feminist history respectively, get its near reflection in the mature works of the above mentioned filmmakers _the first phase giving way to the second in the works of Satyajit Ray, the second making its way for the third in the films of Mrs. Sen and the third phase in the brilliant films of Rituparno Ghosh. For the present study the selected films are Satyajit Ray's "Mahanagar" (1963), Aparna Sen's "Parama" (1984) and the other being Rituparna Ghosh's "Abohomaan"(2010) . The author proposes first to make in detail the thematic analysis of each duo so that the converging and departing paths relating the insights of the authors and the realities of Bengali societies and their portrayals (particularly that of women) in Bengali films can be discussed towards the end of the paper in a comprehensive manner.

The Glass Menagerie (1945) and "Mahanagar"(1963) is the first pair to be analyzed in detail to examine the portrayal of women in literature and film; the text is written at a time when in America the first wave of feminism was in vogue and 1963 is the year when India first starts taking young steps towards new concepts of women and cinema is made to reflect the society(indiatimes.com). The play reveals the story of Amanda, a mother of two children, who raises them up facing innumerable difficulties because of her financially unstable condition. Having been abandoned by her husband, she now relies upon her son Tom who against his wish of becoming a poet is to work at a warehouse to support his family. For her slightly crippled daughter Laura, Amanda depends upon her son to bring gentleman callers at home and ultimately leaving them in a deep mess, Tom frees himself from the responsibility of supporting these dependent women, following the path of his father. The storyline leads one to infer: 1-Women are dependent on men for their social, economical and emotional well being. Women believe that only a man can take them out of their painful reality. 2- Men are capable to shatter females' dreams. "Glass breaks easily. No matter how careful you are" (86) symbolically shows how fragile women are and to what extent they are incapable of being strong. 3-The women_ Amanda because of her love of childhood memories, fantasies , illusion and Laura for her clinging to the delicately beautiful glass menagerie_ are criticized for their escapism. Women are found to be "weak and unable to move on and adapt to modern realities"(www. ukessays.com 2016). 4- Amanda is further criticized for her traditional gender role assumptions that a boy must earn money and support his family whereas a girl must look beautiful and get married(Indumathi and Umamaheswari 2018). She pushes Laura towards marriage (Amanda says to Laura: "All

pretty girls are a trap and pretty trap and men expect them to be”) (52), which is believed to be only guarantee of a decent life as she is not ready for the business world (Trujillo 2014). 5- Just as unicorns are extinct, Laura seems to be unfit at her present world and the Laura-Jim episode (Jim says to Laura: “Somebody needs to build your confidence up and make you proud instead of shy and turning away and blushing...!”) (88) further manifests the fact that women need men to be their saviors.

The plot of the film “Mahanagar”(1963) is set in Calcutta, during 1950s. The film on the one hand marks the transformation of an urban middle class housewife into a working woman and on the other hand brilliantly captures the morality of middleclass community in its attempts for new adaptations and adjustments in the period of industry and trade taking over the city. The aspects that come into focus follow thus: 1- The dutiful and hardworking nature of a housewife is portrayed thoroughly. Arati takes care of her eight year old son Pintu, husband Subrata and her in-laws without any complaint. 2- The attitude of helpfulness on the part of a housewife is presented. To meet the increasing financial burden on her family that happens to be an orthodox and conservative one, Arati takes up a job as a door to door saleswoman. 3- Male domination through the agency of emotional pressure is realistically presented here. Though Subrata, a low-income group bank employee, initially supports his wife, gradually starts to feel insecure at Arati’s growing confidence and independence and at his diminishing stature of sole bread-winner of the family and withdraws his support till long. 4- The question that arises here is, are male folk justified in their efforts to control their female counterparts, on their wishes and whims? Subrata asks her to quit the job by saying “a woman’s place is in the home”, though before she is able to resign, is allowed to continue with it in a changed scenario. 5- That to the middleclass people the most important thing is honour, is brought into focus through Arati’s father-in-law Priyagopal’s over all attitude, through the episodes with his pupils and through his silent objection to Arati’s job. And a woman seems to be the sole stakeholder of family’s honour. 6. The clash between old generation and new generation is captured amidst all its nuances. 7- That at any cost middleclass morality and integrity should be maintained is brought out brilliantly through Arati’s family members’ attitude towards Edith who symbolically represents the Westernized amoral culture and through the lipstick episode. Subrata can comfortably accept the news that Arati has resigned perhaps seeing it that Arati after all has not lost morality and integrity. 8- Ray ends the film with a positive note that the couple can sustain and would not be lost in anonymity of the big city, if only love shines.

The second pair is that of “Draupadi”(1978) and “Parama” (1984) which seem to be produced under the influence of second wave of feminism. Whether Devi here re-interprets the myth of Draupadi or creates a new myth, is a matter of controversy. Dopdi is an illiterate tribal woman; yet she leads the politicized life amongst all. She is engaged in an armed struggle for the rights and freedom of the tribal people. The points to be noted are: 1- The status and respect women are accorded in tribal society is far superior to that of women in mainstream Hindu society. 2- Finally apprehended by the army, Dopdi(tribal name of

Draupadi) is tortured and raped throughout that night. After the brutalities, Dopdi doesn't complain or wail or behave like a helpless victim. In the morning she simply refuses to put on clothes. She walks naked towards Senanayak, the army chief, in the open daylight, very uplifted and straight. 3-The message of the short story to the author is, women should not view their body as point of weakness but that one of strength as that of Kali. Dopdi uses her "muscularity" by using her 'toned' body as a weapon against the army. Army men rape Dopdi incessantly throughout the night. In the next morning Dopdi converts her body into a revenge body and she successfully uses it as a weapon against the army chief, the agent of torture.

"Parama"(1984), which is said to be the most feministic film of the director, is made to celebrate womanhood and the concept of new, free woman. The story, the script, the symbolic pattern lead the author to the following conclusions:1-Parama is subjected to gender oppression in the familial context; her capabilities in music and her sexual desires are strongly suppressed by her family. 2-In main stream society, in an affluent middleclass family, a woman is respected as goddess till she submits to all its rules and performs all of her roles _in the context of the film, a daughter-in -law, a wife and a mother _in an uncomplaining manner(symbolically presented by the Durga Puja celebration). 3- The film raises the question "are these contexts are enough to define her entire existence to the exclusion of her independent identity?" (Ed. Ghosh and Bose 1996). The film raises another question whether a woman who has so far performed all the roles successfully, has any right to be happy in her own way or not? And most importantly the other question is asked too that is, can a woman at all depend on a man to fulfill herself? The probable answer is 'no' as at the end it no longer matters to Parama whether Rahul who vanishes all of a sudden can be traced or not. The newspaper cutting, containing a report on Rahul's activity is symbolically just blown away in the air and Parama does not try a bit to have a hold on that. 4- The double-standardness of society on gender issue inside home, has been the most significant agenda of second wave feminists worldwide. Whatsoever, the film raises this question as to how a man who continuously mix business with sexual pleasure(be it wife or secretary) and himself occasionally tries to seduce girls (during business trips), can pose such as having high moral standards? Parama significantly confronts her husband with this question: "Didn't you ever commit a mistake?" 5- The condescending attitude of Subhash Chowdhury towards Parama(for instance while he talks with her over telephone, being at the business trip) reminds the author of Trovald Helmer's attitude towards Nora. Isn't it high time that a grown up woman should be taken by her male counterpart not as child-wife but a degree more seriously? 6- The next question that is asked is, whether a woman is only entitled to enjoy as much independence as is permitted by her family members or not? And furthermore, what is independence without economic independence? Parama comes to accept the job of a saleswoman finally, offered to her by her friend Sheela. 7- The film gives a caution that while seeking fulfillment at the outside world, a woman is to remember that it is full of the possibilities of betrayals, "sexual exploitation in the name of liberation"(Ed. Ghosh and Bose 1996). 8- The film even gives a lesson to the patriarchal society that on

account of marriage, a female body cannot be the property of the man involved. 9- More significantly the body autonomy attempted for (what Parama is led to believe very much wrong to try to have) is considered by all the members of her society as the major weakness of her character. But finally Parama converts this weakness into a “triumphant self-awakening”(Mitra 1985) saying “I have no sense of guilt”.

The final pair is that of *Bravely Fought the Queen* (1991) and “Abohomaan”(2010), both written and directed when third wave of feminism has been prevailing. Dattani shows that restricted by society still majority of women cannot speak out. A stereotypical Indian business family is presented here where husbands are busy chasing after money while wives stay at home, lonely, bored and dejected. The play hints towards several important dimensions of women’s existence at upper middle class families in India of not very distant past. The play brings into focus the following facts : 1- Indian women’s identity is dependent upon their husbands. The identity of Lalitha is through her husband as Dolly asks her whose wife she is rather than who she is, at the first act. 2- Women are marginal characters so far as inheritance of properties are considered. Dolly boasts of twin luxurious houses built for the two brothers but feels uncomfortable to the question of Alka and her share in the houses as she knows the uncertainty of their rights in a male dominated society. 3- Society too is responsible for the subordination of women to men. Dolly expects Lalitha to go home. Lalitha is dropped at Dolly’s place by her husband. And though Lalitha is willing to leave, she cannot risk the journey by an auto to her home as there is the fear of crime against women, especially rape. 4- There seems to be no end of suffering for women as the play unfolds the lives of women over three generations. Baa who is tortured by her husband has become a tyrannical mother-in-law in her turn and damages the life of the girl of third generation even, emotionally and physically. 5- The bonsai that Lalitha grows, symbolically represents women whose growths are curtailed in Indian context. 6- While female world is claustrophobic and full of ennui, injustice and torments, the male world is full of business activity, greed, manipulations, lies, secrecy, abuse, violence, alcoholism, adultery and homosexuality. Husband’s apathy, insensibility to their wives’ need for recreation leave the couples quarreling on petty issues. 7-Daksha is a spastic child which implies further that the society itself is paralyzed where women are tortured brutally. 8- The current advertisement of the Trivedi’s business product Re Va Tee shows that a woman exists only for sexual gratification of her husband; women are looked down upon as nothing but objects of sex. 9- Having no economic independence and world of their own, women still do depend on the same men who have made their lives hellish and don’t think twice before making physical assault on them or throwing them out of their house as if they were mere bundles. The playwright points towards the need of women’s self-realization and self-respect. 10- Marriage as an institution is questioned as the play by exposing the reality very truthfully shatters the notion of its being ‘security’ provider to any extent. 11- Boredom, deprivation and frustration often leave women taking resort to flirting with their servants and cooks. Dolly allows Kanhaiah and through this the playwright raises the question whether women who don’t get their requisite love in life have not any right to have extra-marital affairs to get fulfillment

or not? The implicit answer can be easily understood. 12. The point to be noted that in spite of facing inhumanity and disgrace, the women have never thought of leaving the household. They tolerate much and at times to maintain their position and self-respect, they are found to be fighting back staying inside the periphery of family and relationship.

Just before the screening of his film “Abohomaan”(2010) Rituparna says,” One can see more layers in ‘Abohomaan’...”(Ghosh 2010) than his previous film. Beside the issues of filmmaking and complexities of relationships, even at cases maintaining the same equations(Girish Ghosh and Binodini, Aniket and Shikha), prone to be carried over to next generations, the other aspects of the film are as following: 1- Woman, here Dipti, sacrifices her career for the sake of love and relationship. 2- Over generations, men tend to have extra-marital affairs than women. They lie to their wives and get involved in adultery but as soon as the initial phase of charm is over, they do not bother themselves for the fate of the other woman involved. 3- Woman is portrayed as a devoted wife, a dutiful daughter-in-law and a responsible mother. She takes care of her family irrespective of her mental trauma caused by her husband. Even she takes care of the other woman, already forsaken by her husband. 4- Woman prefers to stay within the boundary of family and relationship even having ample reasons to leave those behind. Tolerance is Dipti’s greatest virtue and in a queen like manner she holds her position of ‘Srimati’, the ideal of womanhood that a man wants to see in his beloved.

Aspects of Convergence: In this context when the films discussed are not the adaptations of the texts analyzed and a wide variety of themes are brought into focus, it is very interesting to see the aspects of convergence on the whole. William’s play, though women are not allowed here to explore themselves in the outside world, is embedded with the suggestions that a strong woman never fails. The play’s only message to the feminists is not that to establish gender equality they have a long fight ahead but the play also establishes the superiority of women over men by depicting the truth that when the pressure of hard reality crushes the men, women continue to support the family if not in the one way then in the other; men can break the ties and flee away easily but strong woman like Amanda will never give up. Being abandoned by her husband who was then the only earning member of the family, Amanda was able to raise her children and it hints towards the fact that while deserted by her son, she would once more be able to carry on no matter how deluded she is of her past or what illusions are still there in her mind about her daughter’s marriage. That Amanda in spite of her personal experience, still retains her faith in the social convention called marriage, is something very positive about her as it manifests her faith in humanity. Both of them, Williams and Ray have saluted the indomitable spirit of a woman, be it inside the household or the big world outside. While Dopdi stands for converting weakness into strength, body into weapon, to Parama, happiness attained by bodily pleasure is instrumental to achieve the highest goal of self-realization. Finally Parama is capable to remember the name of the plant which symbolically means that ultimately she is able to understand her true self; both Dopdi and Parama successfully fight back. Towards the end

of the film, Parama is the free, new woman who is afraid of nothing just as the tribal heroine Dopdi. Further, it seems that Indian women, be it Dolly, Alka or Dipti tend to share same feelings for relationships. They do not want to drift apart. And to protect their families from disastrous collapse, they prefer to stay inside the family life and fight till end. Coming to know about Aniket's affair with Shikha, Dipti says to Aniket that though she can easily leave the household, she will not do that and rather she will play the role of 'perfect housewife'. It is rightly observed that in Ghosh's film women are "both submitting to and resisting hegemonic conventions, ...women speak from both within the dominant discourse and from outside it". Ghosh shows how women can "simultaneously symbolize and uphold social value as well as strategically undermine them"(Macdonald2009). It is applicable to the play of Dattani even. At the final act of the play, Jiten says that it does not matter a bit to him if Dolly walks out of the house. In reply what Dolly says is very significant to notice: " Why can't I say just like you?...You know very well I can't walk out on you! You know it" (93). It seems that women particularly are supposed to sustain the patriarchal value system. Alka is repeatedly reproached by others for being outspoken and alcoholic. Dolly is not supposed to challenge her husband on any issue or to discuss familial matters in presence of visitors, particularly when they will reveal the men's brutality against women. Arati, though experiences the changed gender role by becoming the only breadwinner of the family, she is kept under strict vigilance always as society does not permit her to change her age-old value systems. Though her gender role gets changed, she is not allowed to enjoy it. In most of the cases, be it Jiten and Nitin, Subhas Chowdhury or Aniket or Senanayak, men (even at times Subrata and Priyagopal may be included in the list) are portrayed as abusers, attackers, oppressors, offenders and adulterous. To them mostly, women are relegated to the position of mere objects to be possessed. Men exploit women both at home and workplace as it is found in "Mahanagar", *Bravely Fought the Queen*, "Parama" and "Abohomaan". Next, mother-in-laws are mostly found to be tyrannical though having variations in degree. In spite of Dipti's fullest attention to her husband(even after the shock she receives), Dipti's mother-in-law complains that her son is not taken well care of. It seems that Parama's only duty is to continuously tend the in-laws. The question is why does Parama seek her mother-in-law's permission before doing anything? Does anybody among her in-laws, whom she has served so far, support her when she tries to live her own life once? Arati's mother-in-law fans her and makes fuss over her having proper meals, only when her gender role is changed but will she not abruptly withdraw herself soon being aware of it that Arati has resigned? Baa who herself has been tortured by her husband, takes revenge upon her daughter-in-laws, Dolly and Alka. She complains against them, provokes their husbands to become their tormentors; the way she guides her son to beat her daughter-in-law "Jitu, hit her on the face but not on the...on the face, only on the face..."(97) speaks of her shameless attitude of revengefulness (her husband used to hit her on her face ignoring her pleadings).

Aspects of Divergence: Because of the temporal gap between the text and the film in case of each duo, it is not very difficult to find out points of differences as some things come naturally with time. But it remains truly challenging to identify the real aspects of

divergences in relation to womanhood and other ideologies. It is only matter of time that women will gradually come out into outer world to rescue their families financially. But there is a substantial difference in the attitude towards women as reflected in *The Glass Menagerie* and the film “Mahanagar”. That woman is weak to take refuge into the world of fantasy and illusion or tries to get support from delusions/past is contradicted in “Mahanagar” where the woman is to handle the day to day reality efficiently as on it depends the success of the family largely. The reality of a Bengali society is that here a woman sometimes doesn’t even let the male members bothered about the hard realities, shielding the things from them by their love, affection and efficiency. For instance, tea leaves are borrowed by Arati from neighbour to supply the morning tea but it remains beyond the knowledge of the male members of the family. Not only financially, Arati through her devotion and hard labour contributes significantly to sustain the spirit of the family. Mahashweta Devi shows that the concerns of feminism are practised in tribal society for ages. Dopdi fights shoulder to shoulder with her husband to attend societal rights .But mainstream Hindu society is found to be marked by gender inequality and double-standardness as is exposed in “Parama”. The question is does Devi indicate that women can attain their rights vis-à-vis gender equality only in a socialist democratic country? Next Dopdi uses her naked female body in retaliation. But in “Parama” the exhibition of naked body to society causes great shame to everybody and the woman involved is brutally abused for this so much so that she is led to commit suicide. Moreover, after studying *Bravely Fought the Queen* and “Abohomaan”, it seems that education and sophistication cause huge difference in the behavioural modes of male and female members of our society. The cultural difference between a business owning family and a highly sophisticated filmmaker’s family are remarkable to look at. Cultural ambience is largely responsible that some women (Dolly and Alka) have become highly depressed (it should not be overlooked that they are trying to protest and fight for their rights in the final act) whereas Dipti never allows her to sink in alcoholism and depression. She moves on and such is her cultural upbringing and sophistication that she even takes care of Shikha after she is forsaken by Aniket.

From the above study thus the author comprehensively reaches the conclusion that in Bengali films women are portrayed in more favourable light than in literature. Here women are found to be steady, stable, “psychologically strong”, bold and efficient than those of literature. While validating this finding, the author may refer to the observation made by the master filmmaker Satyajit Ray. In an interview while answering the question that whether women are psychologically stronger than men, he says: “Yes, they’re stronger that way.” What he adds further is very interesting to see. He says “I think because they are physically the weaker sex. Some balancing element was needed, so nature made them that way....I am not thinking only of Bengali society, but women in general. Women everywhere, women as a species.” (Sight and Sound upd. 2016). As the reach of films is far greater than literature, hopefully this positive portrayal of women in Bengali films, is to contribute significantly to build the ‘correct’ image of the ‘real’ woman, primarily in Bengali society and at large in Indian society, and thereby is to develop a positive culture nationwide. ■

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War and Romance in Herman Wouk's *The Winds of War* : A Study

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Born in New York into a family of Jewish immigrants from Russia, Herman Wouk (1915-2019) has become one of the most remarkable and distinguished American writers of the twentieth century. He made his debut as a novelist with *Aurora Dawn* (1947) but his Pulitzer Prize winning novel *The Caine Mutiny* (1951) that describes experiences during World War II, brought him wide acclaim. Enjoying a very fruitful life of 103 years, Wouk published his last novel, *The Lawgiver* in 2012. Wouk's ambitious World War II epic-scale war novel *The Winds of War* (1971) is a troublesome and turbulent story of Victor Pug Henry, Rhoda, his wife; Warren and Byron, their sons; and Madeline, their daughter. Pug, an American Naval officer assigned to work in Berlin has to take Rhoda with him unwillingly. Warren marries Janice, daughter of a U.S. Congressman. Madeline marries Hugh Cleveland, but is cheated. Byron falls in love with Natalie, a Jew and marries the girl in Lisbon. Meanwhile, Pug marries Pamela, a British girl whereas Rhoda takes divorce from Pug and loves Palmer Kirby. But after Warren's death, Pug and Rhoda are united. Meanwhile, Aaron Jastrow, Natalie's uncle is captured by the Nazis and killed in the gas chamber at Auschwitz but not before Natalie and her son Louis are saved. Nevertheless, Byron and Natalie are united but after tremendous suffering. Thus, the entire story of the Henrys and those who interact with them is set against the backdrop of World War II. Wouk describes the horrible war and mingles it beautifully with adventure feats turning it into a historical romance. In the novel, all the characters and adventures except historical records are imaginary but the masterly narrative style of Wouk makes the novel worth reading. The paper makes a modest attempt to explore the way Wouk intermingles the historical truth of World War II with fictional characters filling in them the spirit of love and adventure to make it a great piece of historical romance.

Key words: World War II, history, adventure, love, romance, Pug, Auschwitz.

War, as we all know is an age old phenomenon. Etymologically, it is a conflict or fight; a confrontation between two or more individual persons, groups, communities or nations. The New Encyclopaedia Britannica defines it as 'a state or period of armed hostile conflict between states, nations, or groups or the science of warfare or a state of hostility, antagonism, or conflict or a struggle between opposing forces or for a particular goal' (628).

Since the beginnings of civilization, war and literature have existed in a near-symbiotic relation. Many of the world's masterpieces have war as their subject. Some of the literatures have their origins in stories and legends that circulate prior to the written word. Though, it is difficult to trace the origin of war in literature, Homer's account of the Trojan War in his epic, *Iliad* (8c. B.C.) and Virgil's *The Aeneid* (1c. B. C.), an epic poem telling the legendary story of Aeneas, a Trojan who travels to Italy, where he becomes the ancestor of the Romans; are named to be the first war literatures which exhibit the mythology of conflicts between different societies. In Indian culture *The Ramayana* and *The Mahabharata* are the supreme examples of war literatures based on the divine qualities of Ram and humanly and heroic qualities of the Pandavas respectively.). It is reflected in many literary fictions as in Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* (1869) and Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895).

War is perhaps the most interesting, mysterious, and still fascinating of human activities. It engages the minds and imaginations of authors as long as there is written language. It has been virtually incessant during recorded human history, but in this age we are instantly aware of every minor fighting and major encounter around the world. Whether human nature is dynamic or is a constant ratio of qualities; war, with its destructive potential expands to the indefinable limits of technology and thereby becomes a logical metaphor for the plight of a civilized society in the twentieth century.

The Second World War (1939-1945) has been examined in thousands of books and in countless magazine and newspaper articles. It has been widely featured in cinema, TV films and radio broadcasts. In an article, a well known British historian Walter Laqueur writes, 'The Second World War— continues to attract more interest and to provoke more controversy than any other topic' (Laqueur1). At the same time, the events of those days continue to agitate the ordinary people throughout the world. Unlike the disillusionment that characterizes the literature of the First World War, the Second World War literature is neither completely pessimistic nor entirely antiwar. Instead, it presents war in its complexity as a tragic but perhaps inevitable part of the human condition. To add to this, the Second World War Novel shows how the ideological dimensions of novels are aesthetically communicated by fictional strategies, idioms and analogies. The most significant Second World War writers include Norman Mailer, James Jones, John Horne Burns, James Gould Cozzens, John Hawkes, Joseph Heller, John Hersey, Kurt Vonnegut Jr., Herman Wouk, Irwin Shaw, William Styron, and John Steinbeck. The novel of the 1940s becomes heir to disillusionment of First World War and depression of the Second World War. The recorded disillusionment of war novelists is robbed of much of its strength. The novels of the Second World War comprise the most varied category in U.S. war literature.

It would be thus interesting to see how in the 1950s and thereafter the writers see the Second World War from different angles and perspectives. Some of the changes in how writers see Second World War are based on simple distance and the passage of time. As the impact of the war fades, including the immediate feeling of joy, and relief, the deeper

horror of the war's aftermath begin to seep in: the news of the Holocaust, the new technology of mass destruction that begins with Hiroshima, the swift beginnings of the Cold War and the arms race, with periodic crisis such as the Berlin blockade and air lift in 1948. Coming to the war novel of the 1960s, the new war novel is less about the Second World War than about the Holocaust, the Cold War, fear of atomic war, and the War in Vietnam. Many of Second World War novels cover a wide range of human experience. They include stories laid in peacetime barracks, in training camps, at Bomber fields in England, on Navy Vessels patrolling all the oceans etc. They also include firsthand accounts of every major battle from Pearl Harbour to Iwo Jima. Most men in all services accept the war as if an earthquake and try to do their best in the given circumstances. The post 70s American novel shifted its focus from World War II to the Vietnam War as is seen in Tim O' Brien's *Going After Cacciato* (1978); to the 9/11 war on terror as reflected in Don DeLillo's *Falling Man* (2007) with an exception to Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow* (1978) and William Styron's *Sophie's Choice* (1979), the novels that stuck to the horrors of World War II and its turning into business factory. In a way, modern American writers are not short of war material as their own country is feeding them with plenty of it by taking up new wars now and then. That might be one of the reasons why the writers think that World War II is to be left behind.

The novel selected here for analysis is Herman Wouk's *The Winds of War* (1971) that narrates the turbulent and still adventurous war story of the Pug family in which the writer artistically intermingles second world war history with adventure and love story of the fictional characters that makes it a wonderful historical romance.

As far as the depiction of war is concerned, *WW* deals with it only in the concluding chapters with the picture of Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour. However, the minute description of the American and Jewish life prior to America's entry in the War effectively creates the war atmosphere. That is to say, though war hovers at the background followed by the winds, Wouk creates a very life-like and visible picture of the incoming war. In this respect, he makes us feel the devastating flow of the winds of war that has reached the threshold of the world. Wouk takes the war as the theme of his books and he works in the theme of people as though they are a string of pearls on a necklace. In *WW*, Wouk correctly points out in the letter of Pug to Harry Hopkins from Moscow:

I've been through some cruel warfare in the Pacific, but that's mainly a war of professionals. This one is all-out-two entire nations at each other's jugulars (706).

What Pug seems to suggest is that warfare in the Pacific, as well as the two Anglo-American campaigns in North Africa against Rommel is mainly a war of professionals, but the German- Russian conflict was an all-out war of two nations against each other's jugulars. Apart from this, the novel also treats war theme through other aspects such as Love, Need for excitement, Friendship, Sex etc.

Wouk also treats war to make a vibrant show of love; sometimes jubilant, sometimes parting. Wouk treats the love theme on many levels: love between husband and wife as in

case with Victor - Rhoda, Warren - Janice, Byron - Natalie, and to some extent between Madeline - Hugh Cleveland; love between lovers as in case with Pug - Pamela and Rhoda-Palmy Kilber; love between father and son as in case with Victor- Warren; love between mother and daughter as in case with Rhoda- Madeline; love between mother and son as in case with Rhoda- Byron and last but not least love between uncle and niece as in case with Jastrow- Natalie. Yet, all these love relationships do not run smoothly but undergo tremendous tension and develop only with rigorous test. As Pug and his family are at the centre of the sequel, the love relationships among its members catch our attention most. To begin with, Pug and Rhoda have been married twenty five years ago, and though they admit that they are comfortable, it is not true. They catch up in emotions when new love comes their way. Pug is immediately captivated by Pamela. Initially, he thinks that she would be a perfect match for his son Warren and plans to introduce the two but before that, Warren announces his engagement with Janice. It seems that Pug is attracted to Pamela because of her intellect and courage to make a negative comment about Hitler at a table on a German ship. Pug admits that Rhoda is able to capture a man's immediate attention, but complains that she lacks depth. Rhoda claims to have been an almost perfect wife with one minor careless act to Kip Tollever. She admits that she drinks too much and that Kip has her dress off before Madeline wakes, crying. That interruption ends the event, though Rhoda wonders what might have happened. When she meets Palmer Kirby, Pug is away, but Rhoda says that he has been away on other occasions, often for much longer periods of time, and she has never before stayed in this way. She obviously faces a serious decision and based on her letter and phone call to Pug just after the bombing of Pearl Harbour, she cannot decide what to do. After Warren's death, Rhoda in her meeting with Pam in Hollywood cannot trust Pam's proposition that she never slept with Pug and imagines Pam in her place enjoying Pug's company. Apart from this tense and constrained love story of Pug and Rhoda, there are several couples in the sequel who fall in and out of love. The love affair of Pug- Pamela, Byron- Janice and Rhoda- Kirby though look smooth and finely tuned in the initial stage, however create problems and put to test by war torn Europe. Pug considers his love for Pamela as an illusion of war. Though after Warren's death Janice and Byron live together and are attracted towards each other, Byron's conscience prevents him from betraying Natalie. Rhoda loves Pug but is unable to remain faithful to him and so turns to Palmer Kirby, plays game of love with him and then returns to Pug just to take divorce and marry another man. The point to note is that all love relationships in the sequel never bloom in a healthy and enjoyable atmosphere. This obviously shows that very tender and delicate feeling of love gets spoiled as a result of war.

The need for excitement is another aspect through which Wouk treats the war theme. The sequel is filled in with excitement and thrilling acts. This is very much evident in Natalie and Byron's journey to Poland. Natalie is incredibly headstrong and insists on going to Poland though the threat of war seems to make travel dangerous. Byron goes along simply because he wants to be with Natalie. As soon as they arrive in Warsaw, Natalie informs Byron about the debasing life there:

The further east we've come, the smaller the airports have gotten, the more loused up the schedules, the worse the airplanes, the surlier the officials, the cruder the johns, and the rougher the toilet paper. I'm not sure my bottom would survive a trip to Russia (WW 89).

This is what the pair immediately learns about the insecure and unsafe life in Germany invaded Poland. However, once they are on the run from the Germans, Byron finds that he loves being in the dangerous situation. In this way, it can be seen that though the winds of war reach hook and nook of Europe compelling people live under constant fear, time and again the characters in the sequel try to derive excitement out of it.

Next is the aspect of Friendliness. Wouk uses this idea in connection with family and tries to show how fragile this social unit may become on the backdrop of war. This very much becomes apparent when Natalie cannot make up her mind because one decision would endanger the life of Aaron and another might put at risk the life of her newly born child as well her own life. Wouk, however, does not stop at this moment and goes even farther. The whole incident actually takes place in a part of Italy which is governed by the Nazis and the characters being in trouble are of Jewish origin. Yet, in WW, despite the war situations, there develops the friendship bond between Natalie and Rabinovitz which can easily be seen in the following narration:

I'm Avram Rabinovitz. Mrs. Henry, how do you do? He spoke clear English now. ... He went on 'I'm glad you've come. I asked Mr. Rose what other American Jews were left in Rome. It was a great surprise to learn that Dr. Aaron Jastrow was here (885).

Another example for instance, is the marriage of Byron and Natalie that takes place at Lisbon in such haste that:

...Wine, lilies, and roses; the dark sea rolling beyond the windows under a round moon; young lovers separated for half a year, joined on a knife-edge of geography between war and peace, suddenly married, far from home; isolated, making love on a broad hospitable bed, performing secret rites.... such was their wedding night (549).

This shows that the motif of friendship is very apparent in the novel. It is family again and the act of marriage that the motif of love is primarily associated with.

Nevertheless and more importantly, Wouk treats war to elucidate his argument that the novel is a historical romance. In the "Foreword" to the novel, he calls it a 'historical romance' for it combines both fact and fiction together. He also wants to distinguish it from the historical novel. This categorization is important to literary scholars and historians, since unlike the writers of the historical novel, the writers of romance are usually allowed greater liberty in rearranging historical events and engaging in fantasy. In an essay in the *Political Science Quarterly*, Michael Mandelbaum approves of Wouk's labelling the sequel saying, 'World War II is the subject of this 1900- page, two-volume work which falls somewhere between fiction and history' (515). But there is another thing. Being set in

various countries around the world during the period leading up to the bombing of Pearl Harbour by the Japanese; many people, places and events are real and this fact lends credibility to the entire story. For this reason, some readers may have trouble in separating fact from Wouk's fiction. But once again Mandelbaum supports Wouk. Wouk's books, he states: "give more vivid pictures of the principal leaders of the war than military and political history could because "fiction is better than history at showing 'how it really was' where matters of human character are concerned" (517).

As clarified by Wouk, the novel combines factual historical details with fictitious characters. The fact that the novel is set in an actual time period against real events and in real places make the lives of Pug, Byron, and their families seem all the more real. The majority of the historical facts are true. There are details of the historic meeting between world leaders and references to the man behind it all- Adolf Hitler. Yet, these fictitious characters in the sequel look as if real and men from history. One of the reasons for this is Wouk's untiring and in-depth study of the historical figures which he makes life- like in the sequel. For example, the most exciting and tough character to depict is that of Hitler. Wouk prefers others to describe this character. For instance, at the very beginning of WW, Aaron Jastrow describes Hitler: 'He is really a very, very prudent man. If he can make it in Poland without war, he'll do it. Otherwise, he'll not move. Not now. Perhaps in ten years, when he's built Germany up enough' (30). Alistair Tudsbury also examines Hitler in the most succinct manner: 'Yes, here the Germans sit at the heart of Europe... with a hideous roar. It gets a bit unnerving. And now here's Hitler, bringing them to a boil again' (50). Yet, at times, Wouk also makes Hitler speak for himself and about his peace ideology when Churchill, the British Prime minister appeals for peace:

I would do anything for peace. But until the British will to destroy me is itself destroyed, the only road to peace is through German victory. Anything else is irrelevant. I will continue to hope with all my heart for a last minute signal of sanity from the other side, before the holocaust explodes (323-24).

Therefore, it could safely be said that the novel bears the qualities of a historical romance rather than a historical novel.

Here, fiction is better than history at showing what the war really was. The virtue of historical fiction is precisely its capacity to show how great events affect ordinary people as in case with *War and Peace*. However in case with Wouk, he is less artful at romance than he is at history and hence despite accomplishment he cannot be compared to Tolstoy.

Commending Wouk's art of characterisation in the novel, reviewer in *Publisher's Weekly* notes that the fictional characters 'are fully realized, gripping the reader's affection and sympathy. . . . the novel makes a powerful statement about the tragedy and futility of war' (102). Wouk also treats absurdity focusing on political and ideological issues connected with history whilst narrating a fictional story. The novel also shows Wouk's deep concern about the impact of war that devastates the individual life by exposing the way war ruins

the smallest unit of society, i.e. family. In the novel the Henrys are representative of American families whose lives are disrupted by the war and whose heroism in its many forms leads to America's victory.

To sum up, the major strength of the novel is its complex plot and panoramic sweep of the world at war. Wouk's sheer ability to combine fiction into history and thus write a historical romance makes him a classic writer. The words of John Ruskin can be a fitting tribute to Wouk when he says in an article, 'books of all time are true books for the author of a true book says, 'This is the best of me; for the rest, I rest, I ate, and drank, and slept, loved, and hated, like another. . . . That is a "Book" ' (11-14). That is Herman Wouk. ■

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Gender as Presented in Dystopian Films:

A Study of *Mad Max: Fury Road* and *Snowpiercer*

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Dystopian films have recently gained the popularity of young Adults and many researchers. They are no longer disregarded as being unreal and out of the World. The dystopian films today deals with unemployment, wars, political nonsense, temporary governments, so many problems that actively participate in the prevailing melancholy, climate change, racism and global pessimism. The two films studied here *Mad Max: Fury Road* and *Snowpiercer* are movies that show the future evolution of the little errors that spoil our daily lives. In this article, a literary genre, dystopia, has been adapted to the cinema to study the causes of the possible future disaster. Those films can be studied with the greatest pleasure, an exaggeration and an extrapolation of the ills of our world, which tend to facilitate the digestion of our daily adventures. In fact, the definition of dystopia is to imagine a society asking its residents to achieve the happiness they desire among the ruins of our present economic and political framework. Hence the people in those future worlds try to see the light as much as possible. We, the audience find a deep darkness but suddenly we realize our real life takes on its most beautiful elegance.

Key words: Dystopia, Climate Change, Isolation, Gender & Cinema.

Dystopia is a story of the distant future that represents an imagined community where it is so organized as to prevent the audience from being happy. A dystopian story is a story based on future events that are imaginable. This term 'dystopia' includes science fiction but not all science fiction movies can be termed as dystopian movies. Dystopia creates a universe that guides the impulses of our world and therefore must be presented as coherent to the viewer, regardless of the distance between that future and our present, our reality. The expectation that exists with dystopia is based on the small democratic societies in the near future. The happiness that seems to be unattainable is the result of an ideologically harmful institution in the proposed imaginary society. Cinema as a visual element inevitably contributes to the expression of the invented universe. In this representation of the future; the image of our history flows alongwith modern technology. The director unites the past and the future to create a coherent futuristic world. Merriam Webster defines it as an

imaginary place where people lead dehumanized and often frightening lives, beyond their ability to be defined. The future seems to mingle back with the past and our present culture, habits and values are shown to be insignificant and meaningless. For the present study, the movie *Mad Max: Fury Road* and *Snowpiercer* directed by George Miller and Bong Joon-ho is taken up as the text for analysis.

Unlike utopia, dystopia has been established as an independent, literary and, later, cinematic genre. It is no longer just a place or a genre; it becomes a story imagined in a small universe that contributes to happiness. Dystopia is one-sided in the sense that it does not suggest anything positive, a better world, but describes in a completely pessimistic way a society with only one negative value. In this way dystopian works “hit the mark, light the exit to escape that feeling of being controlled, destiny out of your hands stuff, in the big sense as well as small ways”(Campbell20).

Dystopia is thus a genre, a subgenre of science fiction, which represents an imagined society situated in a more or less restricted future, whose pernicious ideology makes it difficult for people to access happiness. It evokes the future as a story of waiting, an imprecise idea of the time from which infinite ideas will appear. Dystopia is therefore a type of complex, because it can always appear with different characteristics and under a new face. This reflects the story that the dystopian tries to tell. Therefore, the generic classification is subject to a certain degree of complexity. Max Rockatansky the central male character in *Mad Max: Road Fury* says in the movie script

“My name is Max. My world is fire and blood ... Once, I was a cop; a road warrior searching for a righteous cause ... As the world fell, each of us in our own way was broken. It was hard to know who was more crazy me or everyone else.” (Miller 00:00:22 – 00:01:06)

These lines defined the dystopian setting in that film as dystopia is defined by its resistance to utopia and, consequently, by the inability of society to produce happiness among its citizens. Based on this premise, dystopia is also called “counter-utopia”. This contradiction between the two sexes is expressed in their ability to make happiness accessible or illusory.

There are factors that guide the genre as an inexhaustible source of stories in visual universes, situations, characters and future environments. The future of several inaccuracies is a rather vague indication of the definition of gender normality. In these two films the universe in which the characters are aesthetically very close to the society we live in. Sometimes, even the imaginary world created, is confused and seems to reflect our past, to return to the old values. And the decoration is the only narrative element that allows you to make this temporarily visible. Gender brings with it a stimulating force that forces the director to create a universe whose context is subject to this complexity of time in matters related to behaviour, dressing and relationships. The study of fundamentally different films here will explain this temporal blurring that is responsible for dystopia, as well as the range of imaginary possibilities that lead to future representative films. As Rosoff says “in a

survivalist love affair, you don't have to worry about having a boyfriend or what clothes you're wearing, because you're saving the world" (63). These completely different approaches are different, unlike universes that a priori have nothing in common, but both are part of the dystopia genre.

The debut of the *Mad Max: Road Fury* in 2015 brought more and more popular press to young adults, which sparked many similar new stories. What that story seem to share is to show readers the consequences of not respecting the planet. Although the movie is further in the future than most others, it still includes all the classic debates and thoughts promoted by dystopian literature in general. The story is inspired by various sources, including dystopian literature of the twentieth century, as well as by the scientists in their binoculars, alternating TV programs and from the Middle East wars. Imperator Furiosa, the protagonist, is generally seen as a strong female character and role model for young adults. Some argue otherwise, because her story ends with Furiosa not being very different from other women who interpret the gender stereotype of care giver and warriors. In *Snowpiercer* the entire world is condensed in a train. Here there aren't any distinguished ranks between genders and there isn't any platform in which one gender is presented as inferior or superior to the other. However, the popularity of the *Mad Max: Road Fury* suggests that readers respond positively to dystopia stories that reject the conventions of the romantic plot that is traditional in dystopian literature of the twentieth century, among others.

The represented universe bears its mark at that moment, both for the interior of the cabins and for the exterior windows that roll through the windows of the train in *Snowpiercer*. The snow cover on the surface of the planet shows horizons we do not know, such as these blocked and blocked gaskets mixed with rubble. The post-apocalyptic landscape talks about the future, this is the question, because that is why the train exists. In addition, the aerodynamic body of the locomotive, a factor that obviously helps maintain its crazy ride, recalls the development of the current train. In a constant search for technological advances that combine fuel speed and efficiency, today's train design makes tomorrow's train a *Snowpiercer* which is thrown into a new ice age. The last survivors live on a train, *Snowpiercer*, which makes the whole world and is destined to never stop. In this futuristic world, a society has been re-created, with a clearly visible hierarchy of class, which a handful of protesters are trying to fight. Our present world too maintains in vestige of its former classifications. However the future class hierarchy is classified by poverty line. Wilford the most powerful leader in *Snowpiercer* says the following lines to Curtis as a justification to the violence and disorder on the train under his leadership

"The population must always be kept in balance... This is the world. The train saved humanity...The engine lasts forever."(Joon-Ho 01:38:54-01:51:11)

He tells Curtis that maintaining the population to a minimum level in the engine is the only thing keeping humanity alive.

In that futuristic world of *Snowpiercer* we follow Curtis, the protagonist, a hero with ambiguous motivations who suggests finding a train crossing, from tail to head. From the beginning of the film, in a context of credits, a series of voices from the television or radio news, it establishes the temporal context in which the action is to take place, but also the reason why the world is there. It all started in 2014, rumors are talking about a “CW7” refrigerant, a revolutionary solution to global warming. This product is released into the atmosphere to effectively reduce temperatures and allow the soil to return to a normal and stable climate. The time that the ellipse gave us was seventeen years later aboard the Snow, where, as another box indicates, the “last survivors of humanity” gathered. The explicit scenario of the credits of opening the film justifies the representation of the future we are facing. However, using a cartoon that accurately articulates the temporal limitations of the past seems to limit the power of dystopia. The hasty nature of this work's hand in hand with a blurry future. If this introduction allows the admission of the post-apocalyptic landscape and the existence of this train in continuous movement, it diminishes its credibility. The initial postulate takes us aboard an extravagant universe far removed from ours. The boundary between mainstream entertainment and the sensitive and informative reflective film is subtle and undermines the weight of the message inherent in the story. The head decorator is here to give the body a delicate futuristic universe. If the world froze, it froze, in *Snowpiercer*.

A starting point for the dystopia of the next film is the belief that material and technological innovations will abolish daily life as we know it and improve every aspect of life. At the end of the nineteenth century this belief was symbolized by the belief in the machine, at the end of the twentieth century it was replaced by the belief in digital technology and later in biotechnology. These films often use the architectural example of modernism to comment on the failure of utopia in a way that coincides with the most widespread criticism of the modern movement: the limits of its rationalism, the absolutism of international style, and the abandonment of history. Popular Greek actor and author Papadopoulos says that it is “...the established modern movement fed the representations of the futuristic sites with city models based on rationality, detached from their geographical location and historical time”(67).

The fantasy of control over our lives in these two films, the planning and planning of our future and the search for a better life beyond any moral dilemma is the present of our future. The forced happiness in “Brave New World”, the self-realization achieved through professional success, the desperate search for eternal youth, the human relationships based on market conditions, the realization of dreams through a screen instead of the other are the elements that make up the dystopia of our Utopia. .

To conclude, dystopia is an imaginary society in which drastic rules impede access to freedom and individual development. Therefore dystopian films appear as a society which aims at controlling the population by establishing a controlled happiness. Dystopia is the failure of the society of happiness; the defeat of the utopian leaders who could not transmit their happiness to the mass population. The comparison between *Mad Max: Road*

Fury and *Snowpiercer* revealed an orderly chaos that is shown to have evolved from our present times. The condition of women and the strategies of governing shown in these two films are nothing but a refinement and sharpening of the way things were in the early 21st Century. Our history in the future is shown recorded in digital wares and in oral tale just as our forefathers use to record history in monuments and in their hearts. *Snowpiercer* is a world after the global cooling process had failed to tackle the problem of global warming. The cold future is death itself: a dystopia. Also in *Mad Max: Road Fury* we see a kind of isolation where people are not supposed to cross borders into another's territory. The isolation is a kind of never ending prison in those future desert lands. The audience can form their own epilogues that dystopian societies would end someday in the journey towards utopian society. Both these two films give a warning; they show the viewers what the consequences are if they don't care the planet. The collapse of the world market is clearly visible. These two films also challenge general ideas about capitalism and gender ideologies; sexual differences that doesn't help much in the survival in a dystopian society. For all these and many more which aren't studied here; these two dystopian films have become popular and are still trending ever since they were released. Everything is changed into a different form of developed world. ■

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Race and Resistance in Maryse Conde's, *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem* : A Study

Rupasree Dutta

The term 'race' refers to groups of people who possess certain specific biological traits which either assimilates or differentiates them from other groups of people. In western countries, the color of the skin plays an important role to fix the racial identity. On the basis of skin color, there are two distinctive races- the Whites and the Blacks; the differences are not only socio-politically apparent but also significant from the point of view of literature. Race is a frequent occurrence in Maryse Condé's oeuvre. Her characters often witness the turbulences of race, and in due course, they make themselves capable of screaming out in resistance. This article is an attempt to study how Maryse Condé deals with the issue of 'race' in *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*; and how Tituba, the female protagonist debunks the very concept of race through her actions throughout her life in a white dominated postcolonial society.

Key words: Race, Resistance, Difference & Defiance.

Maryse Condé, the recipient of *The New Literary Prize* in Literature in 2018, is a remarkable name in French Caribbean literature. She started her literary career at the age of 11 with her first novel *Hérémakhonon* (1976) where she depicted the plight of a young West Indian woman who quests for roots. This is the quest found in the novelist Maryse Condé, too, by virtue of her being born in Guadeloupe and latter being settled in USA. Maryse Condé writes in French. Her works are translated into English mostly by Richard Philcox who is also her husband. Race is a frequent occurrence in Maryse Condé's oeuvre. Her characters often witness the turbulences of race; Black protagonists are the victims of racial discrimination, and gradually these female Black protagonists make themselves capable to scream out in resistance. *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem* is the novel by Maryse Condé which was published in French in 1986 and it was translated into English by Richard Philcox. The novel expands on the true story of the West Indian slave Tituba, who was accused of witchcraft in Salem, Massachusetts. Maryse Condé brings Tituba out of historical silence and makes her a female hero by giving her a fictional childhood, adolescence, and old age. In other words, Condé retells history to give a voice to her black protagonist.

The term 'race' refers to groups of people who possess certain specific biological traits which either assimilates or differentiates them from other groups of people. Such biological traits are considered to be socially significant as they determine the position of a

particular race in the society. The color of the skin plays an important role to fix the racial identity mostly in western countries. Thus, on the basis of skin color, there are two distinctive races- the Whites and the Blacks. Significantly, in western countries, the 'white' is the color of the colonizers and 'black' happens to be the colour of the colonized. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in "Can the Subaltern Speak?" talks about the construction of subject position of the colonized subaltern none other than the colonized among the colonized, marginalized among the marginalized; and rightly points out that the colonizers do not understand the nuances of local, native culture of the colonized for which they misrepresent and misinterpret the colonized subject. This is all about the politics of misrepresentation and misinterpretation by the European colonizers that not only constructs the subject position but also gives birth to the question 'can the subaltern speak?'.

Although identity is a complex term and there are various determinants of identity, race contributes to shape identities. Race or racial identity is deep-rooted in history and culture as the very core of political identity and sensibility. Racism is a lens through which people not only interpret but also naturalize and reproduce inequality.

The study of race prominently started in mid 1980s as a major concern in social, political and cultural theory. Race theories deal with the intricate questions of geographical, social and emotional belongingness. Issues of citizenship, affiliation, welfare and empowerment are certain other issues that race theories tackle along with discrimination, exclusion and oppression. Therefore, reading race means to read texts to find out the social roles and political significance of a racial and ethnic identity. Such studies may further be enhanced with a study of the resistance and 'counter attack' of the oppressed against an age old tradition. It can be said that rather than a critical theory, critical race theories are a set of critical policies that examine and further scrutinize the issues of race and ethnicity.

In *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*, Tituba gives us an account of an entire history of oppression, but significantly Tituba emerges every time as an individual sensitive towards her feelings, desires and actions. More than a rebel, she is a voice in defiance. In the Afterword to *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*, Maryse Condé mentions,

"Writing Tituba was an opportunity to express my feelings about present-day America. I wanted to imply that in terms of narrow-mindedness, hypocrisy, and racism, little has changed since the days of Puritans"(203).

In the same interview she further says,

"Every black person living in America will tell you that racism still exists. A few success stories that are told over and over again for propaganda reasons must not hide the fact that for the majority of the blacks, life is still hell"(203).

The title of the novel unveils the racial theme and introduces the readers to the black race and makes them ready to explore the excitement to be found in the life of a black witch called Tituba. The original French title of the novel is *Moi, Tituba, sorciere...noire de*

Salem. ‘Noire’ means black. The binary is already established. The name of the protagonist Tituba is not a name common among the Ashantis, and it might have been invented by Yayo, another slave.

Tituba is the unwanted product of a rape. Her mother was raped on the ship named ‘Christ the King’. The name of the ship and its association with Christ is ironical. Christ is regarded as the saviour of human race, but Black Abena was not rescued but tormented in a place which is, indirectly although, related to Christ. Isn’t it a deliberate attempt of Maryse Condé to suggest that even Christ is partial? Christ or the mercy of Christ is not same for each and everyone. Christ, too, cannot escape from being accused of racial discrimination. Religion apart, can’t it be accepted that a difference between the Whites and Blacks has been established here that reflects the overall subjugation of the Blacks in the society? When Tituba declares that she is born out of ‘aggression’, ‘hatred’ and ‘contempt’, a conscious reader cannot help but to relate the words and feelings to the ‘aggression’, ‘hatred’ and ‘contempt’ faced by the Blacks in a postcolonial White dominated society.

Condé describes Abena as “beautiful with her jet black skin”(3). When she was pregnant with Tituba and punished to stay with Yayo, he becomes empathetic because they share the same skin colour, physical attraction comes much later. Abena knows that she is doubly marginalized for being Black and also as a woman, and so she wants her baby to be a ‘boy’. A rebel lives in Abena. She could not save her from being raped, but she is not ready to be the victim twice. When Darnell calls her to fulfill his desire, she doesn’t dare to take the life of Darnell. Little Tituba experiences one more instance of racism, brutality and torture. This time the victim is reversed. Her mother is hanged in front of her. The impact remains so deep that Tituba repeatedly mentions the brutal act in the narrative.

Tituba’s life takes a new turn after this incident. She has lost the company of Yayo, Mama Yaya takes the charge of her life, teaches her the secrets of herbs, and gradually she steps in the world of supernaturals. Tituba is powerless in real life as a daughter of a black rebel, but the world beyond perception has empowered her. As a young girl she is attracted towards John Indian, a slave, and decides to live with him thereby accepting slavery. John Indian is a true slave and never thinks of going against slavery. But Tituba becomes restless by witnessing such acts, she becomes angry, her blood gets boiled within her, she refuses to behave like John Indian and his friends. This is resistance on the part of Tituba, her mother’s sacrifices made her conscious of her race and role.

Racism is taught to the White children since childhood whereas the Black children are victimized at an early age. Such behavioural change is prominent in the behavior of Betsy Parris and Abigail Williams. Abigail becomes a racist with enough scorn and disdain towards the Blacks in general and Tituba in particular. Betsy is soft cornered just like her mother who as woman stands in solidarity with Tituba, but eventually becomes a racist to accuse Tituba even if both of them share mutual love and affection. Tituba is unable to tolerate when Samuel Parris asks her to confess by saying,

“I know that the colour of your skin is the sign of your damnation, but as long as you are under my roof you will behave as Christians. Come and say your prayers!” (41).

In a “firm voice”(41) Tituba affirms, “Why should I confess? What goes on in my head and my heart is my business” (41). Samuel Parris assaults her in return and even strikes his wife when she tries to support Tituba. It is interesting to see the use of the pronoun “we”(43) as Tituba feels an association with Samuel Parris’s wife however transient it may be. “Children of Africa”(44) are destined to pay “their tribute to misfortune”(44), it is the misfortune for which Tituba is addressed by Abigail as “poor, ignorant Negress”(44) as if it is the prelude to her long days of torment and torture as a black witch of Salem.

Tituba realizes that they are regarded as the “messengers of Satan”(65) in White men’s world that does not permit happiness in motherhood for a slave. She takes the decision to abort her child. Tituba knows that she cannot change the world at one stroke, but restricting her child’s entry into this world is the only thing that she could do to deny the effects of racism. She wants to revolt against her fate, questions the creation of the black race; eventually becomes a defiant, “In my helplessness and despair I started to think about revenge. But how? I devised schemes that I would reject at dawn, to start reconsidering them at dusk. I lost my appetite”(66).

Such realizations have made Tituba so matured that when she came out of the prison she describes her freedom as a “misfortune to be born twice”(122).She also realizes that this freedom has no meaning if her own people are living in bondage. Exploitation in the name of race is further intensified in *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem* with instances of sexual harassment. Tituba is an exception here as her partners are always either chosen or rejected by her. She is not simply an example of tolerance, but, actually, a living example of defiance. Although she becomes a maroon, she knows the futility of many actions already undertaken. The words of Mama Yaya gives voice to Tituba’s realization, “You talk about freedom. Have you any idea what it means?” (162).The next generation thinks and acts differently. They are more practical and believe in action although there is no end to the misfortune of black people. This is the eternal misfortune of the black race that has been continuing since colonization. Providing scope for metafiction, Condé poses the question to the readers,

“Do I have to go on to the end? Hasn’t the reader already guessed what is going to happen? So predictable, so easily predictable! And then by telling it, I shall be reliving my suffering over and over again. And must I suffer twice?” (166)

Tituba suffers by virtue of being Black; but, as a woman, she suffers more than John Indian. Continuing her resistance through Iphigene, Tituba opines, “What does it matter! The important thing is to have tried and to have refused the fatalism of misfortune!” (169). The protest pops up even after her death when she hopes for better time, “But I know, too, that there will be an end to all this” (178). One question still remains unanswered ‘when’.

In a 1992 interview conducted by Ann Armstrong Scarboro, Maryse Condé clarifies her

understanding of Tituba as primarily a creation of her own imagination who speaks more to contemporary readers and contexts than to historical ones. This is the biography of the fictional character created by Condé who narrates Condé's novel, not the biography of the historical person accused of witchcraft in Salem in 1692. Throughout the novel, the racial theme and attempts of defiance prevail. Condé accepts the challenge of history when it nullifies any history to a black woman except the account of colonization. But the same person is extremely sexualized. Her race is not an obstacle to sexuality. Hoodoo, merged with her race has given the protagonist a racial identity that she invariably tries to assert through numerous screaming of resistance. ■

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Crossing Patriarchal Threshold in Shashi Deshpande's *Roots and Shadows*

Riazul Hoque

In Indian tradition, the wife is known as 'Ardhangini' which emphasizes her equality and oneness with the husband. Despite this ideal concept of marriage, it often proves to be a trap for a woman that negates her rights to individuality, independence and self-realization. When a woman suffers from identity crisis she often crosses patriarchal threshold in order to create her own space. In Shashi Deshpande's *Roots and Shadows*, the protagonist Indu faces a crisis in her marital relationship and has to traverse the arduous and thorny road of self-exploration before she is at peace with herself. This paper is a humble attempt to show how the protagonist crosses and transgresses the periphery of the rigid patriarchy for the sake of identity when she feels subdued and marginalized in the society.

Key words: Patriarchy, suppression, womanhood, feminism, modernity.

The male-dominated patriarchal society keeps women in the periphery of the boundary adopting various strategies in order to perpetuate its hegemony. Conventionally and culturally they are to be confined within the four walls of their houses. So they are supposed not to break the periphery of the designated line. But with the rise of feminism, the ground beneath women's feet has extended to a large extent. An increasing awareness of injustice, subjugation done to them slowly makes women raise their voice against the patriarchal dominance. Consequently women have in recent times made endeavours to set them free from the boundary of patriarchy. Now women have crossed the patriarchal threshold which they are not supposed to do irrespective of the proverb "As ye sow, ye shall reap". In this context, Seema Suneel in her scholarly article "Emergence of New Women in Indian Fiction" observes:

This awakening among the feminist and women writers has helped them to project in their writing the image of a new woman. In such times, when radical change is going on all over the country,.....and determining the parameters so as to become an integral part of family and society, striking a true balance between extreme feminism and the conventional role of subjugation and self-denial. (Suneel 220)

Sudhir Kakar points out in his essay, "Feminine Identity in India", that "Getting along with other women in this sphere, learning the mandatory skills of householding, cooking and childcare, establishing her place in this primary world : these relationships and these tasks constitute the dailiness of girlhood in India" (Ghadially 50).

Gerda Lerner opines, patriarchy "means the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of male dominance over women in society in general. It implies that men hold power in all the important institutions of society and that women are deprived of access to such power" (Lerner 239). For a woman to be autonomous and independent, it is necessary for her to be enlightened as well as liberated. As Simone de Beauvoir rightly observes:

The mother's relation with her children takes from within the totality of her life, it depends upon her relation with her husband, her past, her occupation, herself. (Beauvoir 537).

Feminists emphatically insist on the importance of women becoming "aware" of themselves as individuals and shaping their own destinies by assertiveness and self-confidence and use the term "feminist consciousness" or "consciousness raising" in this context.. Juliet Mitchell defines consciousness raising as "the process of transforming the hidden, individual fears of women into a shared awareness of the meaning of them as social problems, the release of anger, anxiety, the struggle of proclaiming the painful and transforming it into the political" (Mitchell 61). While the traditional- minded women accept their false conditioning into sub-ordination and dependence without demur, the sensitive and awakened women realize the need for individuality and revolt against the established norms.

This paper is formulated with the help of Postcolonial feminist theory using comparative and analytical methods. The paper is a literary work using primary and secondary sources. The secondary sources are based on library resources like reference books, scholarly journal and internet also. The subject matter of this paper is analyzed in the perspective of feminist theories put forward by feminist critics like Simon de Beauvoir, Kate Millet, Gerda Lerner, Juliet Mitchell etc.

The main protagonist of *Roots and Shadows* is Indu. She takes a lot of pain to safeguard her identity and her individuality. She, like any modern Indian woman oscillates between tradition and modernity, acceptance and rejection, flexibility and rigidity, fantasy and reality and above all, revolt and compromise. She strives to find her real 'self' but is deprived in many ways. Her journey for finding her 'self' brings from her parental house which she leaves to become free and independent. For finding her roots, she abandons her house which bears her roots. Being an educated woman, she has her own belief and convictions. Indu revolts against the tradition of the society and marries a person, Jayant whom she herself chooses. Being tied up in marriage with Jayant, Indu realizes that it is because of Jayant that her life bears some meaning in one sense and also meaningless in another sense. She wonders why she is trying to please him all the time, "Have I become

fluid with no shape, no form of my own” (49). She has sworn never to conform to the concept of the ideal woman as represented by her aunts and other tradition-oriented female relatives. The traditional rituals performed by her orthodox female relatives in order to put safety and long life for their husbands are ridiculed by Indu. Consequently, she takes determination never to perform such self-affecting rituals that justify her existence only in relation with a man. Right from the beginning of marriage, she takes Jayant as a modern out-looking and progressive person but she is deceived and disillusioned finally. She finds that her marriage has deprived her from human needs. It has de-generated her physically and spiritually. Her marriage with Jayant has made her feel that she has misused the sanctity of her body. In this connection, Michael Foucault rightly observes:

Power relations are dependent upon a number of deftly-designed strategies: most important role of these strategies is the tendency on the part of the dominant to ceaselessly refuse to acknowledge the dominated subject's separate identity and the dominant power structures constantly strives to drive a wedge between the oppressed of about to be oppressed individual and community group, gender or class to which she belongs. (Foucault 125)

To her great surprise and shock, Indu finds that Jayant has not only expected her to submit but has taken her submission for granted and she also, without being aware of it, submits herself to him step by step. She recollects her days of childhood and adolescence in a very disdain mood in the novel. She does not forget how she is hated during her period of menstruation as an unclean object. The traumatic experience of Indu, develops a sense of an aversion to the natural biological development and function of a woman which later on culminates in her apathy towards giving birth to a child. She feels that her womanhood will pose a great threat in her completeness and independence. Simone de Beauvoir in her pivotal work *The Second Sex* says: “For an adolescent girl, her first menstruation reveals this meaning and her feelings of shame appear” (Beauvoir 335).

But Indu rebels against the social patriarchal set up created by men. In order to be free and independent, Indu marries Jayant of different caste with her own choice. But the marriage proves to be a failure for Indu. She gradually realizes that her decision to marry Jayant was a wrong one. She feels that her marriage with Jayant denies her from freedom, fullness and satisfaction. So, Indu returns to her ancestral house and starts suffering untold miseries and suppression under the patriarchal cover. Thus during her early life, Indu breaks the patriarchal norms of marriage whereby she is not allowed to break marital relation under Indian patriarchy.

Indu is totally fed up with the dos and don'ts of the society. She refuses to be a mother of child, though she acknowledges the truth of the maternal instinct. She does not welcome a child wholeheartedly. Her non-real marriage and non-real love makes her feel trapped in a negative situation. Female sexuality is feared as a threat which undermines a woman's own honour and that of her family. Religious tenets and cultural ethics have

always emphasized the child- bearing function of woman and condemned her pursuit of sexual pleasure. Woman is therefore, enforced to be sexually passive and submissive even towards her own spouse and a quested for sexual satisfaction, woman is not ethically accepted. Finding her sexual personality suppressed within her marital relationship, Indu tries for expression and acceptance through an extramarital affair with her cousin Naren. Her affair with Naren becomes a metaphor for Indu's rebellion against Jayant's humiliation of her for being the initiator in their sexual relationship. She boldly expresses:

I can go back and lie on my bed..... I didn't need to erase anything I have done, I told myself in a fit of bravado. (152)

This bold assertion of her has sparked off contradictory statements. In the words of P. Rama Moorthy: "This sheds a brilliant light on Indu's awareness of her autonomy and her realization that she is a being, and not a dependent on Jayant" (Moorthy 124). Indu crosses and transgresses the patriarchal norms in order to assert her independence and completeness. Breaking of Indian patriarchy is somewhat strange to the people who strongly believe in strong bond of husband and wife. Here we find Shashi Deshpande's modern views of feminism which is against the tradition of Manu, law giver of Hindu. Manu observes in 'Manu Smriti' that wife is not supposed to develop extra-marital relation with another person. Rather she must be loyal, devoted and committed to her husband. She should never think of another man even after the death of her husband. Husband should be worshipped by a wife like a God though he may be a person of loose character. A disobedient and bad wife may be discarded at any time but husband must be worshipped. A husband can marry after the death of his wife but a wife cannot marry again. So, in such a portrayal of Indian patriarchy and feminism, Indu clearly crosses the patriarchal threshold by entering into physical relationship with Naren. Whatsoever, the affair acts as a catharsis and frees her of self-imposed limits. Having purged herself of the feelings of guilt and shame towards Jayant, she decides that she will no longer try to deceive him nor to hide her true self from him in order to make herself more acceptable and lovable to him. Through this resolution, she learns to liberate herself and rid herself of her complexes. She resolves to speak out, to stand up for herself.

It can be concluded that an increasing awareness of injustice, subjugation done to them slowly makes women raise their voice against the patriarchal dominance. Consequently women have in recent times made endeavors to set them free from the boundary of patriarchy. Due to some societal norms such as customs, traditions, and culture women struggle in gaining their individuality. Consequently they rebel and go beyond the boundary of femininity and try to establish that they are also human beings. Shashi Deshpande seems to be saying that it is the women themselves who have to exert and come out of the mire of patriarchal oppression, to emerge as individuals and as human beings in their own right. More than any one else, the educated Indian woman must do it so that she can light the path for her daughters. That seems to be Deshpande's vision of the future. Together Deshpande's women represent the new, collective voice of dynamic young women who are not going to lead circumscribed lives. ■

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Treatment of Love, Liberty and Sexuality in Kamala Das's Poetry: A Study

Satya Sundar Samanta

Kamala Das is a frank and confessional poet of India. Her poems enunciate feministic outlook towards life. She articulates women's carving for love and liberty in the midst of pains, anguish, loneliness and sufferings. She desires to outstrip the limitations being a woman and the boundaries imposed upon women by the male dominated society. The intense expression of the patriarchal urge to dominate and exploit over women is apparently the matter of her poetic vision. This article purports to establish Kamala Das's perception of love, liberty and sexuality in this humdrum life.

Key words: Anguish, confessional, liberty, outstrip

Kamala Das (Madhavikutty) is undoubtedly one of the greatest confessional poets of Indian sub-continent like Sylvia Plath of America. She has championed the plights of the down-trodden women at the lower strata of the society and their psychic distemper. She is well-known for trying to generate universal womanhood. Being a woman and a wife she has gained many direct experiences in her contemporary male dominated society. Desires for love, peace, freedom and aptitudes for mental happiness are the basic elements in her desperate quest for female identity. Like Sylvia Plath, Audre Lorde, Adrienne Rich, Mina Lot, Margaret Atwood, Carolyn Kiser, Olga Broumas, Sandra Gilbert, Dorothy Hewett, Nellie Wong, Kamala Das valiantly reveals feminist aspects and opinions in her poems.

Kamala Das is forthright discussing her auto-biographical elements, specially love and sex. She is unquestionably celebrated for her daring treatments of the non-artificial quest for liberty and love. Being a woman she is longing for a society free from deceitful love and emancipation from the burden like limitations imposed upon women by the male-occupied system. Again she is so outspoken that she confesses her own sexuality. She explicitly refers to her conjecture sex by such phrases 'my limbs, swelled', 'one or two places sprouted hair', 'my pubis'. She is cleansed and simple like other cultured and enlightened women. She confesses 'as I am every woman who seeks love'. Again she says 'in me ... Ocean's tireless waiting'. She is discontented with the lists of male. She remarks on her husband that 'in him ... the hungry haste of rivers'. Her umbrage is revealed in the line 'But my sad woman-body felt so beaten'. Her concept of love, liberty and sexuality is

enunciated in her well known poems like “An Introduction” , “Summer in Calcutta”, “The Old Playhouse”, “A widow’s Lament” etc. Such poems are regarded to her personal manifestos. In such poems we find a strong contrast between emotional feelings and sexual lust. This sharp contrast is well-manifested in the lines of her debut poem “An Introduction” -

“He did not beat me.
But my sad woman-body felt so beaten.”

She is not a politician, not even connected with politics. She does not have any carving for power and dominance, but a profound appetite for love and freedom. Like many other Indian women she possesses simple heart which desires love. As she says in her poem “An Introduction” - ‘I asked for love’. She has a thirst, hunger, carving for love or emotional satisfaction. On the other hand, her husband has no emotional feelings but only male desires. As she confesses - ‘ he drew a youth of sixteen into the bedroom and closed the door’.

Being unloved Kamala Das’s mental state becomes frail and weak. As she says in “Summer in Calcutta” - ‘like a bride’s nervous smile’. She remembers her past happiness of the childhood when she enjoyed endless mirth and freedom in her another famous poem “The Old Playhouse”. Her feminist outlook is expressed with self assertions in the poem “A widow’s Lament”. -

“My man, my sons,
forming the axis While
I, wife and mother
Insignificant as a fly
Climbed the glass
panes of their eyes.”

In this poem she artistically sketches the bitter and helpless, sad and melancholy state of an Indian widow. A widow does not get honour and dignity, love and significance but she faces deprivation and lovelessness. In spite of being a woman and a mother in Indian society she is brought up in the male-dominated society where ‘A woman worried by compromise’. Kamala Das also revolts against the attitudes of the male-dominated society towards women. Being a victim of male-desire, she felt pain. Her unforgettable sexual images like ‘my sad woman-body’, ‘weight of my breasts and womb’ express her honest confessional attitude. The Indian Sylvia Plath openly admits that without emotional feelings or love the dry sexuality and the lust of her husband become pains and aches to her. She feels that she is ‘betrayed’. In spite of her sincere love for her husband, she feels emptiness in her heart, loneliness in her women soul either in day or in night, either in the room or outside. As she says in “An Introduction”:

‘It is I who drink lonely
Drinks at twelve, midnight’.

Kamala Das has drawn various images from the human body as the elemental components and raw materials for her poems. Such physical images take significant role in formation

and establishment of her feminism, her idea of love and sexuality. She is undoubtedly a feminine critic who has raised her voice against masculine views. She has sharply criticised manly outlook with the elements connecting with her body.

In her famous poem “An introduction” Kamala Das confesses:

“ He did not beat me.

But my sad woman-body felt so beaten.

The weight of my breasts and womb crushed me.”

She further says:

“ I was child, and later they

Told me I grew, for I become tall, my limbs

Swelled and one or two places sprouted hair. When

I asked for love, not knowing what else to ask

For, he drew a youth of sixteen into the

Bedroom and closed the door.”

In another well-known poem “Looking Glass”, Kamala Das mentions:

‘Gift him all, what makes you woman; the scent of long hair, the musk of sweat between the breasts; The warm shock of menstrual blood, and all your endless female hungers.’

In “Summer in Calcutta” she says:

“What noble

Venom flows through

My veins”

And

“Like a bird’s

Nervous smile and meet

My lips.”

In another poem “Nani” she writes:

“In life, like music in the koel’s egg,

Like lust in blood, or like aap in a tree.”

Kamala Das voices her protest against the oppression of male over female. Through her auto-biographical elements she has been able to establish herself as a female critic. She struggles against the views of male sexuality towards female sexuality. Her autobiography “My Story” has been regarded by many as the honest approach in this perspective. Here the poet and critic has successfully enunciated her happy childhood, her age of youth, her concept and attitude towards sexuality, her desperate craving for love, her disappointment and frustration of married life and her external love relationship beyond the bounds of matrimony. Being a woman she has direct manifold experiences in life. She passes mirthful childhood, stage of adolescence, unhappy marital life and even coming in the old stage of eventful life. In her youth she has ‘endless female hungers’ or profound craving for sexuality.

She has much more attraction for homosexuality. She also confesses that her husband has also carving for homosexuality with his friends.

Kamala Das has her own ideology or principles of womanliness. She considers that the ongoing conception of womanliness is molded by the male-dominated society where there is no freedom, no honour, no dignity and no power for women. She revolts against such concepts and systems. She strictly avoids such traditional ways and manners imposed on women by men.

In “An Introduction” she says:

“I wore a shirt and my

Brother’s trousers, cut my hairs short and ignored

My womanliness.”

She engages herself in love relationship with another man neglecting the conventional laws and principles of matrimony. It may be illegitimate in the perspective of the then Indian society, she doesn’t care. However, Kamala Das’s poems are Indian but they have strong universal appeals. She struggles a lot to show womanliness with universality as if she presents the questions relating to women of the whole world connecting with love, Liberty and sexuality. Thus, her concept of feminism is profoundly connected with love, liberty and sexuality. ■

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Poetry as a Path to Self-Discovery: A Perspective on Jayanta Mahapatra's Poetry

Sushree Pallavi

Jayanta Mahapatra is, without doubt, one of the greatest Indian English poets of our time. His poetry has remained a space configure hand-in-hand, where the bipolar entities: self and other. Poetry for this poet has remained his mother. It has given birth to him. In the process of writing poetry, Mahapatra has come to discover his own self. Side by side, it helps him to link with the extraneous world – the world to which he calls his ‘other self.’ His poetry exemplifies peculiar blending of two apparently contradictory worlds: the inner world of the subject and the outer one of objective reality. The concern with this paper is to shed some lights on the subjective dimension of Mahapatra's poetics as well as poetry.

Key Words: self, subjectivity, self-discovery, other, world

To be a poet is a condition, not a profession..... Robert Graves.
poetry, for me, helps one in finding oneself. ...Jayanta Mahapatra

Expression of intuitive feeling with an imaginative awareness through a convenient language is the sign of a skilful poet. The poetry produced in this process turns to be the aesthetics of the soul. Jayanta Mahapatra, the veteran Indian English poet is at his best in producing this sort of poetry. One very striking feature of Mahapatra's poetry, accordingly has emerged to be an astoundingly personal tinge as well as intonation. The vast trajectory of his poetry is based in fact, on an untiringly ongoing enterprise of self-expression or self-projection. The involved exercise on the part of the poet, both on its imaginative and psychic plane, has remained an incessant exercise of grappling with his own ‘self.’ In one of his memoirs titled “Freedom as Poetry” Mahapatra has stated,

Poetry is the stranger within oneself – the man inside one is unaware of, and the poet is almost always in the quest of finding this other one (Mahapatra, 2007, 4).

This is not simply a stray impression with Mahapatra. It is rather his firm poetic conviction. Both in his poetry as well as essays and memoirs, he has reiterated this conviction. In another essay titled “Stranger than Brothers” he has firmly stated, “poetry, for me, helps one in finding oneself” (2007, 148).

For Mahapatra word structures have dynamic interpretations. Precisely, with a controlled temperament he expresses his emotive imaginations, with an in-depth logical sequence in his

poetry. Invocation of idea is in fact a process of his poetic persona. Mahapatra narrates his live experience in his compositions with prolific personal imaginaries binding the readers under a colossal effect of nativity, culture and psychoanalysis. A serene writing style that could be relatable for each reader is his forte. The objectivity of any societal scenario gets a subjective outlook as it is impossible on Mahapatra's part not to brood over that sensitively. His keen eyes on every distinctive matter of his native land are quite commendable.

From the position of a student of Science to a poet of incredible calibre and creativity, Jayanta Mahapatra's career is expressive of a journey of uncommon psychological turmoil and creative contemplation. His creative process has further strengthened through his voracious reading and perceptible virtual grasping of his environment. As he says, "I suppose my own writing began then, in my imagination"(2007, 147). Availing the soulful private emotion a satisfactory language, is of course a tedious job. A process that has imagined out of his practical learning and childhood pathos.

But he enjoys the idiomatic status of a modernist. His engaging of private emotions with the occurrences of peripheral materialistic surrounding bestows his narration a modernistic effect. Poetry opens a wide extended skyline to get the real accomplishment. For that, silence becomes his potent medium for insemination of the raw emotions as images. Mostly, silence is his real poetic voice. Also, without any flux he keeps his identity as an Odia and then Indian poet intact, and links each of his subjective emotions to the objective observations and memories of his land. Bruce King has aptly observed on Mahapatra as well as Arvind Krishna Mehrotra, "Mehrotra and Mahapatra, early in their career, appear to have viewed the poem as object, a structure of images, but in differing ways have increasingly been concerned with the need to bring to the poem's surface the observations, memoirs, doubts, and other personal experiences which are the source material of the imagination"(King, 2001, 183). Material world might become a matter of reference for Mahapatra but his prime focus remains on the self and psychological quotient on feelings. In search of ultimate truth and contentment, books helped his sense a lot. The impact of his external reading material and internally grasping its words and essence is the intellectual process he often talks about. This is a worthy escape or the solace that a good book can provide. This cannot be replaced by anything else. The insensitive aura of the materialistic world is much trivial than the world of the artistic pages filled with a vision to elevate his dilapidated self. But he accepts that the contradiction keeps his senses alert. His pain and happiness probe his artistic self to be vocative about it.

However, attempts of writing stories or interest in photography, neither of these could give him the satisfaction that he used to long for. But the composition of poetry brings his soul that fulfilment. The inclination towards English language became his core tool for narrating his experience in the genre of poetry. Convincingly he said he had a schooling in English medium and possessed a good command over this language. So, in his artistic endeavours, English gave him the ease of expression. Though Odia is the commonly spoken native language across Odisha, this poet lacked a sway over it, and very apologetically put

forth that. Because of this lacuna he somewhat felt hand cuffed to fulfil the void in linking to the emotion of the native fellows through his contents. In his words, "I had begun to face a wall, even as I went on to publish book after book of poetry. A wall which I couldn't cross" (2007, 147). Jayanta Mahapatra got acknowledged and awarded by many a renowned organization like Sahitya Akademi, yet was struggling for publishing his epic poem 'Relationship' he had to face a lot of trouble. Even after publication too this went unseen for Odia poetry readers and brought utter discouragement for the budding artist in him for some time. He faced the scepticism as an alien poet how might he have had no awareness about the socio-cultural background or history of Odisha because, he used to write in English language. But this prejudice did not stop him from exercising his skill of fine art. In fact, the reward conferred that he not only was a brilliant writer and poet targeting the recurring topics of social and cultural trends of Odisha and Indian society, he also was indulged in translating many Odia poets' works, so that they could be available for the global readers and the Odia sensibility could be acclaimed beyond the territory of Odisha or India. Actually, the general treatment of estrangement was his fear which he had to go through, not just within Odisha but also outside his homeland. The segregated marginal gesture by the fellow participants at any literary meet throughout India bothered him horribly. Evidently, this whole process of alienation was frustrating him a lot.

But surprisingly, he landed on an improved temperament after this. As he says, "Poetry, for me, helps in finding oneself." Extending his artistic exercise from writing prose or taking photographs to composing poetry remains the turning point of his artistic life. This new venture showed his crave for searching his true self and identity and not critical affiliation of fellow artists or bagging award from the renowned organizations. He had never stopped his intellectual voyage of self-discovery at no point of his persistent learning.

Of course, every book is an exposure for a new learning. It becomes an experience for life time for every individual in his own novel way. So also, every observation on a singular society can be different for each creative artist. There lies the question of subjectivity. The individual subjective approach can lead to the reader fully or partially to the world of experience which the artist has once gone through. No doubt the common symbolic order of language is taken as the means of communication for a cultural group and a heretic subjective cultural projection of ideas can be adopted by a reader. Yet, the conscious to subconscious then to unconscious layers of psychoanalytic process of a being gets affected by the pre-conceived independent ideas. So, the interpretations can be uniquely different from one to another. But the lucrative part is through the linguistic delving, before the final product gets its shape of the creative art, the artist discovers a unique layer of his own personality. Donald E. Hall's quoting of Jacques Lacan is applicable here. As he asserts "The form in which the language is expressed itself defines subjectivity ... I identify myself in language, but only by losing myself in it like an object" (Lacan, 1977, 85-86) In case of a poet too, through his past experiences and learning he interprets his raw observations and visions through his liberal language as the base for his composition of poetry. But during

this process of churning, the poet experiences a relieved self; relieved from the compact thinking, interpolation, description etc. This justifies the unbiased approach to the select content. An artist quite sensibly observes every chunk of things that comes under the sight of his parley, whether it's the human condition because of the social and cultural protocols, the dark realities or esteemed heritage etc., he knows quite well, how to deal with that content without any detriment. Some writers prefer to remain anonymous. As the procedure of perceiving the content itself is life altering and after that everything seems trivial and absurd. It's indeed the discovering of the stranger self which can give the familiar self an all empowering identity. Even the publications and public appraisal sound peculiar. Mahapatra also affirms, that sharing the private ideas is not comforting for many sensible thinkers. Hence, keeping the contrived final product to themselves could be a situation solacing for some poets. But for these sorts of self-imposed isolation, the world of literature stays devoid of certain gems as artists. Especially for them the reinforcement is necessary to admire their art. To foreground their innovative inceptions, both society and art authorities should come into the scene for uplifting their hidden talents.

Furthermore, being an Odia-English poet, Jayanta Mahapatra experiences a silent exclusion from the general mass of Odisha. He has precisely mentioned that English the language empowers him. Whereas, in India or in Odisha the literacy rate is significantly low, and English is still a foreign language for many. This is a land of rich oral literary culture, and here the native language Odia is preferred to any other tongue. Hence, though he resides around a market place in Cuttack and has many familiar faces exchanging the small talks in his day-to-day life, he has realised a distinctive intellectual wall between him and them. Though the common life and its tribulation has a reflection in Mahapatra's poetry, his final art becomes an inaccessible and absurd thing to them. So, this can judiciously be observed, the poet's target group of audience is fixed. No matter how perceptive the content is, the select language of poetry securely categorises its readers who are comfortably capable to understand its lingo. Another important thing is, certain literature and art lovers have parameters to reckon a novel art. Especially in India, they deliberately refer to the epic poems with the Morden ones and find the later to be lacking grandeur and looking frivolous which is quite obvious. Whereas, at first hand one should consider a fine art independently. So also show its allusions a certain level of credibility. Every single art has its own charm and in case of subjective poetry, it provides a mirror into the poet's psyche. So, expecting ethical conclusion and usefulness from each confessional poetry is simply bizarre. This cause also shrinks the quantification of readers of modern poets like Jayanta Mahapatra. Undoubtedly, the active and insightful readers are the real stimulators for a poet. That's why, many poets these days want prestigious award tagged to their names so that they can publish materials for the sake of claiming public approval. As Mahapatra mentions, "There seems to be a fantastic abundance of poets writing today- those who believe that their need to write is *not* as great as their need to be read" (2007, 150-51). So, to say, there is a huge responsibility on both the budding modern poets and readers. For the poets it's necessary to speculate on the core essence of poetry; why and how it is composed.

Initiating from the involvement of the innate self for finding the self just to be a cumulative portion by which the poet can discover a whole new world of freedom, is the real purpose of poetry and the reader must do a qualitative assessment of any poem or work of literature. Then, the publishers should take a spontaneous interest in publicising work of art and select a secure medium to preserve these for future literature lovers, so that it would not fade away in the piling of multiplicity of random ideas.

The art of poetry has indeed remained of vital importance to Mahapatra. Poetry has remained, so to say, his second mother, or rather, his foster mother, Mahapatra has gained his rebirth at the door of poetry. That is why he has reiterated, "I have salvaged the hours of loss for my own self-expression in poetry." But the realization that poetry has remained his mother is explicit in these lines from his poem, "The Lines of My Poem":

Poem, my mother, how
pain has made you cross
the divide between past and future.
You are the cocoon
of my broken soul (Mahapatra, 2009, 150).

Poetry has remained the poet's mother as well as "the cocoon" safeguarding his "broken soul." The images the poet has accumulated around poetry, images like mother, cocoon, door, safety measure, and salvage operation, are invariably protective in nature. On the other hand, the poet persists to feel himself as a "broken soul." The world including his home, has obviously remained a sad and sickening place to him. Besides, as he has hinted it clearly in the above excerpt, poetry has never remained a song of joy, of happiness here in this world. The poem's entire temporal space from past to future has been pain-stricken. Mahapatra has found the world in the same sorrowful position today in which Keats found it even more than a century and half ago. As his "Ode to a Nightingale" tells us, Keats' heart was filled with sorrow to see "hungry generations", to see "palsy", "The weariness, the fever, and the fret" in the world around. About the world today, Mahapatra is living right now, he writes,

Around me was sickness and hunger, the sufferings of people from malnutrition and disease – a terrible form of disorder of the universe that made me question myself on the goodness of God we had been taught to believe in (2007, 212).

Therefore, he has asked,

Where is the thought
that will make one happy?
Generations of men here
have bled from a terrible history (2009, 149).

It not the poet's personal history alone which has remained "terrible." Generations of entire human species have bled from a terrible history. The poet's painful awareness of the world-wide cruelty and suffering is manifest in the following lines of the same poem"

Perhaps the lines of my poem
will be lame for a long time,
losing their fight against
the pain of the screaming, frightened girl
in Kosovo, or kicking vainly
at the anger of a boy on the West Bank.
Or because they have been unable
to bear the weight
of years of poverty in this land.

Both in this land of his nativity and abroad, the poet has found unending violence, brutality, and hunger, or, the unbearable “weight of years of poverty.” In these bleak situations, it is no wonder,

This poem stares out
uneasily from the top of its cage.
It has become
a faint shadow of its former self.
It has not been able
to find its way out,
stumbling over the hunger
of another starving child.

As a matter of fact, Jayanta Mahapatra’s poetry is the shining example of J.B. Yeats’ pronouncement, “All art is reaction from life.” His poetry has been reaction from life as much personal as racial. He has aptly described this intersectional state of poetry in his pronouncement, “But poetry, for me, helps one in finding oneself - in relation to the time he or she belongs to, to his era, or to separate himself from his other selves.” Poetry, according to him, has a social role to play. It is to “attempt to remove the burden of the time from this world” (2007, 5). It attempts to remove the burden of the time from this world and at the same time opens the door to one’s own inner self. Poetic exercise with this poet has thus remained a bi-way traffic. By engaging oneself with this exercise, one makes discovery of one’s own self in simultaneity with discovering one’s existential link with the outer world, one’s other self. ■

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Violet Diary: Living In-Betweenness

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Yeshoda Nanjappa

The colonial event has undeniably marked the ex-colonies predominantly the indigenous communities including Canada. The colonial implementation was a two-sided sword which left peoples fragmented on multiple domains. Native writings and literatures emanating from the imperial occurrence systematically concentrate on the postcolonial fragmentations. The conceptualised representation of living in-betweenness is considered in Canadian Ojibwa writer Ruby Slipperjack's *These Are My Words: The Residential School Diary of Violet Pesheens* (2016) to scrutinize the course of colonization which engenders fluid, non- static identities by blurring various binaries such as colonizer – colonized; personal – collective; private – public; oral – written; and history – fiction within the colonial subjectivity. Focusing on the critical and textual analysis of the central character, Violet, the discussion unfolds the trajectory of colonial subjects' resistance, negotiation and negation while residing on the borders of native and western cultural ambits. The paper employs Homi Bhabha's conceptual framing of in-betweenness to locate and scrutinise the vexed liminal existence of colonial subjects and the liminal colonial condition of indigeneity.

Key words: Diary Writing, Indigeneity, Liminality, Fluidity & Colonial Binary.

The emergence of postcolonial literary discourse in the late 20th century gave rise to heterogeneous avenues of literary analysis in enunciating the colonial experience, resistance and reconstruction of postcolonial identities. The postcolonial critics manoeuvred different concepts to theorise and address the colonial/postcolonial trajectory which restructured the socio-cultural identity of colonial subjects. The postcolonial critic, Homi K. Bhabha in his seminal oeuvre titled *The Location of Culture* (1994) appropriates Arnold Van Gennep's and Victor Turner's idea of liminality to address the transitory identity shifts and cultural differences occurred with the process of colonization. Bhabha discerns that the formation of liminal or in-betweenness creates an imperative space of colonial discourse, "a terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood-singular or communal - that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative site of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of the society" (Bhabha 2). Considerably, the "in-between" (Bhabha 5) space constitutes an exclusive spectrum where the colonial subjects could renegotiate, redefine and reconstruct their personal and collective cultural identities through mutual and

interdependent relationships. According to Bhabha, these “in-between” spaces apparently transgress and blur the distinct conceptual binaries in the cultural articulation of colonial subjects. The Canadian First Nation writer, Ruby Slipperjack’s *These Are My Words: The Residential School Diary of Violet Pesheens* (2016) replete with Bhabha’s “in-betweenness” as she portrays the precarious and ambivalent state of colonized Indigenous Canada. Slipperjack’s protagonist Violet and her personal diary entries elucidate the dissonant and consonant nature of interstitial spaces in the reconstruction of indigenous cultural identity.

Violet’s diary superficially appears like a diary of an ill-fated Anishinabe girl and her tenebrous survival at the European Christian missionary residential school. But, an in-depth investigation unravels the profound colonial motifs lurking in the plot. Violet’s diary strongly embodies distinct representations of colonial binaries which emerge from the colonizer and colonized encounters. The narrative which evolves in the form of diary entries written by the protagonist Violet, a ten-year-old Anishinabe girl, chronicles how the colonial subjects oscillate between the binaries of orality-writing; personal-collective; and Native-European produced by colonialism. Significantly, the diary narrative form itself subsumes into in-betweenness for its potency in transgressing complex dualities. The much celebrated quote of Virginia Woolf demonstrates the intrinsic dichotomies explicit in diary writing. Woolf states:

Moreover, there looms ahead of me the shadow of some kind of form which a diary might attain to. I might in the course of time learn what it is that one can make of this loose, drifting material of life; finding another use for it than the use I put it to, so much more consciously & scrupulously, in fiction. What sort of diary should I like mine to be? Something loose knit, & yet not slovenly, so elastic that it will embrace anything, solemn, slight or beautiful that comes into my mind. I should like it to resemble some deep old desk, or capacious hold-all, in which one flings a mass of odds and ends without looking them through. (13)

Woolf’s statement illuminates the paradox of diary through the words “loose” and “not slovenly”, “elastic” and “solemn”, “slight” and “beautiful” and these words signify Woolf’s perception of the diary form within the conceptualised in-betweenness. Analogically, Violet’s diary closely resembles with Woolf’s diary for its loose knit papers from the notebook where Violet illustrates her sensibilities, premonitions, reminiscences and intense emotional expressions which voices the abominable reality of indigenous children within the colonial space of residential schools. Violet’s diary further parallels with Woolf’s idea of diary as a “conscious & scrupulous” (Woolf 266) endeavour for its rendering of deliberate strategies and existence of binaries. Violet’s first diary entry dated “*Friday, September 9, 1966*” (Slipperjack 3) begins with an agenda which emerged out of her cognizance about the definite European cultural assimilation and indigenous cultural disorientation she might have to endure in the residential schooling. Violet chronicles numerous episodes where she foresees the possibilities of indigenous cultural dislocation and indoctrination into the Western white colonial culture. For example, when the school clerk changes her name from “Violet Pasheens” (1) to “number 75” (8) which makes Violet instantly recognize the colonial

process of sabotaging a child's indigenous provenance. Furthermore, Violet meticulously details the reasons for her resolution to vindicate an agenda of severing herself from the alien culture and to uphold her indigeneity. Apparently, Violet decides to keep a diary to remember and to remind her about the Anishinabe roots. For Violet, the diary constitutes an exclusive 'Indigenous space' where she could articulate her self-reflections, emotions and subtle resistance against the colonial indoctrination. In her diary, she integrates all her memories about her Grandma, mother, family, neighbours, pet dog - Blackie, grandma's reserve - Flint Lake, fishing and camping expeditions with Grandma, letters, dreams and other recollections as souvenirs to emphasise and reinforce the meaning of her relations with her indigenous family, community and worldviews. However, Violet's rationale of formulating an exclusive 'Indigenous space' never materialises due to its incontestable and intrinsic in-betweenness suffused in her very act of writing. When Violet transforms the colonizer's notebook to a diary by ripping out pages from it, which is meant to master the European pedagogy, she subverts the purpose of the book as she appropriates the white pages to inscribe her recollections and reflections about her Anishinabe genesis. Nevertheless, the English language which she uses to write constrains her mission of constructing the 'Indigenous space'. This contradiction creates a borderline cultural dialogue between dualities of the colonizer-colonized and native-foreign in her diary space.

One of the predominant and conspicuous binaries which manifest in-betweenness in the storyline is the juxtaposition of Indigenous orality and European writing in Violet's diary. Although Violet intensely tries to preserve her Anishinabe linguistic cognition in her diary writing, she unconsciously endorses the colonial language - English. The medium of the English language in her diary partially undermines the essence of indigenous oral tradition and Violet involuntarily transgresses the oral mode of knowledge transmission of her native culture. Violet's diary entry dated 17th February 1967 exemplifies the oral-written dualities in the plot when she writes:

I have decided to write down the names of things so I don't forget them...
 robin – opichins
 aandeg – crow
 papaasae – red-headed woodpecker
 kwikwishi — Canada jay

I am not sure if there is a proper spelling for these names, so I am putting down what they sound like. Mooningwanae – flicker (I had to look up what this bird is called in English at the King George School library) (Slipperjack 127)

The diary becomes an intermediate space where both indigenous and western socio-cultural linguistic elements converge, intersect and create a complex "in-between" space which narrows and underplays the intention of Violet to formulate a unique aboriginal space. The above translated words from Anishinabe to English encapsulate and conceptualize the

apparent convergence of written and oral cultural traits in Violet's diary. It is the in- between and dynamic nature of the diary which facilitates Violet to decode the words of her native language. The diary also encompasses a recursive inscription of personal-collective memory. There are many passages in Violet's diary which explicates the personal-collective expressions imbibed in her writing. She writes about her interpersonal relations with her Grandma, mother and stepfather. Grandma's details carry feelings of warmth, whereas her note about her relationship with her mother and stepfather expresses guiltiness about her failure to understand them. Violet's inscription about her family relations, her sense of responsibility and awareness about her Anishinabe culture describes the formation of her personal memory in the diary. When Violet writes about an incident where she and her fellow mates at the residential school unconsciously join together to play a popular indigenous string game, Violet communicates and transmits her personal cultural knowledge and memory with her peers. Violet awakens their repressed personal as well as collective memories about the string game which is connected to their native identities. They all nourish the performance uniformly without any sign of perplexity or uncertainty, as if they were playing the string game every other day. While doing so, they relocate their past memories and recollections about their respective indigenous families, communities and tribes. She clearly voices out:

I got a string about 2 feet long from the Science room at King George yesterday. We were standing around by the windows, waiting for the supper bell to ring, when I remembered it. I tied the ends together and I began playing the string games that everybody knows back home. I saw a girl nearby and I stuck out the criss-crossed string to her, and without a word, she immediately turns it into another figure. Then another girl joined us and she turned it into another figure and then a Cree girl joined us and she knew the game too! We were not speaking, but smiling at each other... (Slipperjack 37)

This simple enactment of the string game embodies their longing to perform their shared and collective indigenous cultural experience and eliminate their insecurities emerged from dislocation. The natural and spontaneous act of the string game explains how Violet and all the other children of the residential school consciously safeguard and immortalize their indigenous heritage in their psyche. This collective cultural memory and Violet's own perceptions on indigeneity elucidated in the diary unfold the personal-collective complementarity in the narration. The inscription of string gaming can also interpreted as a symbolic representation of the Violet's and other children's liminal existence. When the children perform the indigenous game in a colonial space of residential school they passively reject the colonial space of indoctrination and reappropriate that colonial space into an exclusive indigenous space to perform and reflect their indigeneity. However they remain in-betweenness because the reappropriation takes place within the colonial space. Therefore the game becomes a space of synthesization of both indigenous and colonial spaces and engenders an in-betweenness within the plot.

Violet's diary also postulates a binary of the historical/factual-imaginary/fictitious in the narration. Her diary entries about the residential school and its mode of functioning manifest the unpleasant history of Canada's lost generation. When Violet writes about how the other children and she were taken away from their families in a symbolic "Train of tears" (Slipperjack 4) by the White Christian missionaries, she reminds the readers about how colonialism snatched away almost seven generations from the Indigenous culture. Violet's voice of censure points out the customary cleansing ritual in the "communal showers, were they [sic] stripped and scrubbed...to kill lice" (Slipperjack 7), not only eliminated 'the lice', but also exterminated the 'Indianness' from the psyche of native children on the first day at the residential school. Violet traces and enunciates the trajectory of colonial cultural genocide which perpetually dismantled the sovereignty of Indigeneity. This historical documentation of the residential schooling and its discursive strategies of indoctrination and assimilation elaborated in the diary thereby constitute a binary of historical and literary paradoxes in the plot. Violet recreates an inclusive space where both indigenous history and her imagination could merge and produce an amalgamated "in-between" space. It is imperative to note that it is not only just Violet and her diary that dwell in-betweenness but also the other characters in the story line endorse the dualities in their thoughts and actions. Violet's mother, Emily, is a prime epitome of in-between existence of the colonial subjects. Emily, being a residential school survivor repudiates Christian beliefs by relinquishing the church sermons and masses. But, she diligently makes her bed, a habit she learned from the school, by folding the blankets and tucking it under the mattress. Emily substantiates Bhabha's argument on the "luminal" (Bhabha 5) and the in-between existence of colonized aboriginals as she consistently collaborates and resist Western cultural and religious practices. The Bhabhaian in-betweenness aptly addresses this perpetual and on-going cultural dialogue between cultures in redefining cultural identities. Bhabha opines,

Terms of cultural engagement, whether antagonistic or affiliative, are produced performatively. The representation of difference must not be hastily read as the reflection of pre-given ethnic or cultural traits set in the fixed tablet of tradition. The social articulation of difference, from the minority perspective, is a complex, on-going negotiation that seeks to authorize cultural hybridities that emerge in moments of historical transformation (Bhabha 2).

Analogically, Violet's and Emily's attempt to detach themselves from the Western- colonial influences never achieves an unalloyed and absolute reconstruction of indigenous identity because they have partly assimilated and imbibed the cultural elements of colonizers culture. It is in the intersection of colonized-colonizer socio-cultural features where the colonial subjects produce fluid and non-fixated identities through negotiation and performance.

Ruby Slipperjack's *These are My Words* undoubtedly manifests Violet's reconstructive efforts of recreating indigenous identity by conserving her indigenous relations. However, she can never construct an exclusive 'Indigenous space' because of the residue of both European and indigenous cultural elements in her 'Indigenous space'. Violet's

resistance against colonisation never creates an ‘exclusive Indigenous space’ because of her affiliation with European literary form of writing. Violet’s cultural affiliation of writing and her antagonistic stand against its colonisation process substantiate Bhabha’s argument and reify the creation of the “in-between” space in the narrative. Significantly, Violet’s abnegation of diary writing after she leaves the school does not yield efficacy in her reconstruction of the primordial indigenous space, owing to the fact that, Violet has ingrained and mastered the colonisers’ artistic expression and writing technique. Through her diaries, she everlastingly live in a “liminal” (Bhabha 5) state endorsing the colonizer — colonized convergence and confliction. Hence, *These are My Words* becomes not solely Violet’s words but an amalgamation of distinct voices from dissimilar realms. Therefore the research paper deliberates how Violet’s diary is a space to delineate the modalities of in-betweenness and to analyse the colonized subjects subjectivity and cultural recuperation. The research has attempted an investigation into the Bhabhian concept of “in-between” (Bhabha 2) to elucidate the kind of in-betweenness the characters live in an indigenous postcolonial milieu to contest, negotiate and subvert the colonized space. ■

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Githa Hariharan's Fugitive Histories: A Silent Quest for Identity

R. Manimozhi

Woman is the main contemporary issue faced by all the societies both in West and in India, launching herself in the quest for identity. The portrayal of woman in Indian English fiction as the silent sufferer and up holder of the tradition and traditional values of family and society has undergone a tremendous change and is no longer presented as a passive character. They assert themselves as an individual rebelling against the traditional role, breaking the silence of suffering trying to move out of the caged existence and asserting the individual self. Therefore, the contemporary writers expose a graphic picture of Indian woman in their works and tried their best to free the female mentality from silent sufferings. Githa Hariharan one of the contemporary Indian women authors represents the reality for a considerable section of Indian Womanhood inserted in a brahminical, high class environment.

Githa Hariharan's *Fugitive Histories* is quite as powerful as its predecessor and thematically even more controversial. It is a journey of three Indian women Mala, Sara and Yasmin trapped in the anguish and hatred of their past and trying to release themselves with fearless hopes and dreams. Githa Hariharan portrays the web of human connections that binds as much as it divides. The search for one's destiny is the key theme of the novel. *Fugitive Histories* is as subtly constructed as a Chinese box, concealing narratives within narratives and yet remaining blindingly clear in its exposition of public and private realities. It is about people picking up threads from the point where man-made upheavals have left them. It is a journey back in time. It is the story of Mala, Sara and Jasmine who suffers to trace their own identity and they silently search for their future.

Women writers have used fiction to explore and share their experiences. The conflicts which they face in everyday lives are woven into the fictional world of their creation. Men in their writings portray women as they want them to be for. It is not possible for the men to express life otherwise than as they know it which again is according to their own experience. Avadhesh Kumar is not wrong when he says that "only she, not he, knows what she experiences, so only she can speak of it" (Jain and Singh 119).

Githa Hariharan fabricates a body of Indian literature that is committed to feminist and social issues. Her novels venture to tear apart the veil of sophistication and social equality

by presenting the real status of women. She has created the image of the suffering but stoic woman eventually breaking the traditional boundaries has had a significant impact. Her works simultaneously reveal the tapestry of patriarchy and at the same time attempt to celebrate feminine selfhood and freedom. Though she does not like to be branded as a woman writer because she believes in categorizing a writer, yet she calls herself a feminist as she said in an interview as:

“Am I a writer particularly concerned with “women’s issues”? And am I a feminist? The answer to both questions is yes. I want to make it quite clear that in my life my choices have been dictated by what I perceive as the feminist choice. ...And anyway, however you define yourself, all our work is informed in some way or the other by feminism, along with the ideas of Freud and Marx. And this goes for both men and women, of course. So ...I am a writer (as opposed to a woman writer) who is a feminist, along with several other things! (Hariharan, Interview with Arnab Chakladar)”

Githa Hariharan’s *The Fugitive Histories* (2009) exposes the legacy of prejudice that, sometimes insidiously, sometimes perceptibly, continues to affect disparate lives in present-day India. Githa Hariharan portrays the web of human connections that binds as much as it divides. She also picturises the wide view of the social life, political events and the boring aspects of character’s inner sensibility make her an existentialist novelist. She writes about the grassroots of the urban segments of Indian life and reality. She is concerned with the personal tragedy of the individuals, and shapes their inner crisis.

Mala, a Hindu Brahmin woman, who married Asad, a Muslim artist, despite the misgivings of her immediate and extended family she searches for her future. After the death of Asad, Mala proves to herself and to her daughter and son that she would manage to live of her own. She says, “Go back to your work, I can manage. Get on with your lives.” (FH 3) Samar and Sara thought of teaching Mala the art of survival or reconciliation of life after the death of their father, but she manages to live of her own. Mala opened the trunk of Asad and traced out his sketchbooks; almost the trunk is like a biography of Asad. For her astonishment she calls the trunk ‘the times’ or ‘the works’ or ‘the love story’ (FH 5)

Mala feels that the paintings are, “waiting for her like an impatient lover, a patient bandit, wherever she is in the flat.” (FH 10) She is back to her usual librarian’s desk, she cooks for her alone, she washes dishes, soaps herself in shower, switches on the TV for the evening news, checks her email though she is not in a mood to send reply. She can feel the air of anticipation in the empty rooms and often she feels that someone is waiting for her nothing but the colourful paintings of her artist Asad. She believes that they are speaking with her through its concepts as it reflects the thoughts of Asad.

Mala could go back to renew her own journey which covered an immeasurable number of miles. It is a wonderful distraction for her to escape from the worries of Asad’s absence. The recollected chain story of Mala has to unravel because she is a part of it and

the painful ending can take her back to the beginning, a beginning without Asad. Mala suffers a lot of staying alone; her sleep has been disturbed by her avenging thoughts of Asad. She could not sleep without hearing his distinct and cheerful burst of snoring, she says, “a noise she trained many years back into becoming her own private music” (FH 56) She goes to Samar’s room to get rid of Asad’s memory, there she has gone through the paintings of Asad and she saw a picture of Lord Ganesh and she dwells into the past memory. Though he is a Muslim once Asad bought the statue of Lord Ganesh and he presented it to his mother-in-law, at last it decorated his office table.

In the absence of Asad, Mala cleverly liberated her car from the crowded parking. It shows her ability and self-confidence. To break the silence of isolation she visited Qutb Minar the ambitious stony folly reaching for the sky; it built courage in her to survive despite Asad’s death. She rewind the past imaginary film of her marriage with a Muslim, her parents advised her that everything will fall under confusion. Her father says, “It’ll always be a problem, the difference between us and them. It won’t go away just because you’re married.” (FH 69) Mala’s mother reminded her that the problem starts from the basic thing food and they quarrel with her as, “You’re killing us! You’ll marry this man, this foreigner, and you’ll be lost to us, you’ll kill us!” (FH 69)

According to the parents of Mala if she marries Asad it is an offence to the family and it will affect the traditional culture of their religion. But Asad convinced her as, “Anyway we have nothing to do with either lot. It’s not as if we think of ourselves as Hindu or Muslim.” (FH 70) Mala’s mother scolds her bitterly that everyone gossip about them and look at them, “like we’re animals in the zoo” (FH 73) Mala’s quest to compete her loneliness caused a strong stress in her mind. At last she has thrown away the paintbrush and palette knife into the near by pond. This act will help her to reduce the disturbing memories of Asad and to recreate herself to live a life of her own.

Bala the traditional figure of this novel survives under the male domination of her husband. She got married at the age of twelve. She is a mysterious woman and she feels that she is married to the house even more that she is married to Mala’s grandfather. She has to obey the rules framed by her husband and she is not allowed to step out of her in-laws house to visit the neighbours, not even to visit her parents. The author has portrayed this as, “prison condition” (FH 15)

Githa Hariharan aptly presents the male chauvinism through ‘she was his’, ‘she belonged to the house’ (FH 15) Woman is treated like an object. Bala is seen as an object in the house and she ‘belonged’ to him at the same time she should ‘be longed’ forever for her identity of happiness. Bala has been portrayed as the traditional house-wife, as she did her household works sincerely and devotedly. The only place where she could go without fear is the roof of the house through the ladder in the backyard. She use to go there to dry her hair and she would be entirely herself there. Most of the time Bala is locked in the storeroom, because Mala’s grandfather thought that the storeroom is the best place for her to learn how

to be a respectable woman. Bala patiently bears the ill treatment of her husband and she suffers as a slave. It has been exposed by Githa Hariharan as, “She had to love the storeroom best” (FH 22)

Once Mala and Asad visits Bala who is bedridden because of old age ill health. Bala told Mala that she had spent her life time under male orders, but Mala has won and she has escaped from the village by marrying Asad. She extol her for her revolutionary thought and she says, “You married him, I couldn’t escape this place but I’ve lived longer than that old bastard boss. We’ve won.” (FH 76) This shows Bala’s longing for freedom.

Samar and Sara, the heirs of Asad and Mala are a team of two against the world. Sara is at Mumbai works with her friend Nina to make documentary films on the current issues of India. At present she is to prepare a script for a new documentary film about Sabarmati Express which was attacked in Godhra Station in Gujarat where two of its carriages were set on fire. The train with the Hindu activists on their way back from Ayodhya. The Muslims of Gujarat were the target of brutal violence. Muslim ghettos were disposed of Gujarat and live in safe areas of Ahmedabad as refugees. Sara does not want to be a dependent of her mother Mala for financial support and she says, “But how could Sara take the risk, how could she ask Mala to support her, even for a while?” (FH 38) Though her thought seems to be matured she suffers to search her own identity whether she is a Muslim or a Hindu. She is under a religious conflict.

Sara’s journey from Mumbai to Ahmedabad is to visit the immigrants from Gujarat. Nina and Sara meet the orphaned people as a sort of social visit. Among them Yasmin plays the main role in the thoughts of Sara. Yasmin studies in twelfth standard with lots of expectations in her mind that they have to return to their previous life and place. Yasmin longs to continue her higher studies back in their city. Sara says:

“Yasmin, seventeen years old. Yasmin’s father had a shop downstairs in the house where they used to live. Yasmin’s mother used to be a housewife, now an NGO helps her and other women in the area sell the skirts they stitch and embroider. Yasmin’s brother was in college when the trouble started, he did not come back home. He’s still missing. Her father was forced to sell their house for whatever he could get and move to a safe area. He’s trying to set up a small business, but is often sick. Yasmin is in the last year of school. She wants to go to college, but she failed her boards last year (FH 114)”.

Yasmin suffers under lack of sleep; her aim is to complete her studies and to be helpful to her parents financially. Yasmin’s heart races and she longs to live in a home of their own. Sara feels that Yasmin also in a same state as she suffers to identify her own. For Sara she is in religious conflict and for Yasmin she is in societal conflict. Sara worries in what way she is going to help Yasmin and her quest to identify herself “who she is and what she is. It’s not just a question of who and what she’s supposed to be, but who and what she wants to be, chooses to be.” (FH 231) Finally, she says, “Yes, I’m beginning to realize how lucky

I am. How glad I am that I'm a hybrid.' (FH 184) The novelist herself reveals that the book would be termed liberal, secular, and broadminded and defines Muslims to make them more palatable.

Githa Hariharan's greatest credit, is that she looks unflinchingly into the ugliness of sectarian destructiveness and strife with an almost photographically realistic lens, but always remains within earshot of her protagonists' small, personal voices; Yasmin's traumas are observed rather than directly experienced, as she is one of the survivors, and though there are harrowing scenes in the book, Githa Hariharan scrupulously avoids both polemic and voyeurism. In this connection, Virginia Woolf aptly says, "For women are always, always, always talking about what one feels..." (Woolf 140)

Githa Hariharan endeavours to highlight the feminine characters individual position in this society. Their experiences with men in their lives and their reactions to those circumstances are well focused by the author. She also displays their individual quest for identity. This has been exemplified as, "Women, who refuse to accept the prevalent codes, question the injustice, assert to seek fulfillment, are grouped under the title of non-conformists." (Bai 43) The women characters strive hard to overcome psychological impediments such as inferiority complex, inhibition, reluctance, diffidence, self-doubt and timidity and social barriers such as traditional beliefs and biased religious opinions, in order to achieve freedom and individuality and also to affirm independence in concrete ways. ■

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Reconstructing the Malayalam Literary History: A Journey into the Past to Comprehend and Value the Literary Heritage and Culture of Kerala

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Literature is part of the history and culture of every society and therefore cannot be explored in isolation. Though Malayalam literature is rich in its content and style, it is often regarded as a poetic language. The first recorded evidence of Malayalam literature goes back to as early as 13th century. But oral traditions have a longer history. Each generation of writers has added flavour to its style and content. The modern Malayalam literature is built on the foundations laid by its ancient poets and writers. It is therefore, important to reconstruct the trajectory of literary movements in Kerala to understand and appreciate the gamut of contemporary literary figures and their works. To understand any society, it is essential to go back to its history. In many societies, the earliest form of literature is always in the form of poetry and the earliest form of poetry is of folk tradition. Many of the folk poems are not written and therefore, not recorded and transmitted to generations. It is essential to understand the literary history of any society, because every society is also defined by the dynamics of various literary forms and the socio-cultural and political history of that society. It is impossible to reconstruct the entire literary history in few pages. Therefore, this paper is an attempt to initiate the process of reconstruction into the vast ocean of knowledge by analysing a few literary characteristics.

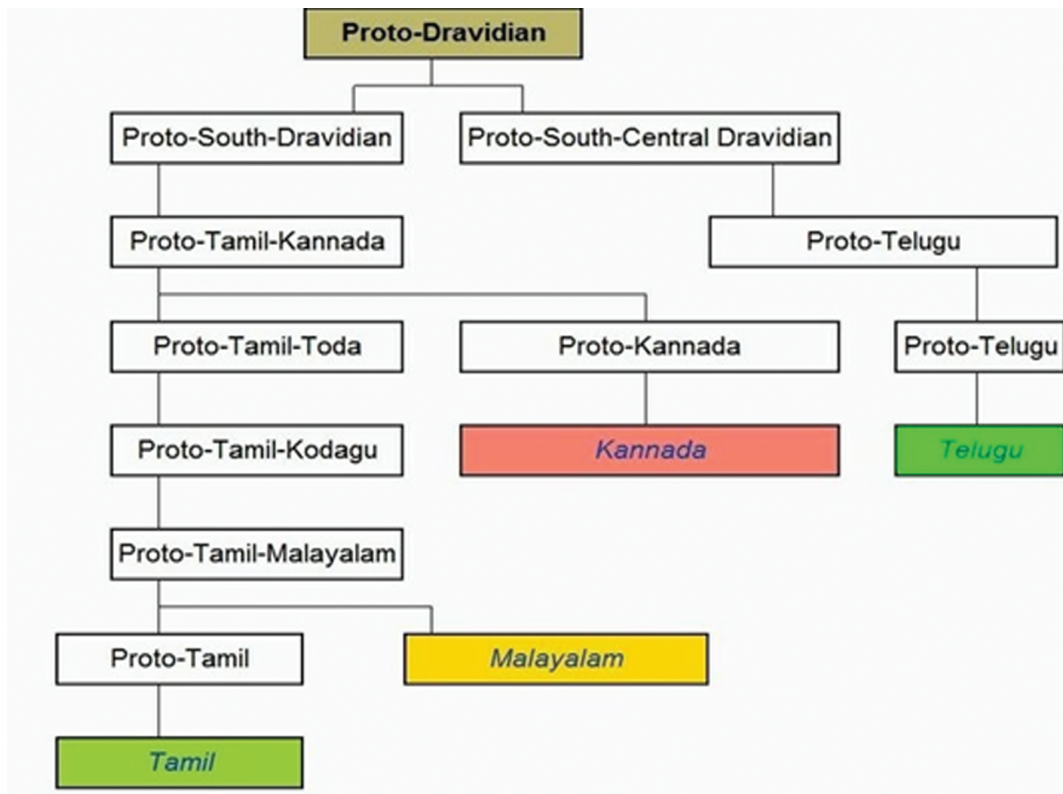
Key words: Literature, Culture, Malayalam literature, reconstruction, literary heritage of Kerala

Introduction

Summarising the literary activities of a few decades in few paragraphs would be the most herculean task of any scholar. However, an attempt is made to peep into the history to trace the origin, growth and development of Malayalam literature. The trajectory of the literary movement in Kerala together with socio-cultural and political changes has been a topic of discussion by the intelligentsia of the time. The reconstruction of the various literary phases which include the patriotic period of the early part of twentieth century, the progressive and the modernist period of the later part of the century throw light on the nature and growth of literary activities prevalent in Kerala. This is also an indication of the

fact that society is dynamic. The literary history of a society is not an independent entity of study but rather defined by the dynamics of literary forms and the socio-cultural and political history of that society. Understanding the literary history and reconstructing it would put us in the right perspective to comprehend the trajectory of literary movements. Again, it is only a small drop in the vast ocean of knowledge. The list of literary figures mentioned in the article, belonging to different genre and different periods in time, is limited and not exhaustive. The scholar has focused mainly on three areas: poetry, novel and drama. A brief mention is also made on short stories, popular speech and literary criticism.

Malayalam is a language spoken in Kerala, Lakshadweep and Puducheri. According to 2011 census, nearly 34 million people speak Malayalam, which is about 2.88 percentage of the total population of India. (censusindia.gov.in) Though it is spoken in the entire state of Kerala, it has its own regional dialects and variations. It is considered as a hybrid language of proto-Tamil and Sanskrit and belongs to the Dravidian family of languages. Every language is an essential component of the history of a society. Similarly, Malayalam too is closely linked to the history of Kerala as it has several borrowed words from the Roman, French, Hebrew, Arabic, Portuguese, Dutch and the English languages. (Luke 54, Paniker 2006: 11) Malayalam is influenced and has influenced Tamil and Sanskrit literatures in the ancient past and English and Hindi in the recent time. The following diagram depicts the genealogy of Malayalam and other South Indian languages.



Source:

https://www.google.co.in/search?q=genealogy+of+malayalam+ literature+pdf&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiisZGU5MD1AhVGXSsKHWKcAOIQ_AUIEigC&biw=1366&bih=654#imgrc=J9FBLoLWgnpnUM:

According to C Kunjan Raja, no literature is known as belonging to Kerala till 9th century AD. But by 14th century Malayalam is seen as a fully developed language. The classical period of Malayalam literature seems to have started from 15th century with the appearance of *Krishna Gatha* by Cherusseri. The classical period was influenced by different schools of thought like, 1. Schools influenced by Tamil, 2. Schools influenced by Sanskrit and 3. Schools consisting of folk songs. These schools have helped in shaping of classical language particularly in the hands of Ezhuthachan in the 16th century. (133) The literature of a society appear in both oral and written forms. The earliest form of literature in Malayalam is found in folk songs and many of them are associated with religious rituals dating back to Dravidian and pre-Aryan period. (Paniker 12) The *Vadakkan Pattukal* (ballads of the north) and *Thekkan Pattukal* (ballads of the south) are ballads that cover a wide variety of subjects from people's day-to-day lives.

It is a herculean task to summarise the history of the evolution of Malayalam literature in few paragraphs. However, an effort is made to understand and appreciate the works of some of the outstanding litterateur who have made significant contributions to Malayalam literature. From time immemorial we have evidences of the existence of poetry. It is believed that the first written document available in Malayalam is *Ramacharitam*, a long narrative poem written between 12th and 13th centuries. But this cannot be considered the earliest collection of poems written in Malayalam because of its epic nature both in content and form. This may be the product of a poetic tradition, established and matured. (Benjamin 443) The language that is used here is the earliest form of Malayalam, which is very similar to that of Tamil. (Paniker 19) As in any society, "the earliest literary works in Malayalam are believed to have been the folk songs and ballads of popular origin." (Menon 2014:191) These folk songs were composed for "religious rituals, popular entertainments or agricultural operations." (Menon 191) Considering the genesis of Malayalam poetry, it can be broadly divided into three categories: 1. *Pattu*; 2. *Manipravalam*; and 3. Folk poetry. It was Ezhuthachan, a great advocate of *bhakti* movement in Malayalam blended both *pattu* and *manipravalam* into a standardized poetic language. After Ezhuthachan, came other two prominent poets Kunjan Nambiar and Unnayi Warriar. Nambiar wrote poetry for *Thullal* and Warriar for *Kathakali* – two different theatrical arts. (Benjamin 445)

Songs like *Nalupadam* and *Payyannur Pattola* are considered to be of ancient origin and songs like *Vadakkan Pattukal*, *Tekkan Pattukal*, *Mappila Pattukal* are of later period. (Menon 191) Chiraman wrote *Ramacharitam* in 12th century, which is one of the greatest works of *Pattu* School. Rama Panikkar, Madhava Panikkar and Sankara Panikkar made significant contribution to the *Pattu* School. Their importance in Malayalam literature is described in the following words, "Ullur S Parameswara Iyer would assign to Rama Panikkar

the same position in Malayalam literature which Spencer holds in English literature.” (Menon 192)

From ninth to the twelfth century, there appeared a new literary language called *Manipravalam* (literally means ‘gem and coral’), where we find a perfect blending of Malayalam and Sanskrit. Even the word *Manipravalam* itself is a combination of Malayalam and Sanskrit. “In *Manipravalam* works not only words but even the grammars from both the languages are mixed harmoniously. It should be noted that *Manipravalam* represents an attempt at Aryan-Dravidian cultural synthesis.” (Menon 193) *Manipravalam* works are classified into *Champus* and *Sandesa Kavyas*. Again we find them divided into Early *Champus* and Later *Champus*. Among the most notable early *champus* written during the 13th and 14th centuries are *Unnichirutevicharitam* and *Unniyatcharitam*. Malayalam literature entered into a new phase by 15th and 16th centuries. By this time, “Malayalam language had liberated completely from the influence of Tamil and assimilated the influence of Sanskrit in full.” (Menon 193) Cherusseri Namboothiri’s *Krishnagatha*, written in the 15th century, occupies a prominent position among the classics in Malayalam. The niranam poets (Madhava Panikkar, Sankara Panikkar and Rama Panikkar) have also contributed to the development of language. The most exceptional among them is Rama Panikkar. (Menon 2017: 325)

Some Prominent Literary Figures in Malayalam

Thunchaththu Ezhuthachan (1495-1575) is considered the greatest of all Malayalam poets. (Paniker 31) He is known as the ‘father of Malayalam Language’. The place of Ezhuthachan in Malayalam literature is compared to Tulsidas in Hindi and Kamban in Tamil. (Raja 134) Some of his famous works are *Adhyatma Ramayanam*, *Srimahabharatam*, *Irupattinalu Vritham* and *Harinamakirtanam*. His uniqueness and contribution to literature is described in the following words. “Apart from being an exponent of *Bhakti* and originator of a new style in Malayalam language and literature, Ezhuthachan was a man with a mission – the messiah of a new movement of social and cultural revival.” (Menon 195) Another important writer of the *Bhakti* school was Puntanam Namboothiri (1547-1640). Some of his famous works are *Bhasha Karnamritam*, *Santanagopalama Pana* and *Jnanappana*. (Menon 196) Two other prominent writers of the 17th and 18th century are Kottarakkara Thampuran, who wrote *Ramanattam* and Unnayi Warriar who wrote *Nalacharitham* respectively. (Menon 196) Ramapurathu Warriar (1703-1753) was also a prominent literary figure of the 18th century.

Kunjan Nambiar (1705-1770) is a name synonymous with Malayalam literature. “He is associated with the *Tullal* branch of literature. The *Tullal* songs of Kunjan Nambiar have *Puranic* stories for their themes...The compositions of Nambiar are noted for their social satire and fine sense of humour. Though the themes of the poems are *Puranic*, they are replete with references to contemporary social customs which give them a distinct local colouring and touch.” (Menon 197) It is also important to note that “He is the first writer who used Malayalam poetry as an instrument of social change. Kunjan Nambiar may therefore be regarded as the morning star of the progressive movement in modern Malayalam

literature.” (Menon 197-98) He is also known as the peoples’ poet of Kerala. (Raja 134)

Kumaran Asan (1873-1924), Ullur S Parameswara Iyer (1879-1949) and Vallathol Narayana Menon (1878-1958) are considered to be the prominent poets of the nineteenth century. This was the ‘Golden Age’ of Malayalam poetry. Most of their poems had a strong social and cultural significance. (Menon 200)

Some of the ancient songs had references to the Roman traders. “The songs 2, 112, 182, 186 of *Akananuru* (a classical Tamil poetic work and one of the eight anthologies of Sangam literature) and song no. 126 of *Purananuru* (another Sangam work) contains references about Yavanas or the Roman traders. Song no. 286 of *Akananuru* refers to the Roman ships which came to Muziris (identified as Chera capital) to collect pepper in return for gold. Song no. 126 of *Purananuru* refers to the pepper which was stored at Muziris.” (Vasisht 136)

Kumaran Asan (1873-1924) was an important literary figure in Malayalam literature. He had gone to Bengal for advanced learning in Sanskrit and to acquire proficiency in English. He also witnessed the winds of change that swept through Bengal in the aftermath of the late nineteenth century cultural revival. He emerged as a major poet with the publication of *Veena Poovu* (Fallen Flower). E.V. Ramakrishnan makes the following remarks, “In choosing to write about a fallen flower, which was seen in feminine terms, Asan made available to the reader the voice of anguish and introspection which could not be admitted into the decadent tradition of the Brahmin poets...” (95) Asan was able to relate himself with the social circumstances and captured the inconsistencies and paradoxes of the situations. His three famous master pieces are *Duravastha*, *Chandala Bhikshuki* and *Karuna*. He blossomed as a poet when he started engaging with social issues/themes.

Another key literary figure of Malayalam literature was **Vallathol Narayana Menon** (1878-1957). The classical style in literature gradually gave way to modern approach in Malayalam literature and Vallathol was one of the prominent figures during this period. Vallathol bloomed as a literary figure during the period when freedom movements gained momentum under the leadership of Gandhi. Therefore, it is natural that some of his writings reflected patriotism and the spirit of “nationalism”. The regional identity that Vallathol attempted to establish was subsumed within national identity. Asan, Vallathol and others therefore tried to lay the foundation for a vibrant regional identity, which provided the basis on which later Malayalam literature flourished. While social norms and cultural practices went through a cycle of change and transformation, the literary principles remained the same.

The bond between the members of society has at times been disrupted by urbanisation and modernization. Literary figures are often influenced by the impact of these transitions. Their presence in literature is reinforced even though they might become weak individuals in society. Literature becomes a powerful tool in their hands to establish their own identity and to become a voice of the voiceless. At the same time there were also

poets like Changampuzha Krishna Pillai (1911-1948) who could not see the spiritual and social mission of poetry. Literature has a critical role to play in democratizing society in spite of the compulsions they may have to face from various quarters. A. Balakrishna Pillai, a literary critic and social commentator, speaks of the relationship between literature and life. Pillai argued for a free space and free thinking in order to develop literature. (Ramakrishnan 7) He in his essay titled, “The Pitiabale State of Malayalam Prose” makes the following observations, “When Malayalam writers produce novels portraying the reality of Kerala society, they will have to be critical of Kerala society. When they do so, the government, the Universities and then textbook committees will withdraw their patronage though they would not send them to jail as Mussolini did in Italy. Real novels can appear only when this state of affairs changes. And the public will have to work very hard to change it.” (Pillai 1991:11)

Very often we associate literature with some of the greatest literary figures. It is also important to think vice versa. Malayalam literature has produced some of the greatest figures whose contributions go unmatched. Some of the important poets of Malayalam literature are: K.P. Karuppan (1885-1938) Nalappat Narayana Menon (1887-1954), Kuttipurath Kesavan Nair (1882-1959), Pallath Raman (1892-1950), M.R. Krishna Warriar, K.M. Panikkar (1895-1963), Vennikulam Gopala Kurup (1902-1980), Balamani Amma (1909-2004), Eddasseril Govindan Nair (1906-1974), P. Kunhiraman Nair (1905-1978), Edappalli Raghavan Pillai (1903 - 1936) , Changampuzha Krishna Pillai (1913 - 1948), Mahakavi G. Sankara Kurup (1901-1978), Vailoppilli Sreedhara Menon (1911-1985), Akkitham Achuthan Namboothiri (1926-), N.V. Krishna Warriar (1916-1989), G. Kumara Pillai (1923-2000), Palai Narayana Nair (1911-2008), M.P. Appan (1913-2003), Sugathakumari (1934-), O. N. V. Kurup (1931-2016), M. Govindan (1919-1989), Chemmanur Chacko (1926-2018), Kadammanitta Ramakrishnan (1935-2008) and K. Ayyappa Panikkar (1930-2006). (Menon 202-03)

An Analysis of Major Literary Forms in Malayalam Literature

There was also another school which used popular speech as the means of literary expression. The promoters of this movement were Rajas of Kodungalloor and Venmani Nambudiripad. Venmani wrote his poems in the daily speech style of the people. (Raja 135) Therefore, this form has also helped in the development of Malayalam Literature.

The earliest piece of prose in Malayalam is in documentary nature. The Attoor copper plate of Vira Udaya Marthanda Varma in 1251 is the earliest document. (Panikker 21) The earliest prose is considered as *Bhashakautalyam*. It took time to pick up prose style and the evolution of it was a slow process. Several translations began to appear in the 15th and 16th centuries. The prose of *Attaprakarams* was meant to help the *Chakkiyars* in learning *koodiyattam*. *Brahmananda Puranam* is an example of 15th century prose. Prose literature received great attention in the 16th century with the setting up of printing press by missionaries. (Panikker 30)

The novel as a literary form had its origin in the last part of the 19th century. Though T.M. Appu Nedungadi's *Kundalatha* (1887) was the first novel in Malayalam, it was O. Chandumenon's *Indulekha* (1889) that is considered to be a novel in the real sense of the term. Novel as a literary genre further bloomed in the hands of C. V. Raman Pillai. Some of his famous works are: *Marthanda Varma* (1981), *Dharma Raja* (1913), *Premamritam* (1915) and *Ramaraja Bahadur* (1918). Another important novelist was Bhavatratan Namboothiripad who wrote *Appante Makal* (1932), a social novel.

The second quarter of the 20th century has seen enormous growth in the field of novels. Most of the novels of this period are based on some social themes. Some of the important novelists of this period are: P. Kesava Dev (1904-1983), Basheer, Takazhi, S.K. Pottekkat, P.C. Kuttikrishnan, M.T. Vasudevan Nair, Surendran, Malayattur Ramakrishnan, G. Vivekanandan, C. Radhakrishnan, M.K. Menon (1928-1993), N.P. Muhammad (1928-2003), O.V. Vijayan (1930-2005), Perumbadavam Sreedharan (1938-) , G. Vivekanandan (1921-), Padmarajan (1946-1991), Madampu Kunjukuttan (1941-). Some of these names also appear among the list of short story writers.

Short story is another form of literary expression. A number of novelists started their literary career as short story writers. Some of the short story writers are: Chengalathu Kunhirama Menon (1857-1935), Otuvil Kunhikrishna Menon (1870-1916), Moorkoth Kumaran (1874-1941), Karon Neelakanta Pillai (1898-1974), Takazhi Sivasankara Pillai (1912-1999), P. Kesava Dev (1904-1983), Ponkunnam Varkey 1910-2004), Vaikom Muhammad Basheer (1908-1994), S. K. Pottekkat (1913-1982), P.C. Kuttikrishnan (1915-1979), Lalitambika Antarjanam (1909-1987), Vettur Raman Nair, Ponjikkara Raphy (1924-) and E. M. Kovoov. (Sreedhara Menon 204-05)

The Malayalam drama made its appearance in the latter part of the 19th century. The earliest dramas composed by C.V. Raman Pillai had historical themes. Raman Pillai. Soon after that came dramas with social themes. The most important of them all were V.T. Bhattathiripad's *Adukkalayilninnu* Arangathekku (From the Kitchen to the Drawing Room) and K. Damodaran's *Pattabakki* (Arrears of Rent). Some of the prominent dramatists of the period were: N. Krishna Pillai (1916-1988), Thoppil Bhasi (1924-1992), C.N. Sreekantan Nair (1928-1976), G. Sankara Pillai (1930-1989), Kavalam Narayana Panikkar (1928-2016), S.L. Puram Sadanandan (1928-2005), Pulimana Parameswaran Pillai, Edasseri Govindan Nair, C.J. Thomas and K.T. Muhammad. (Menon 127-28)

The development of prose literature eventually gave rise to literary criticism. Periodicals like *Bhashaposhini* (1896) provided platform for writers to write articles on various literary works. Kerala Varma Valia Koil Tampuran and A.R. Raja Raja Varma were the pioneers in this field. P.K. Narayana Pillai was another literary critic of reputation. Some of the important literary critics of Malayalam literature are: Ramakrishna Pillai, C. Anthappai, D. Padmanabhan Unni and C.S. Nayar. Kesari Balakrishna Pillai (1889-1960) was well versed in some foreign languages and he applied Western standards of literary

criticism in evaluating the works of Malayalam writers. M.P. Paul, Joseph Mundasseri (1901-1977) and Kuttikrishna Marar are outstanding figures in the field of literary criticism. Other literary critics of reputation are: M.S. Devadas, K. Damodaran, S. Guptan Nair, Sukumar Azhikode, Dr. M. Leelavathi and M. Krishna Nair. (Menon 209-210)

We can notice a gradual change taking place even in the field of literature. Up to the early part of the twentieth century literature was synonymous with poetry. Slowly fiction took the centre place in the field of literature and most of them discussed certain social issues and so were close to the heart of people. According to E.V. Ramakrishnan, “The period from 1889, the year in which *Indulekha* was published, to 1944, the year of publication of Vaikom Muhammad Basheer’s *Balya Kala Salkhi* (The childhood friend), represents the first phase. Most of the novels of this phase could be described as social or historical novels.” (97) The novels of the forties were marked by progressive movements in literature. We could see a gradual and steady change taking place over the years in style and theme. Contemporary writers have large canvases to express themselves, mainly because of the exposure they have with other societies.

The progressive thinkers and writers gave thrust on social realism. Social reality was one of the criteria for judging the literature of the period. Therefore, we can already notice the changes taking place in the growth of literary movements in Kerala. Some of the novels like Thakazhi’s *The Scavenger’s Son* and *Two Measures of Rice* and P. Keshav Dev’s *From The Gutter* had subjects of social significance. Basheer’s novels like *The Childhood Friend* and *My Grand Dad had an Elephant* have significance even today as they deal with issues of social change in the orthodox Muslim community of Kerala. During the phase of progressive thinkers, the novelists explored the multifaceted psychological and social make up of their characters. The novelists of this period had the courage to transcend the regional experiences and borders and could discuss issues pertaining to man in general. “The novels of this period by their insistent interrogation of the social reality sharpened the critical awareness of the reader and helped transcend the limitations of the regional experience.” (Ramkrishnan 99)

P. K. Balakrishnan, novelist and historian, pointed out how novels became popular among the soldiers from Kerala who participated in World War II. Some of these novelists became soldiers and their stories were nothing but expression of their own experiences of anguish and distress. They became popular during the fifties and sixties. During the late fifties and early sixties another set of writers emerged on the literary scene. Some of the important literary figures of this period are, M.T. Vasudevan Nair, Kamala Das, N.P. Muhammad and T. Padmanabhan. Their stories dwelt with some of the nuances and complexities of human life. M. T. Vasudevan Nair occupied a prominent place among them.

The novels of late sixties and seventies displayed some trends of the modernist phase of Malayalam fiction. O. V. Vijayan’s *Kasakkinte Ithihasam* was an important piece of work which served as a breakthrough into modernist thinking. He paid much attention to

portray a society that is in conflict with the changing scenario. Vijayan skilfully described the tension between the “innocence of a pre-literate society” with the “forces of modernising process” which gradually but steadily sinks into the very essence and structure of society.

M. Mukundan’s *On the Banks of the River Mayyazhi* offers a wider view of life and society instead of dwelling only on personal issues. In other words, the characters are just representatives of a larger reality. E. V. Ramakrishnan observes, “In these novels action does not take place in a remote landscape of the mind shut off from time and space. In the best novels of the eighties a shift towards the public and the social may be noticed.” (100)

While reconstructing the literary history of Kerala, one cannot ignore the contributions of Europeans, especially the missionaries, on the development of Malayalam as a language. The introduction of printing by the Portuguese was significant in the development of language. In 1577 they set up printing press in Cochin and Vaipicotta. Works like *Christiya Matatatwam* and *Christiya Vanakkam* were printed here in 1579. The *Hortus Malabaricus* written in Latin contains the earliest passages in Malayalam types. The Catholic missionaries who worked in Ambazhakatt and Verapoly compiled grammar and dictionaries. Arnos Patiri, a German missionary, who came to Kerala in 1699 wrote a few poems, Grammar and a Dictionary in Malayalam. In 1712 Anjelo Francis wrote a popular grammar in Malayalam. In the latter half of 18th century Father Cement published a Malayalam Dictionary. Fr. Paulino Bartalomeo who lived at Verapoly from 1777 to 1789 was considered to be a great scholar in Malayalam. The protestant missionaries towards the end of 18th century and early part of 19th century also made significant contribution of Malayalam literature. Robert Drummond published *Grammar of the Malayalam Language* in 1799. F. Spring compiled a Malayalam Grammar. Dr. Hermann Gundert of the Basel German Evangelical Mission in 1872 published the most noted dictionary called *Malayalam-English Nighantu*. He also started two Malayalam periodicals called *Rajyasamacharam* and *Paschimodyam* in 1847. Rev. Richard Collins published a Malayalam dictionary in 1865. (Menon 2017: 328-29) In 1821, Benjamin Bailey, a Protestant missionary from England, established the first Malayalam printing press in Kerala which helped in the publication of several Malayalam books. (Ramakrishnan 2019: 2) In 1846 he published a Malayalam-English Dictionary.

Conclusion

Malayalam literature has a rich tradition and history. The contribution of Kerala to the cultural heritage of India through art and literature is significant and needs special mention. A reconstruction of Malayalam literary history is important to understand and appreciate the literary heritage and culture of Kerala. Till about 800 A. D. Kerala was part of a larger region called Tamilakam and the language was Tamil. Malayalam as a distinct language might have originated only by the latter part of 9th century. Malayalam is the last of the four Dravidian languages to take shape, the others being Tamil, Kannada and Telugu. It has its offshoot in Tamil, but is also influenced by Sanskrit and Prakrit as Brahmins

became an important element in the population of Kerala. (Menon 2017: 324) The present form of Malayalam literature is the result of the growth, development and transformation that took place over the centuries. The cultural history and the literary history are the two sides of the same coin and one cannot be understood without studying the other. ■

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Critique of Mediatizing in Milan Kundera's *Slowness*

Binu K D

Slowness, published in 1994, is one of Milan Kundera's significant but least discussed novels. In this satiric novella he analyses the process of mediatisation that reduces people, relationships, culture, history and everything to mere images that are, temporal and transient, serving the interests of capitalist globalization. Mediatisation is the view "that the media shapes and frames the processes and discourse (conversation) of political communication as well as the society in which that communication takes place"[Wikipedia]. Mediatisation leads to the commodification and dehumanisation of the individual as the individual who is subjected to the process of mediatizing is forced to "dance" to the tunes of the media deprived of voice and agency. In other words, media makes the individual who is always trying to be in the limelight to assume multiple roles and multiple identities.

Kundera through *Slowness* tries to demonstrate how in the mediatized modern world the individual is trapped to an imagist existence having lost the sense of self and identity which were intact in the pre-modern, pre-mediatised world. This explains why *Slowness* intertwines and juxtaposes the plot line of contemporary "dancers" – Kundera's favoured term for media-maniacs- preoccupation with images, speed, and opportunism with the story of eighteenth-century French lovers slow, sensual and leisured courtship from Vivant Denon's novella *Point de lendemain* [*No Tomorrow*] (1777). In this connection Natasa's observation is pertinent:

The novella rests on a clandestine encounter between a Chevalier and Madame de T., who seek pleasure in prolonging their affair, delaying consummation, and relishing every moment of the evening. Instead of publicity, the social code of this age is absolute anonymity, which ensures that the memory will not be edited to enhance one's public image. In this way, the Chevalier and Madame de T.'s anonymity allows more room for individual enjoyment and freedom than the contemporary desire for public approval that forces "dancers" to constantly check their behaviour and keep up with the brisk pace of media attention (644)

Slowness offers a vibrant critique of the process of mediatisation and its effect on the contemporary world: how it forces upon the individual a hyper-realistic existence, how it

makes a mockery of social issues and how it reduces people, culture, and history to stereotypical images.

Slowness also exemplifies Kundera's experiments with the form of comic fiction for a satiric end: to hold up to ridicule the unreal, quick paced, lacklustre nature of media-obsessed modern world. This is achieved by the novel with its fabric of interwoven reminiscences. The novelist's recollections of contemporary social life is inextricably linked with his reflections on Vivant Denon's *Point de Lendemain*, the eighteenth-century novella, a referential point to which the author constantly returns. Juxtaposing the Eighteenth century and the present times, the author calls to relief the pleasures and virtues of slowness against the losses and ephemerality of hectic media-addicted modern life. This is achieved by the simultaneous references in the beginning of the novel itself to the two journeys, undertaken by characters far removed in time and space, which carry a lot of symbolic dimensions.

The first is the journey undertaken by Vera and her husband, the narrator, in the present. They move out from Paris to a chateau in order to spend a night there. The second is the journey of Madame de T. and the young Chevalier to the same place that happened two hundred years back. The journey metaphor, at the very outset, sets in contrast the changed tempo of modern life of the narrator and his wife characterised by speed, tension and restlessness with the Eighteenth century life of Madame de T. and the young Chevalier characterised by slowness, relaxation and sensuality.

The contemporary mindset anchored on speed, societal positions, clamour for fame, riches and media attention is pitted against the Eighteenth century mentality predominated by savour for slowness, imaginings, secrecy, indolence, and discretion. Slowness or deferring the fulfilment of a goal to enhance the ecstasy of the moment of fulfilment is what characterised the pre-modern life which is epitomised by the Denon's novella *No Tomorrow*. The characters in the novella unlike the present day 'dancers' who care more about their future goals and fail to relish to the full any experience in the present; cherish ecstasy of the moment, savouring it to the fullest through slow, controlled, leisured wandering, contemplation in solitude and preserving anonymity fully immersing in the event oblivious of the surroundings in wild abandon, every time drawing attention to the event at hand. This accounts for the reason why the plotline of the novel presents simultaneous actions at different levels.

At one level, the action takes place in France at an international entomology conference. Such a venue is an apt locale for various "dancers" who try to capture public attention. The desire for public attention and approval results in what Kundera sarcastically terms as "imagology" as the dancers or performers regulate all their actions to cater to the shifting focus of the camera. Kundera presents the different models of "dancing" through the Czech scientist Cechoripsky, who tries at the conference to glorify his communist martyrdom which indeed is feigned than real, the French politician Berck, who tries to switch over from one social action to another to enhance his media ratings, and Vincent, who boasts in public about his sexual prowess but is incapable of any real act of love-making.

This plot line with the modern day “dancers” engrossed with images, speed, and opportunism is entwined with the plot of wealthy eighteenth-century French lovers from Vivant Denon’s novella at another level.

The novella deals with a secret encounter between a Chevalier and Madame de T. They strive to derive sexual ecstasy by prolonging their affair, slow consummation, and relishing each and every moment to the fullest. Instead of public attention what people in the era of Enlightenment prized most was that of absolute anonymity. The societal mores exemplified by the Chevalier and Madame de T.’s in the 18th century allowed more anonymity and scope for individual enjoyment and freedom. Contrary to this the contemporary desire for public gaze forces “dancers” to constantly regulate their words and deeds to keep up with the brisk pace of media glare which ultimately traps them by reducing them to mere images. Kundera’s preference for the Eighteenth century’s, social mores that gave ample scope for individuals to pursue their private affairs over the contemporary world of technological simulation that reduces the individuals freedom and privacy is very clearly expressed in the novel. Kundera’s novella *Slowness* may be considered an autofiction since Kundera often felt himself a victim of too much media attention that adversely affected his personal and creative life. It is no accident that the narrator is named Milanku suggestive of Milan Kundera and Milanku’s wife in the novel Vera is named after Kundera’s wife herself.

The satiric punch of the novel primarily emanates from the effective application of the theme of “dancers.” Kundera uses the term disparagingly to address the media maniacs; the so called public intellectuals especially politicians. Pontevin remarks “The term “dancer” applies to exhibitionists in public life” (25) and he goes to add that “In the very broad sense of the term...there is certainly some dancer in everyone of us” (26). Thus, Kundera reminds the reader that each one of us who belong to the media infested modern world is prone to be a “dancer” in some way or other. This is unambiguously stated by the narrator:

“You say that, though the nature of fame changes, this still concerns only a few privileged persons. For fame concerns not only the famous people, it concerns everyone. These days, famous people are in magazines, on television screens, they invade everyone’s imagination. And everyone considers the possibility, be it only in dreams, of becoming the object of such fame. The possibility shadows every single person and changes the nature of his life; for any new possibility that existence acquires, even the least likely, transforms everything about existence (36).

Here in a self-reflexive fashion he tells us the readers that it is our common desire for fame that makes us to be concerned about media and which makes us victims of mediatizing.

The episode involving politician Breck and his former crush Imaculata amply demonstrates the above point. Immaculata, fascinated by the former’s celebrity status and media popularity wanted to attach herself to him considering it a new possibility but it turns out to be disappointing for her. She, like the common folks, believes in what she sees in the

television about Breck her school mate. She is enamoured by the media-inflated image of Breck as an epitome of kindness. She writes a letter to him seeking a favour for a poor woman who had been a victim of medical negligence. But Breck ignored it since it “did not give him an opportunity for strutting on television” (38). Later the girl herself wrote to him with Immaculata as reference but Breck tore up the letter, spat on it and flung it into the garbage. Breck, the politician who constantly strives to be in the limelight of the media to boost his public image finds his former lover an annoyance. The benevolent Breck who appears in media discourses as a public intellectual who supports the cause of the oppressed anywhere in the world, in reality proves to be a heartless hypocrite. The cruel face of Breck is revealed further in the episode where he ill-treats Immaculata, the woman who was once the ‘bird of night that troubled his dream.’ The episode further unveils how mediatization demands multiple role playing from individuals. Mediatizing forces a person to hide his/her real identity and parade an artificial one.

Breck rejects Immaculata because she reminds him his own ordinary past life which he does not want to acknowledge now being a celebrity. On the other hand, the thought of having been associated with a famous person like Breck in her past life gives her a new sense of self importance. So she tries her level best to enter in to an intimate relationship with him only to get disappointed in the end. Kundera writes:

The famous people have become a public resource....But they are useful only on condition of remaining truly beyond reach. When someone seeks to confirm his elected status by a direct, personal contact with someone famous, he runs the risk of being thrown out... (45)

The so called celebrities once they are under the glare of the media, once they assume the status of ‘dancers’, once their images are projected on to the screen and seen by all, are admired by all and are beyond the reach of all. The incident involving Breck and Immaculata is indicative of the problem of mediatizing. It shows how one’s social life is influenced by one’s celebrity status and the media attention one gets and it also shows how it adversely affects one’s self perception and relationship with others.

Yet another devastating effect of mediatization is the reduction of social and political histories to stereotypes. This view is expressed through the incident involving the Czech scientist. The Communist regime and its twenty years long occupation of Czechoslovakia is viewed through the flawed historical account offered by the Czech scientist at the entomological conference. His version of the historic account of Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 is fabricated and biased. It subscribes to the western media’s negative stereotypical notions about Communist regime. His version of how he was expelled from the Entomological Institute on account of his opposition to communist rule is far from truth. His passionate narration of his ordeals after he was expelled from the institute and his children driven from school is highly applauded by Breck and the fellow scientists because it fully conforms to the western media discourse about Communist regime being inhuman and oppressive.

Of course, as for Breck it also offered him an apt chance to capture the media attention which he always craves for. The narrator observes: "Hardly has he pronounced the final word than Breck rises and applauds. The camera is there in an instant, it films Breck's face, his hands applauding, and it films the Czech scientist as well" (56). This incident illustrates how mediatization can make a mockery of history as it is revealed later by the narrator that the Czech scientist was driven out of his job not out of any act of revolutionary courage he accomplished against the occupying communist regime but on account of him being a coward. He was too timid to refuse permission to a group of opponents of the Communist regime to hold a meeting in the premises of the Entomological Institute. The narrator sarcastically comments "So, to be accurate, it was timorousness, not courage, that eventually got him driven from his position and his children driven from school" (52). Similarly he receives applause during the conference not for any scholarly presentation he makes - in fact he cuts a sorry figure having forgotten to read out his paper for which he was laughed at after the conference - but for the 'moral judo' that he plays in front of the media.

Pontevin is the mouthpiece of Kundera to present his distaste of mediatized individuals. Pontevin describes Breck to his friends as a "mass-media clown, a ham, a show-off, a dancer" (70). His friend Vincent even goes to the extent of publically criticising Breck's media obsession "Look at him, the only thing he cares about is the woman from the television!...the television is his only master, his only mistress, his only concubine, because I bet he hasn't got any others..." (71). In fact, the writer suggests that mediatization is an inevitable condition of Modern life and no one can resist its influence. This fact is clearly spoken by Breck in his scathing retort to Vincent's criticism "Dear sir, we cannot choose the era we are born in to. And we all of us live under the gaze of the cameras. That is part of human condition from now on. Even when we are fighting a war we are fighting it under the eye of the camera. And when we want to protest against anything, we can't make ourselves heard without cameras. We are all dancers, as you say. I would even say: either we're dancers or we're deserters." (72). Breck seems to suggest that one can do better being a dancer to make the best use of the media than escape from it.

In the view of Kundera mediatizing is a trap that results in the dehumanisation of the individual. The characters like Breck, Pontevin, Vincent, the Czech scientist Cechoripsky all live in a world of make-belief they have built for themselves and what they project before others. This trap of construed reality constantly drains out their humanity, naturalness, spontaneity and fixity of real goals. The presence of a faceless impersonal audience who put the weight of simulation ever looms before them. Their goals are of fleeting nature from which ensues temporal happiness as they race from one event to another with no time left for their victory to sink into their being. So happiness eludes them for speed denies them any memory or relishing of an experience of happiness, if at all any such experience occurs to them. Dwelling on superficialities, the hallmark of this generation is counterfeit nature. This becomes apparent in Breck's relationship with Immaculata which unambiguously showcases his harshness and vulgarity of mind as opposed to all the charity deeds he engages

in front of the media cameras. The Czech scientist is equally at fault of masquerading. He who is a victim of false façade, masquerades himself to be a martyr of communist regime. But his patriotism, as already stated, is nothing but a sham. So it is another guise of “dancing” that surfaces through the Czech scientist Cechoripsky, who makes a calculated maudlin speech before the entomologists to parade his communist martyrdom. Cechoripsky who basks in the attention he procures from his dissident position has actually swallowed the stock images of Communist oppression in Czechoslovakia, which is projected as “deprived of the very meaning of his life” (55). He recreates the same picture culled out of his fake memory before the target audience from whom he propose to elicit attention. Just like his peculiar name he wants his experience also to be counted and registered as singular.

Pontevin too is faulty of simulation. Vincent proves himself to be true follower of Pontevin and Bereck whom he detests, for he enters the shoes of a dancer as attested by the aborted show of masculinity in the episode with Julie. More than consummating their relationship as expected in the natural order of things, even his imaginings are directed at creating a semblance of it before an invisible audience whom he wants to impress. “...this is not an orgy they’re conducting, it is a show, and during a performance actors try not to meet the audience’s eyes” (105). On the contrary, the chevalier was uncertain about the true feelings of Madame towards him for he had overheard her laughter, joining the Marquis over the success of their plot of making chevalier a cuckold. But what he was sure about was the happiness he derived from the love’s night he spent with the madame. When in the early morning, the Marquis spoke of his mistress’s frigidity, the Chevalier could laugh up his sleeve, because she had just proved the opposite to him. But apart from that one certainty he has no other. What Madame de T. did with him- was that routine for her, or was it a rare, even thoroughly unique adventure? Was her heart touched, or is it still intact? (120-21). However he contemplates over two choices – to harp on either of these two ‘The pleasure he experienced, or his reputation as a ludicrous whelp?... In other words : is it possible to live in pleasure and for pleasure and be happy? Can the ideal of hedonism be realized? Does that hope exist?’ (121). The narrator, Milanku who wears the skin of the author closely, identifies Madame de T as a true Epicurean. He observes:

Madame de. T. embodies it: she lied to her husband, she lied to her the Marquis, she lied to the young Chevalier. It is she who is the true disciple of Epicurus. Loveable lover of pleasure. Gentle proactive liar. Guardian of happiness. (120).

The chevalier too decides to be guardian of happiness. ‘Becoming a boor is even worse than being ludicrous. He cannot betray Madame de T. and he will not betray her.’ (125). He harbours no ill will against Madame inspite of realising that he was a mask for ‘she possess the wisdom of slowness’, she practices “the art of suspense,” she under stands “art.”

At this juncture, the episodes of Berck -Immaculata and Vincent- Julie emerge in sharp relief. The foul mouth directed against Immaculata clench the deep seated hatred and poison Bereck harboured against her. Also, in *Slowness*, Berck comes to resemble a Fascist

leader when we learn that he has no qualms about sacrificing others to the causes he superficially promotes: he remains safe behind his media image while the anonymous people whom he has inspired to political action sign petitions, demonstrate in the streets, and are in consequence “treated ruthlessly” (19). Vincent too is devoid of real feelings for Julie which, as already stated, results in his failure. But had he not confronted and been reminded of the intensity of his failure and shortcoming by the Chevalier, he would have bragged about an orgy which exist only in the realm of imagination and was never actualised.

Thus, the novel inscribes the contrast of a relaxed artistic life hinging on slowness and a hectic media-infested modern life anchored on speed as epitomised by 18thC and modern times. With prophetic gaze the novelist could capture the reigning temper and mood of the modern day where media strings make puppets of the individuals. Devoid of time and leisure to ‘stand and gaze’ the modern man falls a prey of public and media gaze. Constrained to put up success stories and genial garb in public light, human life loses its natural ebb and flow and disregard for the other becomes the rule of the day. Strained of memories which are nurtured by leisure and composure which grant a structure for artistic serenity and cherished relationships, modern life races on short spanned pleasures and gains with forgetfulness as companion, with no referential mooring for life. Thus, Milan Kundera’s autofiction *Slowness*, although published a quarter century back, connect to our times and address many of the concerns of contemporary life. ■

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English Text Books at Higher Secondary Level in Odisha : Three Steps Forward, Five Steps Backward

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Textbooks in Odishan context is a basic classroom tool. People having sufficient knowledge of textbook preparation and expertise should be entrusted with such serious task. Since textbooks in a developing state like Odisha are used for a wider geographical area including a large number of learners, it becomes imperative to ensure careful and scientific preparation of textbooks to accomplish the most desired teaching and learning objectives. But the task of textbook preparation at Higher Secondary level in Odisha has failed to make a smooth journey. Since its inception, the Council of Higher Secondary Education has prescribed different English textbooks at various points of time keeping in view with the changing needs of the learners. While for a long period in the past textbooks were prepared based on literature approach, later on a conscious ELT thrust is adopted to prepare the texts. The aim of the paper is to evaluate the prescribed Higher Secondary English textbooks in Odisha with an objective to examine the path the textbooks have traversed so far and to see to what extent the subsequent texts are evolved from its preceding counterparts.

Key words: textbooks, literature approach, ELT orientation, retrogression

Textbooks are not merely the composition of language structures, patterns, skill elements and related vocabulary but also the embodiments of learners' need and learning objectives corresponding to the teaching-learning context. Since teaching is essentially a systematic and planned enterprise, textbooks comprising of suitable set of materials and appropriate activities can serve considerably to the programme of teaching and learning. Textbooks that contain essential elements of language teaching and learning are considered as the most convenient aids for both teachers and learners. As Hutchinson and Torres (1994) state "the textbook is an almost universal element of language teaching". Cortazzi and Jin (1999) consider textbook as a map, a resource, a trainer and an authority. Textbooks ensure inexperienced teachers a road map to deal with the prescribed course and constantly guide them with valuable instructions, support and suggestions. Since textbooks selected for language teaching and learning closely reflect the aims, methods and values of the teaching programme (Cunningsworth, 1995), they maintain immense popularity as effective

components of teaching and learning. In addition, the significance of textbook in language learning is largely defined for its representation of a variety of readymade contexts that make classroom teaching quite interesting. Sheldon (1988) views that textbooks articulate “the visible heart of any ELT programme” and provide considerable advantages for both students and teachers. Hence textbooks as the potential instrument for teaching and learning of English and therefore enjoy wide recognition.

The context of English of English language teaching and learning in the state of Odisha is unarguably text book centred. When it comes to English language teaching in our context the immediate picture that strikes us is a teacher teaching with the help of a textbook in an overcrowded classroom comprising of a number of students of same age group with multiple differences. Apart from being looked upon as a disciplinary device to control large classes, a textbook also helps the teachers to make students converge on a point. Hence both our teachers and students largely dwell upon textbooks. Further in the absence of modern technical aids, workbook, teacher and learner guide in our context, textbooks are considered as indispensable teaching material for language learning. More over our teachers do not have the license to go beyond the prescribed course content or to make any adaption of the same according to learners’ needs and teaching context. In face of such scenario textbook is undoubtedly the primary and sole resource of teaching and learning of English in our academic setting at all three levels- Primary, Secondary and Higher Secondary. Since this paper is limited by the study of Higher Secondary English textbooks only, a comprehensive attempt is executed to explore and evaluate the state the textbooks since the inception of Higher Secondary education as a separate programme.

Higher Secondary English textbooks in Odisha prescribed at different points of time are basically of two types considering the science, principle and approach of textbook preparation. Since the inception of Council of Higher Secondary Education in 1983 as a separate and autonomous body to the present day, the textbooks broadly characterise two facets of textbook writing: textbooks with literature approach and texts with ELT orientation. For a long period of 17 years from 1983 to 2000, the textbooks were prepared based on literature approach primarily because their preparation was entrusted to the group of editors without ELT expertise. The four sets of detailed texts prescribed during this period were Prose for the Young, Poems for the Young- 1983; Prose of our Time, Pansies of Poetry- 1987; Voice of Life, Vision of Life- 1991; Speaking Tree, Singing Bird- 1995. All the detailed texts reflected the same focus, objective and orientation. No clear-cut objective of teaching English, preparing syllabus, textbooks and methodology to be adopted were ever enunciated. It was left to the whims of certain so called intellectual big-wigs who occupied key positions in the academic setup of Odisha to decide and determine the fate of English teaching in Odisha. These textbooks were prescribed at a time when ELT was not even conceived as an idea by the text book makers and teachers for which minimum ELT consideration were never incorporated. In these books age, interests, need of the learners were never taken into reckoning. Nor did the text book makers think of the relevance or

utility of the text in real life situation. The soul focus was teaching English literature through English language, not the ELT approach-teaching language through literature. Linguistics competence was attempted to be enhanced through textual question in the form of comprehensive, composition question and non textual grammar items. As the topics in the textbook, method of teaching and testing never aimed at developing the originality of the students, the situation was highly propitious for bazaar notes, private tuition and blind memorization by students. In view of such serious problems inherent in these books, it would be safe to consider these substandard, defective and unsuitable.

This long period of discouraging experience with the traditional content-based syllabus and unsuitable texts with rich literary materials invited a plethora of resentment and complaints from the teachers, intelligentsia and other stake holders. In a reformative measure, the council for the first time assigned the onus of textbook preparation to a group of ELT experts headed by B.K. Das a man with expertise and experience. From 2000, a totally new set of textbooks with high degree of ambition, with new approach, new aims and objectives in correspondence to the newly crafted syllabus that prevailed upon language skills were in use. Titled Invitation to English-1, Book-2, Book-3 and Book-4 and based on ELT approaches the books were expected to open up new vistas in the teaching of English. The syllabus that underwent a drastic modification spelt out new objectives and approach that the textbooks were made up of. The books of Invitation series prescribed new materials, new methodology and were based on sound theories of ELT. A separate practice book for writing Invitation to English-3 was also prescribed for the first time which was long due. The invitation series had separate books for intensive/detailed reading (Invitation to English-1), extensive/non-detailed reading (Invitation to English-2), writing (Invitation to English-3) and grammar (Invitation to English-4). Breaking the old practice of separate text for commerce students, the Council prescribed same set of texts for the students of all streams.

Unlike the previous texts *The Speaking Tree* and *The Singing Birds*, the new detailed text was an anthology that reduced the burden of students by including only 18 numbers of lessons for both prose and poetry. The book was based on communicative approach and had clearly spelt its objectives in a detailed introduction of 26 pages which served as a general introduction to the series. Other ELT approaches like warm-up activity, reading questions of different types, post-reading activity, language activities were well integrated into the materials. Invitation to English-1 was fundamentally prescribed for intensive reading and contained a variety of text types for learners. The book had one story, nine pieces of authentic narrative and eight pieces of poetry to be read. For instance authentic texts like “The Long Distance Runner” (Article of Lokendra Pratap Sahi in the telegraph) is a narrative piece of text, “The Price of Pollution” is a discursive text. Similarly “The Goti Pua Dance of Orissa” is an article of folk tradition of the state and “On the Road to Jaipur” is a document on Travel. The topic “The People that Time Forgot” is presented in the form of narration that recreates the personal adventurous journey of the writer and “The Pied Piper of Delhi” is a biography of the great cartoonist Keshav Shankar Pilai. The topic “Can We Stay Young?”

is a scientific work and “Small is Beautiful” is a discursive lesson that reflects upon the advent of industrial revolution and its consequent catastrophic impact on human society and environment. Three of the selected topics keeping in mind the socio-cultural context of the learners were “The Ramayan on Television”, The Goti Pua Dance of Orissaf and “Cock-Fight”. For increasing the efficiency of reading the editors have carefully appended comprehension questions of all kinds- global, local, inferential and factual to the lessons. Other essential tasks dealing with chunking, diagram, linking work and study skills involving consulting a dictionary, using an index and other reference materials were also annexed in the lessons. Similarly writing activities were sufficiently stressed at the end of almost all lessons in the book. The writing tasks in the book that included different formats like letter writing, interview writing, letter to editors, description of topics, writing narration and paragraph writing was certainly a welcome gesture by the textbook makers. The activities were also based on the lessons in the text. Unlike the previous texts for the first time notes on examination dealing with the scheme of evaluation along with a model question paper were also provided. The Invitation series in fact removed most of the major problems of previous textbooks based on literature approach. Despite the newness and welcome changes the invitation series primarily failed because in the absence of new orientation and training, the teachers taught the new detailed text like another book and in other matters they were equally resistant to change. The teachers with their old habits refused to adopt the methods that have been promulgated in the detailed introduction of the text. Method, approach and attitude of teachers remained the same. Teachers were not imparted training. Textbooks were not tried out to measure how far they will be beneficial for the students. Try out at different level with students having proficiency and students having lowest of proficiency to see whether these books will fall flat on brilliant students or the books will be totally inaccessible to the ordinary students was never carried out. Though the council conducted some orientation programme yet the programmes were offered by people adopting the same old approach as they were never the ELT experts. Old teachers with literary approach to teaching conducted the orientation programme, so the result was just an exercise in futility. At the same time many of the materials in the detailed text invitation to English-1 were quite difficult and unsuitable and could never lend themselves to the implementation of the method that the text prescribed. So far as the topics were in question, materials and methods made their own way. Similarly ELT experts adopted non-ELT approach like giving glossing of the words before the texts, thereby preventing the learners to guess from the context. Another glaring mistake that the editors committed was to prescribe same set of books for all streams of students which was a gross violation of ESP (English for Specific purpose).. A separate book on grammar was not necessary too. When grammar can be best taught with contexts, instead of prescribing an altogether separate book with grammar items based on writing activities only without any group/interactive activities the text could have been synthesized into the detailed text to make teaching and learning more scientific.

After using the texts for long 09 years, in 2009 cosmetic changes were made in the books primarily because a change in the examination pattern with division of marks was

initiated from this session. The grammar and writing books were made simple and some texts in the first two books (Invitation to English-1 and 2) were replaced by new topics. The so called change in 2009 was a non-event. After being used for long 12 years, it was in the academic session 2012 a completely new detailed text with new materials prepared by new board of editors got published and is currently used. However the new book with the old name Invitation to English-1 is not an improvement over its predecessor. All the innovations and good works ushered in by the previous text is abandoned in one move and the new text is merely a change for the sake of change which ironically has tremendous potential to spoil the learning of English at Higher Secondary level. The council that has steered itself into a new era of teaching English in 2000 by prescribing the Invitation series with a conscious ELT thrust instilled into it, once again entrusts the task of making a new text to a new board of editors having ELT expertise. Contrary enough the book with all outward appearance of ELT including the old name has in fact gone back to the old literature approach. The new text spells out a remarkable retrogression as all the positive steps, new approach, innovations initiated by the previous board of editors have been wiped away by the new textbook makers. The book in fact is prepared quite mechanically and carelessly with minimum use of ELT principles and science of textbook preparation by the board of editors and is shrouded by serious flaws and limitations.

The new text is an anthology and contains 20 lessons with equal number of prose pieces and poems. The prose section contains 10 numbers of topics which is a collection of short stories, articles from newspapers, biography and autobiography and is authentic texts. Unlike the previous book, authors of different texts are introduced in this book. Out of 10 prose texts, 07 are written by foreign authors and 03 pieces are chosen from Indian writers. Similarly the poetry section is comprised of 10 poems out of which only 01 poem is written by an Indian author. Interestingly enough, out of 09 poems selected 06 are very old poems written by British and American poets which have repeatedly been placed in our textbooks since a long time. When the topics in an anthology are authentic texts, the editors must execute considerable amount of sincerity and seriousness to choose topics keeping in mind the target learners. They are expected to select topics those are suitable and appropriate for the learners.

As mentioned above the inception of Invitation series in 2000 has been escorted with the most serious flaw of prescribing same set of books for students of three different streams despite the wide range of competency gap among them. This violation of ESP committed decade ago still is in continuation on part of both the council and our new editors having ELT expertise. And in case if one set is easy for both editors and government then our 'learned' editors must have taken the onus of selecting topics keeping in mind the level of competency, need and interest of learners hailing from different streams. But our editors have made the best of a bad bargain of choosing topics that are highly technical, incomprehensible with difficult language and unsuitable themes. Most of the topics in the new text have been selected without keeping in view the need, interest, age and background

of the learners. Not only are the lessons difficult language wise, the theme even in many cases are unsuitable.

Also in choice of lessons the new editors have largely ignored learners' background and aspects of their socio-cultural development. The three of the prose topics- 'The Cancer Fight, from Hiroshima to Houston', 'Development of Polio Vaccines' and 'The Magic of Teamwork' are uncompromisingly difficult and unsuitable. The first two topics are too scientific and technical to be comprehended. Conceptual complexity and language difficulty are conspicuously inherent in the text which reduced its exploitability inside the classroom. Otherwise such highly technical topics should have not been selected and if selected the texts must have been adapted to enhance their comprehensibility and to make it learner friendly and teacher friendly. The third topic is beyond the reach of young minds for both language difficulty and uninteresting theme the text is also beset with a context that is beyond the grasp of learners. Similarly, the texts 'In London in Minus Fours' and 'On Examinations' are quite difficult in terms of language complexity. The topic 'In London in Minus Fours' is unsuitable for many of its foreign concepts and language difficulties. Unlike the previous text not a single topic except "The Legend behind a legend" does relate to or familiar with the socio-cultural background of the learners.

Except three topics "Stand up for Yourself, The Legend behind a Legend" and "The Golden Touch", almost all other lessons suffer from limitations at different levels. Such unsuitable and inappropriate materials would provide no scope for adoption of interactive or communicative method inside the classroom. As a result the very purpose of teaching gets defeated. With regard to poems, 'Oft, In the Stilly Night', 'A Psalm of Life', 'Money Madness' are convincingly inappropriate and unsuitable. The first poem is heavily philosophical beneath the deceptive surface simplicity, the second poem is unsuitable for its deep didactic and philosophic connotation and difficult language, where as the third is uninteresting because of its complex thought and moral appeal. 'The Ballad of Father Gilligan' is difficult for its mysterious and unclear thematic treatment. Similarly two poems 'Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening' and 'Daffodils', are quite old poems very often selected for English syllabus at different level and hold underlying conceptual difficulty and rich literary undertones respectively. All the poems referred above are written by foreign poets and most of them are very old even. All these poems undoubtedly have the qualities of a good poem in terms of melody, rhythm, imagery, simile, metaphor and other poetic figures, but the subject matter on which most of the poems written do not cater to the age, interest, attitude, temperament and competency level of our learners. Not even a single poem is prescribed in accordance to our learners' socio-cultural background. Unlike the previous anthology, the present editors have set the entire setting and ambience foreign so far the contexts of the poems are in question. They are equally careless in selecting poems as they are in case of prose materials.

The best way to serve the purpose of learning needs is to exploit the texts through tasks and activities. But so far as the tasks and language activities are in consideration the

editors unlike the previous group have failed measurably to synthesize the same into the lessons of the text. The comprehension questions titled in the new book as 'Think it out' are not meant for teaching the texts nor are they aid to learning. But the comprehension questions in most of the lessons are designed inappropriately as if to test the students and not to help them understand the topics. They neither help them to develop their sense of guessing which is an important sub skill of reading, nor do they help them to infer. Most of the questions are factual just to examine the comprehensibility of the students leaving no scope for stimulation of their cognitive ability. The warm up activity in most of the lessons are quite uninteresting and mechanically provided. At times it seems that the editors have designed the pre-reading activity just for the sake of an ELT outlook. In case of providing the vocabulary activities and grammatical items the editors have shown not slightest seriousness and sincerity. The language activities integrated in the texts are exasperatingly limited and inappropriately placed under one heading 'Doing with Words'. One fleeting glance would conclude that our editors by language activity would only mean activity on vocabulary. Even the activity on vocabulary in the text is very less, redundant and boring. The grammatical items are scantily provided and even in case of some lessons they are not based on the texts and quite hilariously on one occasion the item is designed without any context in isolation. Unlike the previous text where the editors have substantially stressed writing tasks of different formats in each lesson, the new textbook makers have never cared to induct a single activity on writing. Similarly activities on other important language skills like listening and speaking are bluntly avoided. The editors even have replaced the invaluable 'Introduction' of 26 pages of the previous text by a preface of just one page which is an act of gross mistake so far ELT approach of textbook preparation is in question. The operation of literature approach in preparation of the new text is evident from several problems and factors pertaining to the anthology such as –no introduction to the book, difficult texts with no adaption, improper grading, no method of teaching in mind (paragraphs are not numbered, no introduction to the book), erroneous notes to topic and superficial use of ELT terms and no activities for poetry materials. . The new text with highly unsuitable teaching materials and scantily provided language activities is by no means a change or improvement over the preceding one rather an apology for it. In case of the other two work books Invitation to English -3 and Invitation to English -4 ,this is sheer unfortunate to mention the two texts with the same old activities and identical examples have been in use for long 19 years and still continuing.

The study above has unfolded a very funny scenario in relation to the preparation of CHSE English text books. While there is a long period of 17years (1983-2000) which is marked by an intellectual stagnation with the same type of heavily literature oriented texts with almost same set of Editors undertaking the job without an iota of ELT thrust, the period from 2000 to 2019 presents a funnier picture than before. While the period from 2000 to 2012 exhibits some conscious effort on the part of the Council and the Editors to prepare the texts with ELT orientation as the Chief-Editor is an expert in the field, the clock was again put back in 2012 when non-experts took up the mantle and pseudo-ELT makeover

was presented in the name of ELT to hoodwink the students, teachers and public at large. This is most unfortunate as the books are still in circulation and they make a mockery of the sincere efforts made by their predecessors. ■

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Capturing the Euphoric Sense of Love Kindled by Food in Select Malayalam Movies

Reena Nair

This paper attempts at unveiling the strange kinship established by food in movies which serve as significant cultural artifacts of modern life. It aims at capturing the elated sense of love kindled by food in some brilliantly crafted movies in Malayalam. It explores the instrumental role played by food in attenuating the negative vibes among people and consequently helps in fostering interpersonal affinity in relationships. It further outlines the trajectories in comprehending the intriguing attributes of the rapidly evolving culinary narratives. It also examines the diverse strategies employed by some reputed filmmakers in Malayalam who displayed a keen interest in incorporating the food ekphrasis as a tool to evocatively articulate the storyline, setting, action, the characters and their aspirations and feelings. Food as a complex signifier offered filmmakers fresher insights into the semiotic process of filmmaking. Movies like *Salt n Pepper*, *Ustad Hotel*, and *Premam* with its machinery of visual fetch before the spectators tongue tickling, lip-smacking tangy food elements that fascinate them to gorge those delicacies and allow them to care for their past memories filled with love.

Key words: Food, love, movies, culinary narratives, synesthetic function, heuristic device.

Ever since the origin of human species, food has been a quintessential phenomenon in sustaining the human lives. Being an all pervasive factor which had lured many human hearts for ages, it grabbed the attention of all people to explore every means to augment the supply of food. Discovering, procuring, creating, manufacturing and cooking food were of utmost importance in all ages bestowing on food great supremacy. Virginia Woolf had rightly claimed about the import of food in her essay *A Room of one's Own* as "One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well".⁽¹¹⁾ The aphorism substantiates the ubiquitous influence of food in the lives of human populace. The innate zest among humans and their lifelong endeavour for procuring and processing food serve as testimonies to the wide ranging proclivity for food.

For aeons people have been displaying an unprecedented craving for exquisite food. The very image of Bacchus, the Roman god of agriculture and vine engirdled with grapes and ivy plants signals the inherent pleasure among humans for consumption of food

as a potent joy of the flesh. The constant urge among humans to procure the best delicacies of food has even permeated to create a matrix of love in human with a display of exceptional energy and enthusiasm making life more enchanting. The varied food patterns connect people to their different cultural and ethnic groups. Every person is reared differently and is served different types of food to taste which gradually nurtures one's appetite for food. A strong and sturdy reaction is manifested by people with regard to their individual preferences for food and the food culture they were fostered upon. The varied factors moulding the food preferences comprise the family, friends, culture, inheritance, etc.

Food being the fundamental need of human, there is much of a hankering for its production and consumption. The singular phenomenon which remains deeply embedded in our social and psychological behaviour and attitude is the victual. Food is irrevocably interwoven with love and this profound association can be traced to the inherent culture of expressing love through offering of food. Owing to an intricate hormonal reaction, the emotional clinging to our beloved ones is affected resembling our earnest desire for food. The traditional Chinese medicine claims the human heart to be the supreme ruler of body and the container of the spirit of a person. Hence the very act of consumption of food becomes a pleasant and gratifying experience.

In Indian culture, the phenomenon of food serves as a proclamation of love since the very idea of caring involves preparing, serving and eating food with the loved ones. Just as human beings thrive on love, food too becomes a source of sustenance in human lives. Food has always had an intimate association with regulation of emotion throughout the lifespan. The interpersonal impact of food had its strong roots in the earliest biological kinship established between parent and child influencing its behaviour through food offering. The deed of providing milk indulged in by the mother became an indispensable appendage to the love showered on the child strengthening the emotional bonding. Through the process of food offering mother ensures the survival of the child as well which in turn gathers an immense propensity in the child for establishing close relationships by giving and sharing food. Hence the initial reciprocity imbued with a sense of love and affection enhances the attitude and demeanour of the child in responding to various situations in the future life.

Food has been instrumental in attenuating the negative vibes of both the provider and recipient of food. Consequently the culinary practice with all its intriguing attributes has gained momentum and is of paramount importance in soothing one's self and others' selves fostering interpersonal affinity in relationships. The act of selection and consumption of food announces the extent to which we value and love our bodies. Often we find romantic dating couple exchanging their amorous glances and spending hours over food or a mother engaged with the ramblings of her children over a baked cake signaling how the sharing of food resources intensifies relationships. Such conversations over food gushed with enthusiasm translate the meaning of creating and sharing delicacies into an enjoyable and artistic activity.

Bacon in his essay *Of Studies* explicates his views about the process of devouring a book in his laconic style "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some

few to be chewed and digested.” (1)The aphorism maps the complex linkage between food and books asserting an important bearing of food in literature. The traditional Indian wisdom of we becoming what we eat outlines the trajectories in comprehending the ambiguous and rapidly evolving culinary narratives. Terry Eagleton’s pithy statement about food, “If there is one sure thing about food it is that it is never just food...Like the post structuralist text, food is endlessly interpretable as gift, threat, poison, recompense, barter, seduction, solidarity, suffocation” (Sarah Shieff:68) complements the interpretative nature of food in literary narratives. The natural semantics of food gets reflected in Roland Barthes’ incisive remarks that food is not only a collection of products but also a system of communication, a body of images, a protocol of images, situations, and behaviour which evinced the growing importance of food narratives gaining ground in the contemporary milieu.

Every individual can have numerous stories to articulate in connection with food which serves as the foundation element in nurturing all human relationships. The very process of creating and sharing distinct delicacies has been an aesthetic and endearing experience for all alike. The delightful experiences and interactions over food are relished by many writers with a thumping satisfaction which finds evidence in Hemingway’s reminiscences about slurping Chinese sea slugs as, “There is romance in food when romance has disappeared from everywhere else”(“Gastronomic Adventures” 476) verbalising the exotic attributes of food. Furthermore G B Shaw in his play *Man and Superman* had remarked, “There is no love sincerer than the love of food”(Act I 54). Salman Rushdie too accentuates on the hermeneutic traits of food in his metafiction *Midnight’s Children* that food is memory, food is irony, food is drama, food is symbol, and food is form which is endlessly interpretable (530). In *Edible Ecriture*, Eagleton expounded on the process of literary creation as a process of cooking a delicacy in a few captive words, “Writing is a processing of raw speech just as cooking is a transformation of raw materials”(48). A few similar glimpses of culinary transformations can be discerned in films too. Food has been an integral part of filmmaking wherein the viewers behold the striking ways in which food integrates the narrative strategies towards a spectacular outcome.

Initially, in films, the role of food has been given scant regard though it possessed an incredible metaphoric, representational and narrative power. But later, owing to gross familiarity and commonality of food in every realm of human life, many filmmakers embarked on the errand of focusing their films on food to convey the myriad aspects of intriguing human relations. Numerous such narratives founded on culinary practices attempted at exploring the ethnic, religious, philosophical aspects communicated through food. Discerning the importance of food, filmmakers showed a keen interest in mastering the food ekphrasis to be introduced into their films as a tool to evocatively articulate the storyline, setting, action, the characters and their aspirations and feelings. Food as a complex signifier offered filmmakers fresher insights into the semiotic process of filmmaking. Gaye Poole, writer of one of the few books on food, vividly expounded the metaphoric relevance of food: “It is possible to ‘say’ things with food- resentment, love, compensation, anger, rebellion, withdrawal. This makes

it a perfect conveyor of subtext; messages which are often implicit rather than explicit, but surprisingly varied, strong, and sometimes violent or subversive.” (3)

The metaphor of food has been interpolated into movies, for over a century now, to the extent that it has been framing our social, ethnic, national sexual identities; our aspirations, emotions and feelings; and even our views about love, romance, hatred, frustration, anger, revenge, despair, hope, etc. A culture of consumerism has been nurtured among the human species in the highly technological world where the machinery of visual captivated all alike. People exhibit a natural tendency to get engrossed with each shots and scenes of the movie at each level similar to a person getting enticed by variety dishes. Ian Christie, professor of film studies, posits that cinema itself is a kind of consumption where people are nourished with bite-sized chunks. And through the mechanism of film consumption, the viewers consume all the ideologies, beliefs and values propagated through film. Thus the culinary tradition delineated in films serve as signifiers of cultural continuum and whether it is coded negatively or positively forms a crucial ingredient in the cinematic experience.

Carolyn Daniel, British author, quotes in her work *Voracious Children: Who eats whom in Children's Literature*, “Food descriptions in fiction, like menus in restaurants and TV cookery programmes- produce visceral pleasure- a pleasure which notably involves both intellect and material body working in synaesthetic communion positing the argument that the synesthetic function of food detailing paves way for a persistent absorption with food in the literary text and also with the food text. The food scenes in literary works projected themselves as revelatory instructions which straddle the realm of culinary unearthing the synesthetic function of food. Critics like Claud Levi- Strauss, Pierre Bourdieu and Mary Douglas considered the ways our tongues craving for distinct foods mirrored the social and cultural frameworks and how the culture in turn carved one's food preferences as one of the important theorisations in food narratives.

Any diabolic or abominable person can be appeased by providing delicious food served with a tinge of love. This conjecture of food and love came to be dealt with in umpteen movies leading to the emergence of a new genre of food films. In such films, food becomes a heuristic device enabling the viewers to understand the configurations of love, culture, identity, ethnicity, etc. In the emerging “food film” genre, the makers of the film have genuinely attempted to follow many of the basic conventions catering to the genre. In order to incorporate some of the conventions they assigned ‘food’ a star role, focussed camera on preparation of food filling the whole screen with food. They adeptly manoeuvre the plot and character through numerous culinary symbols.

There has been a proliferation of culinary based movies in the Malayalam film industry too. Many upcoming directors infused the metaphor of food into their works to unveil the multiple nuances of relationships founded on the potent emotion of love. Food, being the fabric of many people's lives, is used extravagantly by the filmmakers with a distinct cogency and persuasiveness. The variety cuisines aesthetically and intricately arranged in contrasting colours and texture are presented to the viewers to satiate both their

physical and visual appetite. Food functions as a catalyst fuelling our happiness and ability to operate well in our life.

The dynamics of love is triggered through an expansive display of cuisines dished out in select Malayalam movies like *Salt n Pepper*, *Ustad Hotel* and *Premam*. The films delineate how food plays a pivotal role in bridging generation gap and enhances the bonding over a shared love for food and cooking. These film makers use food to communicate important aspects of characters' emotions like love, frustration, despondency, anger, happiness, etc. The portrayal of homely food triggers the nostalgic thoughts of the audience making such films grand success outside Kerala too.

Salt N' Pepper (2011) directed by Aashiq Abu showcases a celebration of all kinds of popular authentic delicacies of Kerala enticing the taste buds of the audience with a spectacular sight of exotic dishes. It is one of the first films dishing up an assortment of multiple cuisines that are held close to the malayali hearts. Food with its manifold implications takes up a pivotal role in the film. The title song rustic in nature mesmerized the audience with a pageant of images of tantalizing brown roasted unniyappams, crispy banana chips, spicy Malabar biryani, Kozhikode halwa, Kerala fish curry, fuming puttund kadala flooding the screen.

According to Anne L Bower's, author of *Reel Food*, remarks in the introductory chapter about the convention of 'food films.' "The restaurant kitchen, the dining room and/or kitchen of a home, tables within a restaurant, a shop in which food is made and/ or sold, will usually be central settings." (6) the film *Salt N' Pepper* certainly caters to the food film genre. The film begins with a grand display of famous eateries across Kerala luring the hearts of many. It happens for the first time in Malayalam movies that the characters relish the act of cooking, they engage in long conversations about food, and they also indulge in long sequences of cooking. Hence the film is considered as an ode to food where food is intimately associated with the life of the main characters.

The story revolves around a matured couple named Kalidasan, an archaeologist, and Maya, a dubbing artist who bond over the cooking stove. Both happen to be foodies whose interest in cooking encourage them to converse over the phone for a duration of four days setting out to make Joan's Rainbow cake. Astonishingly it is the love of food which brings these two strangers together. Their bonding starts with Kalidasan receiving a call from Maya who mistakes his number for a restaurant and places an order for a special dosa. Without any further confirmation she immerses into the nostalgic thoughts of her mother making her hot dosas and special chutney luring any viewers. But when her stomach craves for those savory delicacies, she loses her patience and places him another call quite enraged. Kalidasan easily becomes a prey to spite and anger due to his immaturity and outrageously retorts to her saying that he will make her eat raw mango if she taunts him anymore. In a fit of anger he slanders her using the food imagery having vulgar connotations. To his surprise, she too retaliates with no lesser impact by saying that the mango dipped in salt could be served for his death feast. These dialogues remind us how food is associated with all

customary practices forming the sole fabric of our culture which is cogently reflected in such films. Later when they are restored to a tranquil sense of emotion he feels apologetic and abruptly calls her seeking forgiveness. Obviously the apologetic call made by Kalidasan dilutes their mutual resentments.

Sooner or later their rancour and hostility give way to a tantalizing love through their ongoing conversations on cooking and local delicacies. Maya confesses in one occasion that cooking brings to her the thoughts of her deceased mother. This shows how cooking paves way for an indelible love between mother and daughter. The central story of Joan engaged in making the multi-layered Rainbow cake for receiving her French husband gone on war is flavouring the dessert with four different layers of strawberry, pistachio, orange and lastly the chocolates brought by him to embrace her with love. Here the cake with its four layers are symbolic of four different emotions of fear, despair, love and hope experienced by the couple. The rainbow cake in fact strengthens their bond of love and signals the ultimate peace and prosperity bringing in colour into their life. This story serves as an invigorating source for the main characters to indulge in making Joan's Rainbow cake within their four days long conversation and to seal their bond of love in the process.

Along the main storyline develops a love story of a young couple Manu, a management graduate, and Meenakshi, an IELTS teacher. They play a leading role in nurturing the love between Kalidasan and Maya who go out to meet each other in the disguise of the main lovers who lacked confidence in their external appearance. The story takes a jocular view of the character Babu who is brought by Kalidasan to his home to fill his secluded life. Kalidasan who in the process of seeking a prospective bride brings home Babu, the chef to replace his bride. He is so enticed by the brown unniyappams offered to him by the girl's family that he goes straight into the kitchen to fetch the cook responsible for those dainty unniyappams. There exists an unusual bonding of friendship and love between Kalidasan and Babu which is firmly grounded on the food cooked by Babu. The screen brims with scrumptious food elements that captivates the viewers to gorge those delicacies and allows them to fondle with their past memories filled with love. The delectable introductory song alludes interestingly to food and romance by equating the emotion to paladaprathamam (a sweet liquid dish) sliding off a plantain leaf and succulent mango slices in mampazhapulisheru (a special dainty dish). The director feels that the love of food is a delicate topic which ought to be dealt deftly.

Ustad Hotel (2012) directed by Anwar Rasheed features the most glorious breathtaking food moments that leaves the spectators sit open mouthed and drooling. The film treats food as an emotion and the act of watching it is transformed into a palatable experience of eating it. It further exposes how people revel at the extravagant visualisation of splendid food scenes comprising biryani by the beach, piping hot sulaimani and fusion of various continental dishes. The film portrays food and its significant role in sustaining life and binding relationships. It takes us through deviant ways of embracing the basic emotion of love through food. Food is likened to romance since indulging in culinary

creations has an intimate semblance with involvement in romance. In the case of both if we fail to give absolute concentration in the process we might end up in a wistful sigh unable to enjoy every flavour of it.

Faizal, the main protagonist, expresses a proclivity for cooking from his boyhood days quite unusual to their societal culture. His father was terribly chagrined with his son's decision to become a chef studying abroad and confiscates his passport. These adverse situations prompt Faizi to land up at the Ustad hotel owned and run by his grandfather, Karimka by the beach side in Calicut. All people residing by the beach love to eat his unique biryani made out of love. Faizi develops a close kinship with his grandpa who renders to him life lessons like giving heart and soul into cooking, the exquisite relationship between food and love and the queer ways in which good food knits people together. It is also revealed that food has a catalytic role in transforming a person. Many changes can be discerned in Faizi who only after his encounter with grandpa realises the passions and emotions involved in cooking. He undertakes a spell binding journey through food, relationships, romance and power of empathy and food offering which reshapes his personality into a matured, self-composed person with great poise. He ultimately learns the sole purpose of the profession as feeding the people with love.

During his association with his grandpa, Faizi masters the art of shaping Malabar porotta and gains expertise over several other aspects of cooking. After he attains the fervour to do all kinds of job he is suggested by his grandfather to serve in a five star hotel from where Faizi shockingly understands that his grandpa's old biryani recipe turns out to be the most prized dish in the neighbouring five star hotel. Faizi is able to win his superior's appreciation with a wrap of Kerala porotta and Mexican chicken. Shahana, the daughter of a business tycoon, after her marriage negotiations with Faizi fail due to the involvement of her orthodox family, gets engaged to another person against her wish. Faizi and Shahana, the two liberal spirits share similar interests but are unable to express their mutual love for the fear of hurting the family. When she visits the five star hotel where Faizi works, her fiancée humiliates Faizi for bringing the food not well cooked. After the skirmishes Faizi barges into the kitchen to make a strange dish of oysters with Kerala spices which is symbolic of the frustration and unpleasantness persisting between the lovers.

The gorgeous description of sulaimani (black tea) offered by Karimka with a tinge of love in every cup is considered as the most appropriate ending to every meal. His grandpa confides in him the beautiful tale of sulaimani which brewed in his youth lumps of love. Sulaimani with its blending of sweet and sour flavours signifies a blend of experience invigorating us like romance. In the end Faizi understands the importance of his grandfather's words that the success of a good chef lies in the deed of filling not merely people's stomachs but also their hearts with food thus making the profession a noble one.

Alphonse Puthran's *Premam* (2015) traces the love story of George, the main protagonist, who as a teenager falls in love with Mary, most charming girl in the school, as a youth falls in love with Malar, guest lecturer in the college and finally as an adult nurtures

love with Celine, Mary's sister. The story focuses on George as an evolving character who in spite of seeking love from three women discovers that his love with Celine in the last episode only blooms full. George in the last part emerges as an enthusiastic baker runs a Cafe Agape in Kochi. The first seeds of love are sown on the night Celine rushes to the Cafe entreating him to provide a cake to celebrate her brother's birthday before the shop closes down. George displays a special interest in offering her the cake but fascinated by the energetic young girl ends up ruining the writing on the cake. The sweet heavenly cake starts building a healthy relationship between them.

Celine, his future lady love, lured by the lingering taste of the cake frequents his shop. Later when George offers her double layered red velvet cake with cream cheese frosting she becomes an ardent fan of him. Celine tasting the red velvet cake leave the onlookers' mouth agape with incredulity. It is the cake metaphor that draws the lovers closer culminating in their marriage. Other than the cake imagery there are only a few prior references to food through the random dialogues made by other characters like Physical training teacher in the college canteen ordering for sardine fry and other fried fishes making the audience salivate for it even while discussing the subject of sublime love. There is also a reference to lime juice with kaskas (poppy seeds) indicative of the vibrancy of the boys' youth like poppy seeds.

Interestingly the male protagonists in all these movies are avid foodies with an exceptional love for cooking much against the societal tides enforcing cooking on women as a disciplinary mechanism to comply with the traditional authority of men. The cliché maxim 'stomach is the way to a man's heart' is slightly rearranged in these films since food becomes the direct passport to a woman's heart. These films inspire the spectators to look beyond the kitchen which no longer confines or constricts anyone but rather carves out a special space and time to explore the talents and enable people to pursue their secret pleasures and connect to their family, culture and community. These films drive home the message that food if cooked with love can create mesmerising effects on people in constructing savoury relationships. It rather establishes the fact that food and love are inextricably interlinked thus giving life the real essence. ■

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BOOK REVIEW

Book Title : *UNDERSTANDING POSTCOLONIALISM*

Author : Jane Hiddleston

Publisher : 1st Edition, Acumen Publishing Ltd, 2009; 1st Indian Reprint, Rawat Publications, Jaipur, 2012, ISBN 978-81-316-0482-3, Pages 202, Price Rs. 695/-

Reviewer : Ananya Dash, Ph.D. Scholar, Dept. of English, Nagaland University.

Jane Hiddleston's book *Understanding Postcolonialism* (2012) is a valuable addition to the treasure-house of Postcolonial criticism. In the backside jacket, Charles Forsdick of the University of Liverpool has introduced the book as a 'concise and timely introduction to the philosophical underpinnings of anti-colonial and postcolonial criticism and a significant intervention in the field'. Whereas Forsdick hinges upon the philosophical analysis/basis of postcolonial thought brilliantly elucidated by Hiddleston, Lynda Lange of University of Toronto highlights the author's way/style of presentation and recommends the book as 'a fresh, clear and lucid presentation of major strands in postcolonial thoughts. There is no denying the fact that Postcolonialism offers challenging and provocative ways of thinking about colonial and neocolonial powers with special emphasis on the binaries self and the other, center and periphery, gulf between the colonized and the colonizer, writing of the history of the marginalized from below with a spirit of protest and resistance as evidenced from Subaltern historiography/ discourse and contesting cultural imperialism, meta-narratives and Eurocentric hegemony. Viewed from this perspective, the book under review examines the philosophy of postcolonialism in order to bring to the fore the often conflicting systems of thought which underpin it. In his introduction to the book Hiddleston himself states that he will deal with only the philosophical dimensions of postcolonialism (1). The focus of the book is, therefore, on the diverse mode of ethical interrogation by postcolonial philosophers. Such a standpoint delimits the scope of the book to philosophical interrogation of postcolonialism only skipping thereby any detailed discussion of/on the politics, economics and literature of postcolonialism.

The book under review analyses the various nuances and implications of multiple manifestations of postcolonialism. It also explores multiple strategies of postcolonialism as conceived by some of the major philosophers and thinkers of the 20th Century such as Karl Marx, Antonio Gramsci, Louis Althusser, Jean Paul Sarte, Michel Foucault, Emmanuel Levinas, Edward Said, Derrida, Homi K. Bhabha, Franz Fanon, Abdelkebir Khatibi, Edouard

Glissant, Mudimbe, Mbembe and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Hiddleston opines that in dealing with postcolonialism, some critics made a problematic division between political, empirical and material effects of colonialism on the one hand, and its ethical dimensions concerning the relations between ‘self’ and ‘other’ on the other. These two strands of postcolonialism draw, respectively, from Marxist politics and Levinasian ethics. While addressing these two rather polarized aspects of postcolonial interrogation of colonialism, this book upholds the necessity of addressing both the politics of colonial oppression and its underlying unethical representational structures at the same time.

While Marx critiques the dominance of ideological superstructure over the economic base structure, which according to Engels, leads to “false consciousness”, Gramsci’s approach is different in the sense that his writing analyses together economic conditions and the knotted structure of political and ideological relations that serve to form the social fabric. For Gramsci, unlike Marx, the relation between base economic structures and the hegemonic class is wide ranging and diffuse and is bound up with culture and the spread of values as well as with exploitation. Hegemony for Gramsci is lived social relations rather than just false ideas or illusions. It is also for him a site for struggle as plural subjects under the sway of hegemony assert their multifarious and contradictory forms of social consciousness. Hiddleston tells us that for Gramsci, again unlike Marx, resistance would be achieved through the creation of a powerful and fully realized self-consciousness. The author also reminds us that Gramsci’s concept of subaltern has been used by Ranajit Guha and Spivak, among others, to examine the insurgency of the Indian Peasantry.

Hiddleston then discusses Louis Althusser’s critique of Marx and Gramsci. He points out the theoretical gap in Marx’s analysis of the question of how the ideological superstructure works itself into actual economic relations and conditions. Althusser, however, does not rely on Gramsci’s theory of hegemony and cultural supremacy in order to explain this point. Rather he is apprehensive about Gramsci’s idealistic desire to merge economic infrastructure, exploitation, class struggle, the law and the state under the unifying ambit of hegemony. Althusser notes that while Marx is right in asserting that the ruling class controls both the means of production and the community’s mental production, he fails to comprehend the agencies or ‘apparatuses’ through which dominating class exercise its control over them. For Althusser, the state is a “machine” with a set of apparatuses at its disposal to ensure the continued dominance of the ruling bourgeois class. These repressive apparatuses are made up of the army and the police and are complicit with other political apparatuses as the head of the state, the government, and the body of the administration. Althusser asserts that the ideology of the ruling class is promulgated via a plurality of ideological apparatuses such as the education system flourished through schools and colleges, the church, the legal system, communications and the family. Thus for Althusser, unlike Marx and Engels, ideology is not a “falsity” or an illusion or a series of ideas or ruling consciousness, but a concrete set of mechanics. It implies that ideology is not simply a ready formed consciousness, but an agent of subjectivity. It determines and interpellates individuals

into assuming the form of a social subject in the service of the state at the cost of sacrificing the perception of their relation to the means of production.

Hiddleston is of the view that in spite of such limitations in Marx's critique of colonialism and economic exploitation, major revolutionary thinkers such as Franz Fanon and Jean-Paul Sartre derive their understanding of revolt from Marx. More broadly, the concept of ideology as developed by Marx, Gramsci and Althusser feeds into postcolonial denunciation of colonial power as propped up by a system of false images and mirages.

Levinas's work can be seen as pertinent for postcolonial philosophy because he writes against any conception of subjectivity as totalized, masterful and dominant over the other. Levinas's major works seek to condemn not so much the vocabulary of race as the related notions of the "totality", "sovereignty" and "imperialism" of the self. In **Totality and Infinity**, Levinas maintains that war is the inevitable result of the attempt to conceive the self as entirely whole, self contained and self-sufficient, since such a conception inevitably leads to oppression or exclusion. The notion of "totality" alludes both to the totalitarianism of National Socialism or of any imperialism, and to Western knowledge itself, according to which the individual conceives himself as a totality and subordinates everything that is exterior to himself. Levinas's main objective in this work consist in criticizing the ways in which Western thought has conceived the self, or Being, as totalized and self-same; it either excludes or assimilates otherness. Levinas laments that in ontology the freedom of Being is prioritized before the relation with the other; indeed, freedom means "the mode of remaining the same in the midst of the other". According to Levinas, the error of Western metaphysics is its reliance on ontology, and war and injustice are presented as direct consequences of this concentration on the freedom of Being to the detriment of ethical relation with the other.

Hiddleston then focuses on Franz Fanon's critique of colonialism and asserts that Fanon is at once a political activist and a philosopher. He also highlights Fanon's idea of what it means to be human through an ethical commitment to otherness and to the new. For him Fanon is both a militant and a psychoanalyst, who conceptualizes the human as an endless process of self-creation as opposed to reification and stasis. He advocates at the same time respect for the other's dynamism and denounces the ontological categorization of the other as well as the practical mechanics of domination. Freedom is at the heart of Fanon's call, unlike that of Levinas, for whom the ethical encounter precedes freedom.

Hiddleston at this juncture brings in Jean-Paul Sartre's critique of colonialism and maintains that he, though building on Fanon, foreshadows subsequent forms of postcolonial theory indebted to poststructuralism. Sartre, like Fanon, argues that colonialism is self-defeating in its very structure. Sartre maintains that the colonizer hates the colonized he oppresses but this hatred means that he wants either to eradicate the colonized, or to collapse the division he relies on by creating an assimilated society. The system as a result requires the colonizer to keep the colonized in a sort of limit position, capable of work but paid the lowest possible wages, and this system inevitably generates rebellion and brings the

colonizer's violence back on to himself. The colonial system tries to alienate the colonized people by forcing a foreign language on them, a language that the colonizer could then claim as his own. By undermining the mastery of colonial discourse, Sartre comes close to anticipating Derrida's form of postcolonial critique.

Coming to Mahatma Gandhi, Hiddleston maintains that unlike Fanon, Gandhi disapproved of violence and recommended peaceful forms of protest, together with strength of will. His concept of *Satyagraha* is a form of passive resistance. Gandhi's critique of British exploitation in India was moral as well as political. For him, however, the enemy was less the British than the evils of modern civilization embarked on the capitalist system. He, therefore, advocated a return to spirituality and tradition as a strategy for thwarting the onslaught of the colonial system.

Drawing on Gandhi and Fanon, Asish Nandy explores in his *The Intimate Enemy* (1983) the psychology of colonialism and asserts that colonialism "colonizes minds in addition to bodies"(xi). His focus has, therefore, been directed largely to a psychoanalytic understanding of colonialism. Colonialism, according to Nandy, is damaging to both the colonizer and the colonized so far as their self-perception is concerned. He explores the ways colonialism infiltrates in to the very perception of it by both the colonizer and the colonized. As a result, the strategy for resistance on the part of the colonized is undermined by a Western universalist discourse on which they rely on in order to interpret colonialism. In this connection, he refers to Fanon's imitation of Sartre's style for criticizing colonialism and maintains that "the West has not merely produced modern colonialism, it informs most interpretations of colonialism"(xii). The psychology of colonialism is also evident from the fusion of sexual and political dominance, establishment of stereotypical virility, image of masculinity reminiscent of Fraz Fanon's discussion on the virility of the black man. According to Hiddleston, Nandy also locates the psychology of colonialism in the childlike quality of the native. While recalling Sartre's view that both colonizer and colonized are cogs in the system, Nandy explores the colonial system's perverse psychic effects on the colonizing mind'(Hiddleston 66).

Referring to the Subaltern Studies Collective stewarded by Ranajit Guah, Partha Chatterjee, Dipesh Chakravorty and Spivak, Hiddleston asserts that for this group of historians the historiography of Indian nationalism is guilty of upholding "both colonial and bourgeois-nationalist elitism"(69).. In contrast to Nandy's psychoanalytic approach, these historians while focusing colonialism and postcolonialism in India, are committed to rewrite the political history of colonial India from the point of view of the 'subaltern'. While patronizing subaltern historiography, they also tend to unearth the complicity between power and knowledge which is strongly reminiscent of Foucault's conceptualization of power. At the same time, the Subaltern historiographers, according to Hiddleston, also "reveal how economic oppression is directly mirrored by the suppression of the voice"(69).

Michel Foucault, according to Hiddleston , contributes to the postcolonial philosophy through his assessment of relation between power and knowledge. The Subaltern

studies historians' focus on the working of the colonial and elitist power structures in the exclusion of the "subaltern" from the process of knowledge formation has been reworked into a comprehensive theory by Foucault. Charting the trajectory of madness through history and focusing on the prison system and sexuality, Foucault demonstrates how discourse is instrumental in supporting relations of subjugation.

Edward Said's critique of Orientalist discourse heavily draws on Foucault's theories. This 'academic' discourse serves the purpose of presenting the Orient in the garb of certain images and mirages facilitating and justifying thereby the dominance of the West over the East. In Said's *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) we not only come across cultural imperialism and resistance thereof, but also a kind of postcolonial humanism that calls for an ethical awareness of other's difference. By recommending the importance of "contrapuntal" meeting of cultures, Said paves the way for a more nuanced exploration of the meeting grounds of culture by Homi Bhabha.

Both Jacques Derrida and Homi Bhabha direct their postcolonial critique not so much against any particular regime(s) as against the ethnocentrism of Western metaphysics. Both of them target not the mechanics of colonial exploitation but the structure of the Western *episteme*, which positions the European subject at the centre and subordinates other cultures. Derrida in particular is concerned with the ethical dimension of this issue, which he draws on Levinas. For Derrida, ethics and politics are different, but inseparable. Bhabha, relying on Derrida's postcolonial theories, deconstructs the masterful colonial discourse and supplement it by the one(s) based on the native's difference. This notion is based on his theory of cultural hybridity, which challenges the idea of any 'unified postcolonial category'. By focusing on minority rights in his later works, Bhabha upholds a humanism which steers towards a celebration of 'the dynamism and mobility of cultural identity'.

Working on the 'deconstructive ethics' of Derrida, Abdelkebir Khatibi and Edouard Glissant ground this ethic on specific geographical locations. This is, however, not the denial of universality, but an acceptance of the specific to bring forth a "broader ethics of relationality", which is both local and global. It thus facilitates the conceiving of local history with the intention of promoting freedom and multiplicity. Khatibi makes an alignment between deconstruction and decolonization by focusing on the importance of accepting the multiplicity of Maghreb in terms of upholding its internal differences instead of asserting "an essentialized notion of a traditional past". He advocates a "*pensee autre*" or "other thought" that would attend to cultural and linguistic differences. He also advocates a theory of bilingualism in order to assess the alienating effects as well as the creative potential of writing across two languages. His theory of bilingualism is inseparably connected with his exploration of multiple cultures – Moroccan, Arab and Islamic. This problematizes any attempt at conceiving Arab culture in generalized terms.

Though not unrelated to Khatibi's "*pensee autre*", Glissant advocates, unlike the former's bilingualism, "a chaotic melting pot of languages and cultures" relating the specific

place of the Caribbean with the rest of the world. He also affirms the creative potential of 'detour' or 'division' rather than the straightforward return to roots.

Hiddlestone then maintains that G.C. Spivak, V.Y. Mudimbe and Achille Mbembe engage most explicitly throughout their work both with Marxist political theory and with a form of ethical thinking derived from deconstruction. Their works suggest that while politics and ethics do indeed require different modes of thinking, these different modes are both necessary for an understanding of postcolonialism and, indeed, the challenge is to keep both in play without falling prey to the shortcomings associated with the programmatic use of either.

One of Spivak's key concepts, according to Hiddleston, is the problematics associated with the articulation of the desires of "subaltern" women. Her works denounces the ways in which subaltern women in particular have been silenced. She also shows how their voices echo between the lines of Western philosophy and literature. Mudimbe's work consists, however, in a political and ethical critique of "Africanism". He argues that knowledge about Africans has often incorporated them into the "history of the same". He calls for a more authentic form of African knowledge, while admitting that "this authenticity is difficult to attain".

Mbembe criticizes the way in which colonial law homogenizes and subjugates the native, but he also denounces the violence of African regimes in the postcolony. He reveals how these regimes are characterized by excess, vulgarity and theatricality and how they also disallow resistance. His analysis bears testimony to the difficulty of overcoming both colonial and postcolonial violence.

Jane Hiddleston concludes his discussion on postcolonialism by holding the view that Postcolonial philosophy is a complex intermingling of political and ethical thinking and that an understanding of both empirical and discursive structures of oppression is necessary for the establishment of a postcolonial critique. At the same time, the author also candidly states that neo-imperialist oppression still remains a formidable scar on humanity despite the achievement of freedom by many a colony. Despite the decolonization movements of the 1950s and 1960s, the tragic burden of colonialism is discernible everywhere, especially with super powers and local leaders, precisely because "contemporary power structures are perhaps all the more pervasive because they are insidious" (179). This vindicates Foucault's contention that 'power is everywhere'. Hiddleston is further reminded of Spivak's warning that 'global capitalism and the international division of labour have entrenched the subjugation and exploitation initiated by colonialism' (179). Unfortunately, this neo-imperialistic economic oppression is encouraged by Western academics, who are blind to the experiences of the 'subaltern others'. Written in a lucid and moving style, with various 'key points' given at the end of all the eight chapters, 'questions for discussion and revision' and guide to further reading given on all chapters followed by an exhaustive bibliography at the end, Hiddleston's *Understanding Postcolonialism* will be warmly acclaimed by students and researchers of postcolonialism. ■

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