

# ROCK PEBBLES



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**Cover Artist**

Dr. Dinabandhu Sahoo, Bhawanipatna, Dist. Kalahandi, Odisha  
Email - dinabandhu1970@gmail.com

---

**Correspondence Address**

H.O : NARANPUR, Post: KODANDAPUR, Via: DEVIDWAR  
Dist.: JAJPUR, ODISHA, INDIA, PIN Code-755007  
Bhubaneswar Office : U-22/2, Bapuji Nagar, Bhubaneswar - 751009.  
Delhi Office : H-97, Gyan Mandir Road, Jaitpur Extn., Badarpur, New Delhi - 110044  
e-mail : rockpebbles 2007@rediffmail.com / rockpebbles2010@gmail.com  
website : www.rockpebblesindia.com  
Tel - 06728-223005 Cell - 9437009135 / 7978238911 / 9040249490



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#### **Editor Speaks.....**

After thirty two years when I look back on the past days I smell the nostalgic scent of the tiny bits of labour that has turned into something glorious. It is not like rolling the ball downhill faster and faster to reach the ground. Rock Pebbles born in 2007 has been a long-distance runner, it has reached round the globe to the researchers, academicians and poets. My dream has given me the gift vouchers to win human hearts and a mind those who probe into the abyss of literature more over the life inscribed there in words that are always exceptional.

We are going to celebrate the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Day of Rock Pebbles at Bhubaneswar on the 7<sup>th</sup> of April, 2019 with awards, literary discussion and multi-lingual poetry recitation. Awards for literary excellence will be bestowed upon three jewels of literature in three levels Internationally, Nationally and at the State level, Dr. Anwer Ghani, noted poet of Iraq, Poet Pankajm Kottarath of Chennai, Tamil Nadu, Poet Biraja Bal of Jajpur, Odisha will be felicitated on this occasion.

University Grants Commission, New Delhi has declared recently that all peer reviewed journals are at par with UGC's own list of approved journals. Teachers will get 10 points for publications of research articles on language and literature in Rock Pebbles which is UGC approved and peer reviewed. We request all our well-wishers to subscribe the journal and be a part of the literary mission.

The January –March , 2019 issue of Rock Pebbles contains 22 research articles and 21 poems. Most of the research papers are original and based on latest MLA guidelines. We hope these papers will surely cater to the needs of the researchers and teachers in colleges and universities.

I extend hearty wishes to the researchers and poets for availing their global career opportunity and bright future to communicate internationally and inter-culturally through innovative methods of writing and innovative approaches.

**Editor**

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# Girish Ghose's Translations of Shakespeare in Bengali: A Study of *Macbeth*, Act one, Scene one.

Basudeb Chakraborti

Modern linguistics establishes that the translation of a text written in one linguistic framework into another is possible. Differences among all human languages are differences only at the surface structure level. At the deep structure level, there are fundamental commonalities among all human languages. George Steiner observes:

Translation is realizable precisely because deep-seated universals, genetic, historical, social, from which all grammars derive can be located and recognized as operative in every human idioms, however singular or bizarre its superficial forms. To translate is to descend beneath the exterior disparities of two languages in order to bring into vital play their analogous and, at the final depths, common principles of being. Here the universalist position touches closely on the mystical intuition of a lost primal or paradigmatic speech. (Steiner 73)

The above observation has its theoretical basis in Noam Chomsky's concept of 'Universal Grammar,' which brings home the underlying structural commonalities among all human languages. In his syntactic structure (1957), Chomsky shows what Transformational Generative Grammar is and how it is applicable to all human languages.

The present article aims at an evaluation of Girish Chandra Ghose's translation of Act 1, Scene 1 of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Roman Jakobson, in one of his articles, classifies translation into three types. They are:

1. *Intralingual translation* or rewording, which is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language.
2. *Interlingual translation* or translation proper which is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language.
3. *Intersemiotic translation* or transmutation, which is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of non-verbal sign systems. (233)

Girish Ghose's translation of *Macbeth* into Bengali is Interlingual. Before evaluating Ghose's translation of *Macbeth* into Bengali, one needs to keep three considerations in mind. Girish Ghose translates the Elizabethan variety of English into particular variety of Bengali language of his own time. Ghose's journey from the Source Language Text (SLT) to Target Language Text (TLT) is a journey from **diachrony to synchrony**. Had the SLT been the nineteenth century variety of Standard

British English, Ghose's task of translating *Macbeth* into Bengali would have been relatively free from problems. As it is, the cultural differences between the two linguistic communities belonging to different historical junctures are indeed very great.

The second factor needs to be viewed in the context of the twentieth century reader-response theory. What does a translator do first when he engages himself in the act of translation? A translator first decodes the SLT. It is his understanding of the language and both the meaning and pragmatics of Source Language Text with the help of which a translator constructs a text of his own. His understanding includes not only the categorical and formal aspects but also the cultural significance of that language. Shakespeare constructed one text of *Macbeth*. Girish Ghose constructed another text of *Macbeth* when he started decoding the Source Text. The translator's taste and affinity determine the meaning of the original text. Consequently, the author's text is not identical with the text, the translator constructs **at the time of** when he decodes the original. The next stage that follows in the process of translation is that the translator encodes in the Target Language the meaning of the original text he has already constructed in his mind. He does it keeping in view the pragmatics, i.e., the total cultural milieu of the target audience. The process of encoding is a difficult one, because the translator at this stage has to transfer into the TLT not only the meaning and its structure but also the formal aspects of the language of the SLT. In translating the form of the SLT into TLT, a translator may enjoy relative freedom. The

extent of that freedom depends upon translator's own experience, scholarship and his command over the language of the SLT, the TLT and their cultural significance. A translator needs to be careful in being faithful to the form and the meaning of the original text as far as possible. The meaning unit of the original text usually has three levels:

1. The first or the primary level of meaning is the functional meaning or rather the semantic meaning, which is more or less fixed and objective.
2. The second level of meaning is the suggested meaning, which is mostly decided by the context of utterance as well as the context of the whole text. Only slight

variations are possible at this level of meaning because the context of utterance as well as that of the whole text place somewhere rigid frameworks within which only the translator's or any reader's individuality can operate.

3. The third level of meaning is the assigned meaning which is largely shaped by the translator's or the reader's sensibility, his social standing, age, culture, individual tastes etc. Vast variations in translation are mainly due to the differences in the area of assigned meaning. (Nair 106)

A translator enjoys another area of freedom. Every language has its own syntactic features at the surface structure level. The arrangement of words in a sentence, the relationship between words, the hierarchical arrangement of meaning in a text, the use of punctuation marks etc., govern the style of



a literary text. A translator must be very much careful about the style of the SLT. However, the order of words in the language of the original text may be different from that in the language of the TLT. For example, in a kernel sentence written in modern English, the subject comes first, then the verb and finally the object. The pattern is SVO (Subject+Verb+Object). In Bengali, the pattern is SOV (Subject+Object+Verb). A translator, after considering the total effect of the syntactic arrangement of both SLT and TLT, chooses the appropriate order that fits into the language of the translated text.

At the supra-segmental level, the translation of a theatre text is very problematic. English, for example, is an intonational language. It is very difficult to find suitable substitutions for English intonation in Bengali. “Could you help me do this job?” is always accompanied by a *rising* intonation if it is in the form of a request. Bengali is not an intonational language. In Bengali, the rising intonation is not possible. What will a translator do? Indeed Bengali is a tonal language. A practising translator under these circumstances invites usually one or two additional lexical items to convey the sense of request of the English speaker.

Girish Ghose introduces a prologue to Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, which he has translated for stage performance. It is a theatre text. A close examination of the prologue reveals that Ghose acknowledges Shakespeare as a great poet. The prologue, which is narrated by a male voice at the very beginning, resembles the tone of an epic invocation. In doing this, Ghose follows the tradition of nineteenth century Bengali

literature, whereas Shakespeare begins *Macbeth* straightway by introducing the three witches.

Let us place side by side Act 1, scene 1 of Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* and that of Ghose’s *Macbeth* for evaluating the merits of translation of Ghose’s Bengali version. The dialect used by the educated and enlightened people in London and its vicinity started enjoying the status of Standard British English from Chaucer’s time. During Elizabethan England, this London dialect became the language of literature and administration. Shakespeare’s dialect is a specimen of early modern English, which varies from the English used in English literature of subsequent periods. This variation of English is on a diachronic perspective. Girish Ghose translates *Macbeth*, written in the linguistic framework of Early Modern English, into the Standard variety of Early Modern Bengali. Ghose’s translation of *Macbeth* is thus from the diachronic variety to the synchronic variety. In this connection, it should be noted that the Bengali language used by Ghose in *Macbeth* is not identical with the Bengali language of the present day. A modern reader of Ghose’s translation of *Macbeth* stumbles over the lexical behaviour of Ghose’s translated text. However, the fact is that Girish Ghose was quite appropriate to his time. It is natural that an attempt to translate Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* at the present time will yield a variety of Bengali, which will be conspicuously different from that used by Ghose in his translation of *Macbeth*.

The Minerva Theatre in Calcutta opened on Saturday, January 28, 1893 at 9

p.m. In the opening night, Ghose staged *Macbeth*, which he translated, directed and acted for the Bengali audience. The newspaper advertisement that appeared before the stage performance of Ghose's *Macbeth* in the Minerva Theatre is relevant to the present context:

OPENING NIGHT  
THE MINERVA THEATRE  
6 BEADON STREET

Saturday, 28th January at 9 p.m.  
Shakespeare in Bengali

*Macbeth*

I have got the piece mounted by European  
Artists and dressed it under European  
Supervision and make-up by J. Pimm.  
For particulars, see playbills  
Next day, Sunday at candle night

*Macbeth*  
G. C. Ghose

This newspaper advertisement for the stage-show of *Macbeth* at the Minerva Theatre reveals what Girish Ghose intended to do. Ghose declares his faithful commitment to Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in his translated version. The sentence in the statement, "I have got the piece mounted by European Artists and dressed it under European Supervision and make- up by J. Pimm"(?), is the key to comprehending Ghose's translation strategy. At the same time, he had a clear understanding of his audience in the mind and was aware of the popular demand of the theatre-going people of his time. Following the tradition of contemporary Bengali theatre, Ghose translated Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in Bengali. Shakespeare wrote the opening scene of *Macbeth* in conversational rhyme. However, Ghose introduced native rhythm

in the speech of the witches. The indigenizing of the form of witches' speech in Ghose's *Macbeth* was in conformity with the tradition of Bengali theatre of his time.

The Amrita Bazar Patrika of 30 January 1893 wrote the following: "There were flashes of histrionic talents in the display of *Macbeth*'s character, while Lady *Macbeth* must have made an impression on the assembly" (quoted in Ghose 31). Another newspaper of 30<sup>th</sup> January 1893 commented:

The representation of *Macbeth* in the Minerva Theatre on Saturday last, as the opening piece marks a new departure in the dramatic history of Bengal. ... Babu Girish Chunder Ghose, the father of modern stage of Bengal had the whole of the work under his personal supervision, commencing with translation of the masterpiece and including the scenery and dresses which were as correct and effective as might be desired. The success of the play became therefore a foregone conclusion when Babu Girish Chunder undertook [to play] the leading character. (quoted in Ghose 31)

Indeed these stage performances brightened the possibilities of the late nineteenth-century

Bengali drama. On one occasion Girish Ghose told Kumudbandhu Sen, "You know, most of the people go to the theatre hall to enjoy dance and song on the stage"(Ghose31). Ghose deliberately created an atmosphere of dance and song in the opening scene of the TLT of

Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. This musical atmosphere vibrant with dance is further reinforced by the translator's generous use of onomatopoeic sounds throughout the first scene of the TLT. In the SLT, Shakespeare does not employ this Scheme. (Scheme includes the following figures of speech, which show patterns of fore grounded regularity of form: Chiasmus, Assonance, Alliteration, Onomatopoeia, etc.). This is one of the major variations between the SLT and the TLT. Let me refer to a part of the speech made by the first witch in Ghose's *Macbeth* where he amplifies one single line—"In thunder, lightening, or in rain". (1.1.2) into:

*Jakhan jhorbe megha jhupur jhupur,  
Chak chakachak hanbe chikur,  
Kar karakar karat karat  
Dakbe jakhon jhanjhane? (Ghose 451)*

The sound effect produced on the stage by the employment of Onomatopoeia is combined with the sound of thunder and lightning when the witches are introduced in the first scene of the TLT. In the SLT of Shakespeare, we see only three witches on the stage. In Ghose's TLT, a group of witches later joins these three witches at the end of the scene and all, singing together loudly, withdraw from the stage. The total atmosphere in this scene produces an enigmatic effect upon the minds of the audience. Girish Ghose achieves this effect of enigma through the rhythm of choral dance and song. In this context, one should remember that although the *Macbeth* of both Shakespeare and Ghose was intended for stage performance with a well-defined audience and the popular demands of the contemporary theatre-going public of their

respective periods in mind, the SLT that Ghose was translating was a dramatic *text*, i.e. a text meant primarily for reading. In other words, Girish Ghose was engaged in translating a dramatic text into a theatre text. Susan Bassnett- McGuire's comment on the problem of translating a dramatic text into a theatre text seems pertinent to this context:

The difficulty in translating for the theatre has led to an accumulation of criticism that either attacks the translation as too literal and unperformable or as too free and deviant from the original. The pedantry of many English versions of Racine, for example, is apt testimony to the fault of excessive literalness, but the problem of defining 'freedom' in a theatre translation is less easy to discern (123). She further comments:

With theatre translation, the problems of translating literary texts take on a new dimension of complexity, for the text is only one element in the totality of theatre discourse. The language in which the play text is written serves as a sign in the network of what Thadeus Kowzam calls *auditive and visual signs*. And since the play text is written for voices, the literary text contains also a set of paralinguistic systems, where pitch, intonation, speed of delivery, accent, etc. are all signifiers. (132)

Girish Ghose did not translate "word by word" and "sentence by sentence" from the SLT to the TLT. He translated "sense by sense". A reference to Dryden's formulation of three basic types of translation may be relevant here:

*Metaphrase* or translating an author word by word, and line by line, from one language to another.

1. *Paraphrase* or translation with latitude, the Ciceronian “sense-by-sense” view of translation.

2. *Imitation*, where the translation can abandon the text of the original as he sees fit (cited in Bassett-McGuire (60).

Dryden prefers to the second type, because he thinks that it is balanced and sensible provided the translator fulfils criteria. Citing the context of translating poetry, he argues that a translator should be a poet first in order to translate a poem. He ‘must be a master of both languages, and must understand both characteristics and ‘spirit’ of the author, besides conforming to the aesthetic canons of his own age” (Bassett-McGuire (60).

An eighteenth century translation theoretician Alexander Fraser Tytler in “The Principles of Translation”, published in 1791, formulates three basic principles. They are: “the translation should give a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work” ; “style and manner of writing should be the same character with that of the original” ; and it “should have all the ease of original composition” (cited in Bell 11). A comparative evaluation of Act 1 , scene1 of Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* and Girish Ghose’s translation may lead to think that Ghose tries his utmost to “ give a complete transcript of the original work”. However, Ghose’s style and manner are not “of the same character with that of the original”. Ghose discards Tytler’s second

principle of translation. About Tytler’s third principle, one may observe that Ghose successfully maintains “the ease of the original exposition” in his translation.

Ghose introduces a musical format of linguistic expression, which is not in conjunction with the fundamental effect of the SLT . This is the translator’s freedom. In the context of the tradition of the late nineteenth century Bengali theatre, Ghose’s exercise of this freedom is welcome. Some other areas of variations between the SLT and the TLT may be examined here. In the opening scene of the TLT, Ghose uses a Bengali lexical item, “*lo*” which is redundant syntactically so far as its meaning to the context is concerned: “*Didi lo, bol na abar/ Milba tin bone?*” (451). The redundant element “*lo*” here serves the purpose of showing a kind of fraternity among the sisters. This may be the only defense in favour of Girish Ghose. The cluster of two sounds signifies informality and intimacy. Witch sisters are an integrated, indivisible and unitary identity.

One of the three witches in Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* uses the word, “Anon” just before all of them chorus the famous line, “Fair is foul, and foul is fair” (1.1. 9-10). The word, “Anon” is now archaic and a register of ancient literatures of the West. It means “soon” , “in a short time” etc. Ghose translates it in the TLT in the following manner: “*Ai jai chole, Ai jai chole/ Ai jai chole*” (452). The language in Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* has precision and economy of words. Ghose’s Translation follows the nineteenth century theatre tradition of Bengal. Here “*Ai jai chole*” is repeated three times. The repetition



produces an effect of mysterious music upon the audience's mind. The repetition no doubt emphasizes the immediacy of their withdrawal from the stage. The aphoristic "Fair is foul, and foul is fair" is translated "*Bhalo moder kalo, mando moder bhalo*" (452). This line has a structural similarity with the original. The number of words Ghose uses in this line is six whereas Shakespeare uses seven. In the TLT, the first part is concerned with the second part by the connective "and" while Ghose uses the *comma* to connect the two parts of the sentence. Shakespeare uses two content words, "fair" and "foul", in the first part of the sentence and repeats the same content words in inverted position in the second part of the line, producing a chiasmic effect. The copula is present in both parts of the sentence. In Ghose's text, "*bhalo*" and "*kalo*" occur in the first part and in the second part we have "*mando*" and "*bhalo*". Ghose uses "*mando*" and "*kalo*" as virtuously synonymous, although "*mando*" has a wider ethical connotation than "*kalo*". A sense of the right and the wrong is embedded in the word "*mando*", which suggests that something "wrong" is going to happen in the immediate future. The word "*mando*" is significant, as Ghose has arrested here the *assigned meaning* of the original line in the SLT. The trope used by Shakespeare here is an epigrammatic and its effect is also present in Ghose's translation.

Ghose, however, was not alone in translating *Macbeth* in Bengali during the nineteenth century. Others tried their hands at it as well. Haralal Roy, a school teacher in Calcutta translated *Macbeth* into Bengali

before Girish Ghose. He titled the TLT *Rudrapal* (1874). In the text of *Rudrapal* the word "*Amen*" used by Shakespeare, was nativised by Haralal Roy. Roy who used "*Rama*" three times. The way he Roy translates "*Amen*" into "*Rama*" is not appropriate to the context. Nagendranath Basu translated *Macbeth*. The title of the play is "*Karnabir*". Harinath Ghose was the first to translate *Macbeth* literally in 1980. However, not a single copy his work is available now. Among the Bengali translations in the nineteenth century translation, Girish Ghose's *Macbeth* is a milestone in the growth and development of modern Bengali theatre. ■

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# A Study of Archetypal Images and Literary Archetypes in M.A Nare's Poetry

**Uttam B. Parekar**

## **Abstract**

M.A. Nare is widely known for his prolific writings in English as a critic and a poet. This research article is a review of his poetic anthology entitled 'The Dome in the Air' in which the poems included in this anthology have been classified under some heads, and then analysed and interpreted them one by one. Nare's wide reading and varied life experiences have turned his mind into a treasure-house of memories of historical and contemporary personages, events and incidents. Like a skilled craftsman he selects archetypal images and literary archetypes, shapes them to communicate his thoughts and feelings through aesthetic experiences. An individualist of serious disposition and sensible reasoning, Nare has his own opinions on the personages and events cherished in his memory. The use of archetypal images and literary archetypes has provided historical and cultural dimensions to his poems; owing to these poetic features his poems rise above his personal experiences and opinions.

## **Keywords**

'Archetypal Images', 'Literary Archetypes', 'Eminent Personages', 'Binary Schemes', 'Pathos', 'Aesthetic Joy', etc

## **Introduction:**

M.A. Nare, a man of wide reading and a highly sensitive mind with the gift of poetic talent, came into limelight as Indian English Poet when his two anthologies of poems attracted the attention of the critics from India and abroad. For his creative and critical writings in English he was awarded D.Lit. by the 'World University', U.S.A. in 1987. Recently, 'The International Poets' Academy' has conferred upon his person the 'Life Time Achievement Award' for 2010 in recognition to his qualitative and substantial poetic output. His poems are what Matthew Arnold would have called a criticism of life which cover his reflections on various subjects with concern, integrity, directness and simplicity.

In forties, Northrop Frye's work on 'Myths' and 'Archetypes' as literary devices to interpret literary work of art provided a concrete base to 'Modern Criticism'. Nare, a scholar of English Literature, has minutely taken note of the functions of myths and archetypes in poetry and in turn he utilised his rich barn of collection of them to reveal his experiences in emotive and metaphoric manner. However, his capacity of using archetypal images and literary archetypes in poetry has enabled him to transform his observation of any simple event into

aesthetic experience. The literariness of his poetry substantially lies in his meticulous use of these devices. The objective of this paper is to study Nare's poetry in terms of archetypal images and literary archetypes (traditionally quoted events and statements) with special reference to his poems on eminent personages taken from his 'The Dome in Air': an anthology of poems.

### **The Dome in Air:**

'The Dome in Air', Nare's anthology of poems published on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2009, comprises in all 25 poems. The most characteristic of this anthology is the date of publication and the issues he dwelt upon which reflect his nationalistic fervour and social concern respectively. The title of the anthology is very significant in the sense that it refers to the dome of smoke which had palled the Hotel Taj: the proud heritage of India, during the 26<sup>th</sup> November terrorist attack. The poet has dedicated this anthology to the martyrs and innocent victims of 26/11 attack on Mumbai. The poems included in this anthology are written in free verse and cover divergent subjects such as eminent personages, violence, poverty, sacrifice, social evils, sex and marital life. Nare is a poet of international repute as some of his poems have flashed in international journals.

Nare is a poet of masses in the sense that his poems are the expression of feeling of unease, anxiety, and plain as often experienced by common man. He experiences angst as and when he finds honest and innocent people dispensed with injustice and cruelty. In his poems he lays the ills of our social and national life and provides diagnostic symptoms wrapped in

the archetypal images and literary archetypes. The scholar of English Literature: M.A. Nare, is convinced that modernity lies in the contemporary man's experience of irony, contradiction, violence, frustration, alienation, ennui, absurdity, loss of original harmony, tense and broken relationship, disintegration and disillusionment of life. He is well aware that images and literary archetypes are the befitting poetic devices for transforming any life situation pertaining to these experiences into aesthetic experience.

Edgar Allen Poe defines 'Image' as a symbol that imparts sensuous and apprehensive value to a thought. It enables the reader to experience the poetic content comprehensively and most vividly. Nare has selected images and literary archetypes from Indian life and literature and invested them to relate his contemporary life experience to the glorious traditions of Indian culture. Let the life experience be from within the country or abroad, the poet is down on what is inhuman and unjust. He is a man first, so he is not free from the pull of the natural instincts of man. An open discussion on sex is tabooed in social life. But the poet delineates his experiences without any inhibition. In the poems like 'Street Sweepers' and 'Freedom at Midnight' he sincerely communicates his feelings and actions. Content of these poems constrains one to say that Nare is not a hypocrite but an honest poet of emotions and thoughts. His poetic vision which is strongly controlled by his 'Id' and 'Ego' impulses is effectively expressed through his poetry.

Based on subject matter and themes invested in them, his poems may be

classified under following heads broadly:

- 1- Eminent Personages
- 2- Violence
- 3- Sex and Marriage
- 4- Pathos in Social Life
- 5- Aesthetic Joy

### **Eminent Personages in Nare's Poetry:**

Nare is a poet of sensitive mind who has in his backdrop mythical and historical personages; and with the yardstick of their moral values he evaluates the contemporary situations and controversial stalwarts. He has impartial views with humane feelings on every event he has taken up as subject for his poetry.

#### **1 - M.F. Husain:**

The first poem of this anthology entitled 'M.F. Husain at 93' is a satire on the contemporary uprising of Hindu fanaticism. Traditionally, Hindus are known for their tolerance and liberal attitude to other religions. But in nineties the wave of Hindu nationalism surged high and most of the political parties made religion a bait to attract voters and build up their vote-banks. Some of paintings of Husain became controversial for obscenity and the Hindu fanatics accused Husain of desecrating the Hindu deities. The intolerant Hindus condemned Husain, agitated against him and thus ultimately forced him to leave the country. Deeply pained sensitive poet, M.A. Nare, marks breach of liberty of expression and violation of the age old cultural value in this event. Sarcastically enough, to highlight the long cherished democratic value of liberty of expression in Indian culture, he has employed literary archetypes in the following lines:

While we can freely dance here,  
like Goethe,  
With the copies of the Kamasutra on  
our heads,  
Around, the Erotic Sculptures  
on the temples of Khajuraho.  
We can watch, without inhibition  
The processions of Naga-Sadhus,  
with ashes  
Smeared.  
All over their naked bodies,  
passing through our Streets,  
In the broad day light...[p.5]

Towards close of the poem he employs the archetypal images of Hindu deities: Lord Krishna and wishes:

Lord Krishna to come to us  
To teach What is Sin and  
What is Obscene. [p.6]

#### **2 - Mother Teresa:**

Nare's poetic mind is like a sensory marker that becomes active as and when it finds new personages come into limelight and new developments start affecting the social life. He is deeply moved to see Mother Teresa's compassion and service to destitute at Kalighat. He has employed native archetypal images of compassionate Ashoka as a binary element to highlight the vastness of her service:

Now, her empire has grown vaster  
Than the compassionate Ashoka's  
[p.10]

He communicates the same sense employing the vegetative literary archetypes:

At Kalighat, a tender sapling grew  
Surpassing 'The Great Banyan Tree'  
[p.10]



### 3 - Nissim Ezekiel:

‘On The Demise of Nissim Ezekiel’ is a beautiful poem in which Nare has paid tribute to his poet friend: Nissim Ezekiel. Nare had intimate contact with the celebrated Indian English poet so he was deeply moved on the event of his death. Nissim had adopted Indian culture, its beliefs and its manner of expression. In this poem Nare remembers Nissim for his voluminous poetic output and gentlemanly attitude to his colleagues and the fellow country men. Nare remembers Nissim saying that he would be no more attending English Teachers Conferences and guiding the budding poets. Nare produces a pen-picture of the exterior aspects of Nissim’s personality in this poem. In the following lines Nare has used archetypal image of ‘Fakir’ and imparted folk significance to his personality as a poet. The subsequent lines highlight Nissim’s substantial work in the academic field:

Foreign writers and critics will find him  
Missing from the Island: his cocoon.  
Today, his poetry like ‘The Naked Indian Fakir’,  
Stands erect before the English  
reading world. [p.13]

Towards the end of his life, Ezekiel suffered from Alzheimer’s disease; so, he had lost his memory. This has been beautifully versified by Nare in the following lines underscoring Nissim’s important position as a creative writer:

One can’t believe this.  
How gently he passed away!  
For him years, he had stopped

speaking With the world ...  
perhaps to prepare us  
For this stunning blow. [p.13]

### 4 - Mahatma Gandhi:

Nare is the Indian English poet who reels under the impact of Gandhian ideals which were preached to him and lived up to by the elders in his childhood days. In the sonnet like short poem ‘A Sketch’, Nare remembers the events of Bapu’s death and his father weeping in the school. Thereupon, Nare remembers to have drawn a sketch of Bapu on his slate. The poet confides that over the time of two score years he has the same sympathetic heart and that only the medium of expression has changed. In other words the poet identifies himself with the image of his father. In the post-independence era, Bapu became an archetypal image (embodiment) of compassion, service to humanity and high moral values. Through this short poem the poet wishes to strike at the present moral downfall of our national character suggesting that ever since passing away of Gandhi no leader raised his moral stature to Bapu’s:

When Bapu died in Delhi  
My dad, the headmaster  
Wept in our school:  
I never had seen him  
Weeping like this. [p.16]

In ‘Gandhi and Terrorism’ Nare implicitly says that Gandhi’s assassination is as sacrilegious as crucifixion of Jesus. To point out the irony of fate involved in the act of assassination he has used the archetypal image of goat, a sacrificial animal, suggestive of the country men falling prey to the terrorist attacks now:

All his life he preached 'Ahimsa'  
 But we silenced his feeble voice ...  
 And we, like goats tied together ,  
 Watched helplessly, how the  
 butcher's knife  
 Cuts throats of our Kith and Kin ...  
 [p.22]

### 5 - Amrita Pritam:

Poet is a devout nationalist who loves the personages who strive to rise above the spirit of communalism and try to propagate secular attitude among the country men. 'A Tribute to Amrita Pritam' is a poem in which Nare remembers Amrita Pritam for her secular writing for seven decades. In the following lines he has employed literary archetypes of the oft-quoted image of elephant disregarding of the dogs barking at him while walking on the road. This image effectively presents Amrita as a self-convinced visionary and reformer:

All her life, she walked  
 Like an elephant ignoring the dogs  
 Barking on her way. [p.23]

Mark how significantly Nare has employed the archetypal images of 'phoenix', 'Mira', and 'Indira' to highlight her growing popularity as a poetess of modern India:

After the partition of the land  
 Phoenix like she rose from her ashes  
 And danced like a peacock  
 Before the shrine of Babas,  
 Gurus, and Pirs,  
 May be, in the glorious vision  
 and dreams ...  
 She rose to be a great Mira or Indira:  
 With her magic-wand she built  
 A great empire and ruled over it  
 For nearly seven decades ... [p.23]

### 6 - Robert Burns:

In his poem 'On the Statue of Robert Burns' Nare points out common people's conventional attitude and their incapacity of assessing great men objectively. Nare had been to London in 2007 and during his stay over there he visited the bronze statue of Robert Burns on the banks of Themers. He was pleased to see the statue and lost himself in uttering some words from his poem 'Red, Red, Rose'. Ironically enough, at the same time an old English lady ignorant of the grandeur of Burn's poetry condemned Burn as a womaniser while introducing him to an Italian girl tourist. The poet, using the archetypal image of 'Prometheus' and the literary archetype of the title of the poem 'Prometheus Unbound', innovatively expresses his anger in the following words:

... if Burns were alive today  
 He would have pounced  
 on the old hag  
 Like a bloodhound, but poor Burns  
 Was like prometheus Bound. [p.25]

### 7 - Nelson Mandela:

'On the Statue of Nelson Mandela' is Nare's one more poem which reveals the poet's reaction to unjust evaluation of a great man. The binary scheme invested in the poem presents the comparative estimate of the two Nelsons. Considering Nelson Mandela, the black son of Africa, the great Apostle of Peace of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the poet says that the new generations of the terror-stricken world must learn a few lessons from his nonviolent fight against the apartheid rule of the British. In the poet's view Nelson, the hero of the battle of Waterloo, is less relevant today. Gandhi became the archetype

of nonviolence in 20<sup>th</sup> century. The poet is proud of his country: India, for the reason that she has offered to the world a leader like Gandhi, a saint of nonviolence. In the following lines poet has used the metaphysical image of Gandhi to throw light on Mandela's peace-loving character:

Trafalgar Square lost  
a great opportunity  
To receive this living saint,  
a true Gandhian,  
Bearing his torch in  
the New Millennium. [p.27]

### Conclusion:

Nare's poems on personages are steeped in the noble values of Indian culture such as humanity, compassion, social concerns, nonviolence, large-heartedness, secular outlook etc. The poet has employed archetypal images and literary archetypes from the recent past and the Puranic literature, too, in order to underscore contemporariness of the noble values of the Indian culture. His poetry is completely Indianized not only in terms of incorporating Indian expression and attitude to life, but in terms of employing Indian archetypal images and literary archetypes. His poetry is contemporary in terms of subjects and sensibility. The Indian epics, the 'Ramayana', and the 'Mahabharata' are full of characters: each one reflecting a distinct personality trait of man. Indian life cannot be expressed without referring to them. Nare is well versed with these epics, Indian

history and other Puranic scriptures; therefore remarkable images and trite expressions from them often figure in his poetry very naturally. Nare deals with divergent themes hence his poems included in the anthology do not produce a coherent vision; but the poems do express the sense of unease felt by the poet. His poetry is the expression of a sensible Indian poet seriously dwelling upon the national issues which are menacing our life. He is a poet of high order and his poetry comprises a number of exclusive poetic qualities which may be taken up for research work separately. ■

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## Women Victims in Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence*

G. Sulochana & S. Selvalakshmi

Shashi Deshpande, daughter of the renowned dramatist and Sanskrit scholar, Shriranga was born in Dharwad, India. At the age of fifteen, she moved to Bangalore, where she gained a degree in Law. Her writing career began in 1970, initially with short stories, of which several volumes have been published. She is also the author of four children's books and four novels - *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, *If I Die Today*, *Come up and Be Dead* and *Roots and Shadows*, which won a prize for the best Indian novel of 1982-83. Her other novels are *That Long Silence*, *Binding Vine*, *A Matter of Time*, *Small Remedies* and *Moving On*.

Victims are from the Latin word Victim that means living creature killed and offered as a sacrifice to supernatural power. In *That Long Silence*, she clearly portrays a pointer to the catastrophic status of women in the tradition bound, male-dominated, middle-class society of contemporary India, in which they are struggling and they are accepting it silently as their destiny. Here, women are the victims to the male-dominated society. Not only the protagonist but all the minor women characters are portrayed in the novel as a struggling victim in a patriarchal society.

Mohan's mother had to pass her days in abject poverty and humiliation. She used to help in cooking whenever there was a function in any house. She had standing instructions of her husband that she should cook rice for him separately since he would not eat remnants food. He wanted his rice, fresh, and hot, from a fresh untouched vessel. One day she had just finished the second cooking and was waiting for her husband. When he sat down to eat, he lost his temper since his favourite chutney was not there. Without knowing the reason for the lapse, he threw the brass plate at the wall and walked out. She cleaned the wall of the splatted food and asked her daughter to get some chillies from the neighbour's chutney for her furious husband. The girl went hesitantly since she knew it was odd to go to a neighbour in the night to ask for chillies. Her husband did not realize that it was a house of scarcity and the obedient wife was hamstrung by her destitution. She was exploited sexually to the point of brutality by her husband, her body abused by continuous childbearing. Ironically her only act of rebellion – the abortion – had resulted in her death. Her son Mohan who has been a witness to this incident never condemns her father. He eulogizes



his mother , the virtuous woman instead comment on her to be a tough lady. “ She was tough, Woman in those days were tough” ( *That Long Silence*, 36).

Mohan’s sister Vimala dies in silent agony without getting help from her in-laws, relieving her mother’s fate. When Jaya and Mohan went on their annual trip to Saptagiri they went to visit Vimala also. Then they learnt from Vimala’s mother- in- law . Vimala had been bed-ridden since over a month. She asked Mohan to take her away, if he wished, as she had no mind to take her to a doctor. Vimala’s mother- in -law said plainly “Yes take her away if you want to. I never heard of the woman going to hospitals and doctors for such a thing . As if other women don’t have heavy periods” (39) . Mohan and Jaya took her to the hospital where the doctor was rather surprised to know that Vimala hadn’t told of her illness to anybody. While she had been suffering so much . He diagnosed that she had an ovarian tumour and that it was too late for surgery. Vimala wanted to claimed to be different from her mother, but their sufferings binds them together in a common fate. She is another victim of suppression and exploitation in this society. These women are compelled to sacrifice their health for the sake of their family without any protest.

Kusum, Jaya’s maid cousin is another victim of discrimination . She is a deserted wife . “Kusum carried the aura of defeat about her, from her birth” (23). Her lifestyle shows that she belongs to the lower strata of society. Jaya accommodates and takes care of the insane

Kusum despite serious objections from her mother and brother . After some time, when she improves her health , Dilip her brother takes her home. But unfortunately, she commits suicide a day before her husband is supposed to take her home. Her accidental death caused by her fall into a dry well symbolizes the sufferings of those women whose life is conditioned by circumstances. Her mother says “ But it was a good thing in a way. She was no use to anyone after she went crazy , nobody needed her” (22)

She epitomizes those women who submit to insults, injuries, and humiliation with a stoic patience without any protest or complaint against the patriarchal society. Vanithamai represents other faces of the traditionally suppressed woman. After her marriage her life was ruled by her mother in law, as a daughter- in -law her role remained , a passive resister, in any decision making. Jaya recalls . “ Since the day she got married she, like the rest of Ai’s family, was dominated and ruled by that ghoul, her mother- in- law , my other – ajji. Even Vanitamami’s saris were chosen for her by the old woman” (45). The adoption of Kusum was the protest she could register successfully. For her “a husband is a sheltering tree” (32) and marriage the only destiny for a woman. She advises Jaya to please her husband even to the extent of accepting the existence of his mistress. “If your husband has a mistress or two, ignore it; take up a hobby instead – cats may be, or your sister’s children” (31). She advises her to tolerate her husband even if he would develop martial relations with other women and accept them as his mistress

Mukta, Jaya's immediate neighbour at Dadar flat, widowed at a very young age, lives with her parents and a daughter Nilima. She is economically independent, firm and capable of handling any situation and yet she believes in superstitions. She expects her daughter to be like her. But she is indifferent and rebellious. Mukta is some extend pious and Jaya is shocked at her endless sufferings by undertaking fasts for seven days in the week. "If it was not her Saturday it was her Monday or Thursday" (67). She rarely had her normal meal. This was too much for her age which seemed meaningless, she had already forfeited the purpose of it and became a widow.

Nayana, the help-maid views life with an impassionate objectivity. She wants to have a son, not because she expects any help from him in her old age but because she doesn't want her son to be discriminated and harassed by society. She knows that a boy shall at least have status and maintain individuality which is denied to a girl. "Why give birth to a girl, Benji, who'll only suffer because of men all her life?—No..No behnji-better to have a son" (28). A woman has never been a source of pleasure or pride to these women.

Jaya's maid Jeeja, her daughter-in-law Tara, her granddaughter Manda and some of her soul mates, they belonged to the lower stratum of the society. They lived in a *chwal* doing all kinds of hard jobs that came there way. Jeeja was a childless widow, her husband had taken to drinking and married again.

Jeeja was so simple that she didn't have any complaint against the women either. Naturally she accepts as a fate because she didn't have any child. After sometime the second wife of her husband also died of TB, leaving to bring up her two children. Her son Rajaram married Tara, was a drunkard and beat of his wife. Tara had two babies in three years of her married life. She accompanies Jeeja in doing the household works because her husband was a drunkard and provides nothing to the family. He extracts money from his wife commented by her daughter as "Baba beats up Ai (mother) because she has no money to give him, and if she gives him any money Ajji scolds her". (53)

The minor woman characters belong to different generations and different social strata. The majority are neither educated nor wealthy nor do they have the freedom and independence. One way or other each is a victim of socio-cultural constructions. These women are traditional in their outlook and often themselves share the patriarchal value system.

As per the Gandhian principle, "Men and women are one, their problem must be one in essence. The soul in both is the same, the two live the same life have the same feeling. Each is a compliment of the other, the one can't live without the other's active help. But somehow or another man has dominated woman from ages past and so the woman has developed an inferiority complex. She has believed in the truth of man's concept that she is inferior to him. But the seers among men have recognized her

equal status. But equal status to the woman is a far cry.

Again the position of women in the Indian family is inferior to men. "The Indian woman accepts the status because she has been nurtured since childhood on the mythological characters of Sita , Savitri, Draupadi, and Gandhari as role models and taught to be emulate their devotion to the husband"(Mies101). A woman is socialized to such an extent that she unquestioningly accepts the norms and taboos as guidelines for life. The complexity of Indian patriarchal status is such that a lopsided image of womanhood emerges. In this community, women's age and experience are valued. A woman is respected as a mother but neglected as a daughter and wife. It happens not only because of the patriarchal ideals of the society but also her implicit obedience to accept it passively. In order to break this patriarchal chain she should be educated to get more courage and be free to decide her own destiny. And she must know the power of herself , instead of wallowing in self –pity compromising on values and nurturing romantic fantasies about herself.

The author boldly exploits their sufferings and deprivations of feminine life through the systematized representation. The novelist exhibits her voice audibly to know the situation and its solution precisely. "We do not change overnight. It is possible that we may not change even over long periods of time. But we can always hope for that. "Without that, life would be impossible. And if there is anything I know now it is this: life has always to be made possible"(193). They should be passive

resisters in all the incidents in their life, they should overcome the trials and tribulations from their life that leads to an inhibited self-identification. In order to attain self-hood, a woman must transcend silence, negotiation, and self- alienation. A woman with her family must flourish within the totality of her life as a woman. Only then she can attain harmonious fulfillment. In spite of her literacy, prosperity, and liberty, women must know her potentiality of herself and she must have the capability of taking bold decision to survive in the society as like her equal partner. To make revolutions she must be a paragon and happy intellectual. ■

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# The Heart is a Lonely Hunter: Surendra Mahanty's Gouri in *Andha Diganta* (*Darkness before Dawn*)

**Bismitamanjari Biswal**

Surendra Mahanty has made a distinct contribution to the mainstream of Indian literature. He is an artist of intense passion and deep human commitment. The reader listens to him with rapt attention under the hypnotism of his language and compulsion of his themes. He is a rare genius in Odia literature. He combines in himself artistic talent and a broad human vision. The feeling that a reader gets while reading his novels can never be translated into words. He is the dreamer of a millennium looking for new, brightened and beautiful sight of human experiences. His literature had the echoes of unfulfilled dreams, aspirations, frustrations of the common man as its background and foundation.

This famous writer was born in Purusottampur of Cuttack District in Odisha on June 21, 1922. It was just after the First World War, though the common Indians were not that much affected as people of west. He was a dotted child of his parents. His father wanted him to be an L.N.P doctor, but Mr. Mahanty wanted to pursue his goal to be a writer.

Apart from a novelist Surendra Mahanty was a politician and journalist. Though he was active in politics and journalism, he never neglected literature. In spite of his ups and downs of political life,

he never moved away from his forte. His forte was literature. His passion for literature made him look at politics from a distance. Politics for him was a religion, not a business. He confessed this in his autobiography, *Patha O Pruthibi* (*The way and the world*), Mr. Mahanty writes, "Politics has expanded my horizon to know and understand different human character in different situations" (Page c) (translated by me)

He was greatly convinced that politics helped him to come in contact with different types of human character and literature encouraged his dispassionate understanding of life. He was perhaps the only writer after Gopinath Mahanty who believed in authenticity of experience in life to create a good work of art, be it a novel, a poetry or painting. He wrote, "Without burning a figure, to write an essay on fire is another thing; but to get burnt and write a poem on fire is another thing. In one there is romanticism, luxury of thoughts; in another, there is experience of burning sensation. In short, literature has given me peace and understanding, politics has given me plenty of excitement to my existence." (Page c) (Translated by me)

Surendra Mahanty wrote about fifteen novels which were published

between 1947 and 1990. His novels may be categorized into three major types in terms of their themes: (a) novels based on history, myth and legends (b) novels based on social and psychological realities, and (c) novels based on politics and biography. The four novels of Surendra Mahanty's four novels based on history, myth and legends are *Nilasaila (Blue hill)* (1968), *Niladri Bijaya (Triumphant return to Niladri)* (1980), *Krushnavenire Sandhya* (Evening on the banks of river Krishna) (1985) and *Ajibakara Attahasa (Ajibaka's satiric laughter)* (1987). The novels, based on social and psychological realities are, *College Boy* (1947), *Badhu O Priya (Bride and Beloved)* (1948), *Achalayana (The immovable)* (1981), *Phatamati (The split earth)* (1988), *Hansagiti (Swansong)*, (1975), *Kalantara (Beyond time)* and *Neti Neti (Nihilistic)* (1982). One of the most highly acclaimed political novels of Surendra Mahanty is *Andha Diganta (Darkness before Dawn)* which was published in 1964. Its theme centres round Nidhi Das, a freedom fighter, whose dreams of an egalitarian society after independence are pathetically shattered with the emergence of a new class of greedy and powerhungry politicians.

Surendra Mahanty, in the novel *Andha Diganta (Darkness before Dawn)* has written an unforgettable tale of sacrifice and exploitation, bringing out the truth behind the manipulative politics during the Great War for freedom. Through the character like Gouri and Kausalya, he showed another dimension of Indian freedom struggle when women came out of their home and joined the public life. One is reminded of Rabindranath Tagore's *Ghare Baire (The*

*Home and Outside)*. This novel was published in 1916 and yet dealt with the early phase of Indian National movement which believed in violence lead by Lal, Bal, Pal. Even Sri Aravindo was one of them. What to speak of females, even the males were not allowed by the members of the family to participate the freedom struggle. But Tagore thought much ahead of his time and he brought the women, the married women, coming out of home, to join the freedom struggle. Still then women were considered "suits stay at home". Surendra Mahanty's two characters Gouri and Kausalya show the rise of women freedom fighters that joined hand in hand with the male patriots in spite of many huddles.

In this novel Mr. Mahanty portrayed the dark side of freedom struggle. They actively participated in freedom struggle. But some of them were exploited and either vanished from society or committed suicide. While all Indian fought for getting freedom, some of them tried to get benefit from it for their personal gain. They forgot the basic ethics. They only wanted power. For the sake of power they could do anything. The women were exploited. Take the example of Kunti or Baraja Chamar's wife. After the death of Baraja Chamar, his wife was pregnant and one day she was vanished. Then it was Kausalya, the widow sister of Shyamabandhu. She committed suicide after got pregnant. The last but not the least was Gouri.

Gouri is a strong character in the novel. Gouri was the youngest daughter of the Bairisalya, the Zamindar family. She looked like her grandmother who was very beautiful. Her marriage was fixed with the



eldest son of Sundara of Gobardhanpur. That groom was a clerk at the English office in Cuttack. The dowry was - a set of golden utensils and one thousand grams of gold ornaments. The groom party arrived on the wedding day with two goldsmiths to take the weight of each item of gold ornaments and gold utensils. At that time Gouri waited like a statue on the altar. Groom's party was firm that no ritual would start until the ornaments were weighted. It was an insult to Arjun Bairisalya. He became furious and scolded them as harshly as possible. Arjun Bairisalya was an angry man in nature. Gouri was the only person to control her father. She got off from the bridal altar, throwing away her veil and snapping the garland around her neck thrashing on the groom's party. The groom party ran away out of fear. Since that day Gouri had remained a spinster and she conceded to no new proposal to be a bride again. His brother Govinda Bairisalya wanted her to join the freedom struggle who himself was a freedom fighter. So when their father died in mishap and their house was burnt by Darpanaraya, another zamindar of Khetarajpurchaupadhi, she came to Mangarajpur Ashram with his brother. Mangarajpur ashram was the centre for freedom struggle. It was founded by Nidhi Das and Shyamabandhu. All the discussion regarding swaraj was taken there. The renowned congress workers like Suddhodan, Dama Rath were also its member. Even Suddhodan was allotted a separate room. During the salt march agitation, Nidhi Das and Shyamabandhu were in jail, Gouri took the responsibility of the ashram. She opened a spinning center there. The national khadi board used to provide them with fund. It

became also a shelter for the widow. Even during the flood, with Nidhi Das, Gouri visited village to village to rescue people. While rescuing the people, once they encountered with a pregnant lady who was about to deliver a child. Gouri had no knowledge of midwifery but in that crucial situation she was able to help the woman to deliver the child.

One day Gouri tried to commit suicide as she was pregnant. It was a great sin to be pregnant before marriage in our society. But Nidhi Das rescued her. As she was the daughter of a zamindar family she thought she had brought a bad name to her family. Later Nidhi Das gave her shelter and fought with the villagers for Gouri. In the village meeting he declared Gouri as his wife and protected her. For this Nidhi Das was banished from his village. They took shelter in Sakhibheki Math. But there Nidhi Das introduced her as an unwed mother. It insulted and hurt her a lot. She might have some soft corner for Nidhi Das. But Nidhi Das was a man of different character. Although he declared before all that Gouri was his wife, but in reality he had never looked upon Gouri anything other than his sister. In that quiet, lonely evening on the river bank he sat hugging Gouri after rescuing her from water. Gouri was helpless with her ruffled hair, and bare breasts. But Nidhi Das was undisturbed. Even in his unconscious mind he had not thought of Gouri anything other than his sister. Gouri kept quiet about the father of the child; though Nidhi Das suspected Suddhodan to be the father of the child. Being ruptured by Nidhi Das' repeated question, one day Gouri opened her mouth and said, "Listen Nidhibhai, what pleasure do you get by

asking the question, the answer to which you can never get from me. If you can give me shelter without expecting any answer from me, it's well and good. The Birupa is not yet empty. She will not deny me to give shelter." (Chapter 16)

She never considered it a sin. It was as pure as anything in this world. She did not commit any illegal thing to give birth to a child. In her letter she expressed her agony.

It was written .....

"Respected Nidhibhai,

I'm guilty. I'm sorry for what I said. You accepted all blemishes for me; even the scandal and in return, I accused you of swindling me. I called you a cheat. (Some lines were struck off) but Nidhibhai, if you introduced me as your wife why did you introduce me to babaji as a fallen woman? Let by gone, be by gone. I don't bother whether you introduced me as your wife or as a fallen woman. We are not going to meet again in this life. Don't worry. I shall never commit suicide. You have taught me that committing suicide is a great sin. How bitter this life may be, we must live till the end. I have nothing to expect from you. Only one request let Niru not know the story of his mother. If you had once accepted me as your wife, I request you to accept Niru as your son. Do you hate him because he is a bastard? In mythology all Pandavs, Karna, and Bidura were illegitimate children. Still the society did not throw them out. They were recognized by their deed. Lotus is born of mud; still mud cannot touch the lotus. Though we were not married as per the social rituals, we came close to each other. Fire was our witness. A mean person as he is, he may refuse to accept the child as his

own, but remember Nidhibhai, the child I had borne in my womb is not a bastard. He is innocent. Don't try to trace me out. Nothing can pay you back for your sacrifice. You are God to me. A brave heart! Godliness and bravery are not proved by great deeds. Only a small, insignificant incident may speak of godly mind and brave heart. My head bend down to you. Let me touch your feet thousand and one times. Gouri." (Chapter 16)

This long letter to Nidhi Das unravels the character of Gouri as a woman. She does not repent for giving birth to Niru as an unwed mother. She does not take the name of the person who was responsible for the child. It shows the strength of her character as a woman. She was not raped. Niru was the fruit of their love, the love between man and woman. She even quotes the *Mahabharata* to prove her innocence. She found fault with Nidhi Das as he lacked courage and confidence to accept Gouri and her son, Niru before babaji Lalita Das. It was too much for her. As a daughter of a zamindar, she had self respect and dignity. So she did not accept it easily. She also did not want any sympathy. She wanted love and respect. Gouri knew it very well that Nidhi Das could give shelter to her and her son; a father's name but never respected her as his wife. She did not want to stay as a kept or a care taker. She had expected to be embraced by Nidhi Das with her child as wife and child. Since Nidhi Das could not overcome, his illusion of sanctity and chastity she left, leaving her one month son. She knew her child would be safe and would grow up as a human being.

She had a great respect for Nidhi Das. In the end of the story she again

appeared from somewhere and cried out, "Let me see his ashes, where have you burnt him. Show me his ashes. This is a sacred place for me, my ultimate pilgrimage." She sat near the pyre and took a handful of ashes, smeared it on her face and body.

Surendra Mahanty's Gouri is an exemplary character in Odia novels. The novel was published in 1964, just after 17 years of Independence. The society was still cramped by superstitions and old tradition and value. Women were not as educated as now, 2018. When we study Gouri's character as a reader of twenty-first century Gouri appears to be a post modern character. She is much more enlarged in her thoughts, in her identity and a place in the society. Such a strong character was very rare not only in novels but also in real life. Indian society after Independence was as good as Victorian society. Everything was permitted behind the curtain. Kanhu Charan Mohanty tried to create the woman character in his Bali Raja. Although the scene and situation was not the same even the context was far from the human society. We also do not find such bold character in Gopibabu's novel in 1964. Surendra Mahanty was certainly a bold and enlightened thinker of his time. We do not find a Gouri like character even in Bengali

writers like Samarendra Basu, Sunil Gangopadhyay and Bimal Mitra. 1964 Odisha was not as advanced as Kolkata, both intellectually and materially. So Surendra Mahanty was certainly very bold novelist to portray such a woman character like Gouri. Undoubtedly Gouri is a very strong and bold character 20<sup>th</sup> century bhasa literature. She even raised her voice against dowry system and stood by her father's side. She remained unnerved by her deed as she thought; she did not commit any crime. She considered herself as clean as Sita and Draupadi. From all these aspects the *Andha Diganta (Darkness before Dawn)* should be studied as a post modern novel, both in form and content. ■

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# Theme of Alienation and Identity Crisis in Mulkraj Anand's *Untouchable*

S Gopi & J. Jayakumar

Mulkraj Anand stands out as a highly significant novelist on the contemporary scene of the Indian English novel. He is diametrically different from his Indian or Western counterpart. He is remarkable and thought provoking novelist with an uncompromising propensity towards the moral and traditional values of India. The novelist was a globe trotter due to various factors he could not shake all his oriental roots or the accidental influences. In various fictions these predicaments have been reflected which can be summarized as influences of the East and West. Alienation is one of the recurring themes delineating different aspect in Anand's novel. *Untouchable* R.S. Pathak has expressed this is the following lines.

Alienation is one of the greatest problems confronting modern man a sarcastic impact can be seen in the form of generation gap, the anti war movement, the hippie phenomenon the credibility gap and so on. The conflicts between alienate self and the socio – cultural forces are the postulates of Mulkraj Anand's fictional creations. In all his novels, the protagonists are subjected to the extreme social, cultural and psychological pressures. Sociologically speaking the cultural, the enter generation tensions and the changing ethos make increasing demand on the life of the

individual. It results in emptiness, reflecting the chaotic conditions of No man's land, and restlessness in life, pertinently haunts the psyche of men. The awareness of restlessness and consequent anxiety form the basis of identity crisis which has been described as the keynote of Anand's existential vision of the plight and exploitation of the modern day man (Bhavnagar 13) The protagonists discover the meaning and value of life by probing through the dark mossy labyrinths of the soul. This search of the identity is the central pillar of Mulkraj Anand's novels.

The protagonists of Mulkraj Anand's novels are perplexed and find themselves in the fast moving world with no clear ambitions in mind. The economic suffering the social pressure the dissolutions of the old beliefs and dogmas and uncertain loyalties mercilessly degrade their lives and injure their psyches, resulting in cynical attitudes towards life and established social norms and ethics.

The alienations in the novels of Mulkraj Anand's are because of the clash and conflict between the socio cultural and psychological pressure. The alienation primarily arises because of social maladjustment and emotional insecurity. The alienated self of Bakha in search of his identity as the typical protagonist of Anand's

novels. The identity motif functions more on the socio psychic two dimensional materialistic plane rather than on the three dimensional metaphysical world. This quest attains the spiritual dimension only at certain levels. My novels are essentially attempts towards a better understanding of the world and myself (32).

Mulkraj Anand has very dexterously handled some thought provoking grave issues like restlessness detachment, frustration quest for a better alternative identity crisis and self realization in *Untouchable*, highlighting our glorious cultural heritage and imperishable moral values. His reputation has been steadily rising since the publication of this very first novel. Humane fondness is a ray of hope in the darkness of modern world. While technological innovations have an important place in society, they also lead to precarious life. There is a growing antagonism between man and fondness. Mulkraj Anand illustrates that total industrialization and total automation result in the frustration that leads to various pathological states. This notion brings him closer to the Marxist perspective of alienation. However, The literary fondness adopted by Mulkraj Anand. Humane fondness is a kind off acupressure to smooth the pain and suffering, and is kind a friendly to the sufferer. The novels of Mulkraj Anand, emphasis the urgent need of the Humane Fondness to cure this sordid civilization.

*Untouchable* is the study of Bakha's character which is not a study of individual but it is a representative of the suffering of whole modern mankind. It reveals the self and social isolation of the modern man in

order to find peace. He moves from person to person, place to place, hoping to get solution of his problems. He is neither in a position to cultivate and initiates the value existing in India nor became a part of it thus he suffers mental and physical agony feeling himself if uprooted catching the principles of religion half heartedly and carrying the vanity of his thinking. In *Untouchable* many characteristics of alienation have been woven by the novelist and its colorful sheds are visible in the entire novel The predicaments off the modern an have been delineated by philosophers and psychologists not only in *Untouchable* but other novels of various novelists. These characterizes will be discussed one by one in regard to *Untouchable* which is the subject matter of this study Restlessness is the primary form of alienation which is the life and breathe of this noel. This theme has become very common in Indo English novel.

In the novel *Untouchable*, the hero Bakha is an uprooted young man of Indian origin. He is born and brought up by a very poor and downtrodden family. He has no basic education *Untouchable* relates how Bakha, an immigrant Indian, suffers in the course of his search for meaning and purpose of his life. Bakha's alienation from the world is similar to the one that many existentialist heroes in the west suffer from. The novel is an enactment of the crisis of the present in the story of Bakha. He is perennial outsider, an uprooted young man living in the latter half of the twentieth century who belongs to no country, no people and finds himself an outsider in India. His restlessness is rooted within his soul like an ancient curse and drives him from crisis



to crisis. He has no roots, as he himself admits; I have no roots (4). Bakha is trapped in his loneliness, which is accelerated by his withdrawal from the society around him. Deprived of parental love and fondness in his very childhood, he becomes broken and anchorless, he betrays like indifference. Actually he is incapable of any emotional involvement with his social milieu

He is a born in an Untouchable background and is an alien everywhere physically as well as metaphorically. He is in India and even in India as he himself puts it. And yet all shores are alien when you do not belong anywhere (92), whosoever comes in contact when you do not belong anywhere (*Untouchable* 93) whosoever comes in contact with him notices this alienation in him. Bakha 's sister, Sohini Says you are still a in an Untouchable background . You don't belong here. Father asks him why are you so strange (104) Sohini in their very first encounter says. There is something strange about you they don't feel like they are with a human being, May be it's an Indian characteristic. But I have a feeling you'd be in an Untouchable background anywhere (145)

Due to his rootless behaviour the impression gathered by other characters that came in contact with him in which Sohini remarked that; There is something strange about you something distant. I guess that when people are with you they don't feel like they are with a human being. May be it is an Indian characteristic but I have a feeling you'd be in an Untouchable background anywhere (78).

Sohini told him that 'You are still a in an Untouchable background, you don't belong here' Bakha leaves an impression on any of the characters with whom he is coming in contact that he is alien. He has been trapped in the situations mostly of loneliness which compel him sometimes to withdraw from the society around him. Once Bakha asked him about his parents and he become furious to repeat the death of his parents. Sometimes we find him emotionless and did not involve him with the social milieu.

In *Untouchable* the sense of insecurity pervades everywhere Bakha could not get the parental love from the very childhood. Secured hand of his uncle destined to shower on him for a very short duration. This has displaced him from place to another. If someone was asking about his parentage he hated to answer their questions. This has been aptly discussed on his own words:

I hated to talk about my parents. I hated the pity I got from people. This loss and insecurity has culminated and can be noticed in different facets of his life in his context Saxena comments His view of life and response were coloured by his childhood deprivation of love from his parents/ He therefore entertained a deep sense of insecurity unreality and impermanence about thing (78).

The important character Sohini also feels insecurity in India. So she takes the hands of intelligent and wise Bakha to get the security in life. Bakha by posing himself in deep love with Sohini aptly befooled her by propagating the principles of detachment by way of marrying with Sohini. Bakha wanted

to get away from in secured life of marriage. By enjoying love he did not like to suffer for pain but love and pain are crematory factor and when Bakha tries to discard her.

Later, Bakha a person who does not know his root, shelter, relatives and further steps. Such person has to suffer and to suffer with sociologically anomalous notions psychologically abnormal personality and culturally pagan values, devoid of any lesson of morality and ethics. Though these are only the objective realities, yet the subjective conflict in search of identity could be verified on socio-psychological grounds. Devoid of socializing elements from his childhood, he confronts loneliness and frustration in life, that make him a purposeless human creature

His state of mind is unpredictable because he is a cynical. It has been pointed out by different characters of the novel. Bakha, his friend and a student at Boston, wrote to his sister Sohini that Bakha is so terribly cynical, his flat mate Karl asks him if Bakha could laugh to the reply, to which Bakha responds, yes, but only if he is heavily drunk, (47). On the other hand, Sohini went to the extent of saying that he was the saddest man on the earth she had encountered in life. This reality is not contested by Bakha. Rather he confessed that he was. I show that he was aware of his plight and knew the problem. His awareness of his identity or the identity crisis brings Anand closer to Camus's *Outsider*.

Wherever he went, his restlessness accompanied him; from India to London and there to Boston and finally to New Delhi. It seemed that he was a man from no man's land. His continuous drifting from place to

place reminds only of the fact that he was doing consistent experimentation on himself to find the peace of mind but he was doomed to failure. His luck gives him the opportunity to learn and to learn to survive and find the meaning of life to establish self identity. As the story moves ahead, he gets a job in a bar where he meets Anna who leaves him. Then he meets Cathy and gets physically involved with her. But he refuses to marry her. Here again the survival was in the question and so was the identity. But he finds that these episodes only enrich his mind and states of my life lay in what I had learnt from many, (*Untouchable* 178).

A man without basic education and without a close relative became a vagabond and sometimes he was behaving like a cynic and totally detached. The different facets of his life also reveal that he grew without family ties and alien everywhere. It was also an outcome of his restlessness where he opined. Somebody has begotten me without a purpose and so far I had lived without a purpose. I had not felt that when my uncle was living the thought that he moved about in that small house on the outskirts of Nairobi gave me a feeling of having an anchor. After his death the security was destroyed. Now I suppose I existed only for dying close.

His friend Kari says to him I did not know you could laugh too to which Bakha replies: I can if I am drunk enough (10). This statement reveals that laughing is a normal phenomenon which was never appearing on his face which is the characteristic of cynical people. In the novel Sohini goes him telling you are the saddest man I have ever known. His thoughts about love and marriage are

also example of his cynicism. In one way he did not believe in marriage and on the way he is lusting for Sohini and under in the spur of cynicism he opines that wife can be changed as new cars. Radha aptly comments Bakha the cynical exponent of non – involvement became overnight as it was a warm hearted and purposeful man of action. The another character Babu Bakha once wrote to his sister Sohini that Bakha was leaving as bad as dead and also was terribly cynical Bakha himself accepted this fact, I was cynical and exhausted grown old before my time, weary with my own loneliness.

In fact this cynical attitude was an outcome of his restlessness. Due to this restlessness he was disgusted with his own life and he uttered in sad tone ; western

countries, while discussing Sohini's virginity with Sohini he uttered. Twenty five years largely wasted in search of wrong things in wrong places' once Sohini's mother told to Bakha; you are just a cynic my body. Another way of cynicism can be seen in his profession. He studied as a sweeper no life skill line. He accepted a job as a sweeper only because it will keep will away from himself. Even once he accepted a job of dish washer and bar room water in fact that was below his dignity which is a proof of his cynicism. ■

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# Education System and Philosophy of Swami Vivekananda

**Vedha Saradha & R. Jothipaul**

**P**resent system of education is far from the touch of life. It has become simply job seeking education. Students of schools and colleges simply learn what is there in the books. They pass the examinations to get some job. This is simple formal education. In such education man can be educated but cannot be cultured. Education must be a harmonious development of human personality. Further the present system of education is expensive. The common man cannot afford to derive the benefit of expensive education.

Vivekananda was against the present formal education. He ridiculously painted the present system of education in his satirical story the of the following words, “with Text-books in one hand and baton in the other the pundits gave the poor bird what may fitly be called education,”(4). If this is the share of education how will it be effective for the students? There is no relation between a bondage, the dragging of which merely serves to provide it with food and shelter in the stable of its master; the horse has not the same freedom of relationship with the carriage as its owner, and therefore the carriage ever remains for it an imposition of beggarly necessity,”(5).

The main cause of unrest in the educational institution today is the lack of relation between knowledge and reality. We

have forgotten the Upanasidic idea, the whole world is wrapped in one reality. It is a spiritual knowledge but we must not stop here. The knowledge of intellect. Due to the lack of this knowledge, East is poor and weak and in absence of spiritual knowledge, West is disturbed and restless. The nations o the world are running fast towards the scientific bliss with no time to look within and always engaged in looking without. Hence,, “Hence, “the mechanization of mind and the sterilization of the intellectual seed-plot are the results of the tyranny of the educational policy,”(6).

With a view to establish his own educational institution he not only gave a list of ideals and aims of education rather he gave them a concrete form.

## **AIMS AND IDEALS OF EDUCATION**

1. Personality development mind body training
2. Education must be imparted in natural background.
3. The method of education must be knowledge by doing and medium must be own language.
4. Cultivation of Aesthetic Sense
5. Education must be correlated with religion and culture.
6. Social service by education.
7. Rural Reconstruction,”.

Let us dwell upon these points in brief:

1. Generally education is through to be concerned with mental power and mental development but that is simply a part of education. It must develop the whole personality, i.e., the Union of Body, Mind and Character. For mental development a sharp brain is a must. A healthy mind needs a healthy body. Our education is always a heavy burden on our mind so we cannot take it in an easy way. There is no relation of education with life, language and ideas. So all our education is not perfect. It is simply real education that can destroy all mental lethargy and narrow feeling. A highly intellectual man with a weak and diseased body can never utilise his mental power for the development of society. On the other hand a man with a strong physique with no mental capacity must be ashamed to be called a man. Animals are also physically strong but they lack intellect. Man must have a balanced development of mind and body,”

For the development of physical strength Vivekananda had stressed on the Athletic side and manual work which will make man not only physically fit but help him to know the dignity of labour. It will create self-reliance and self-confidence. Students will learn creative arts and skill when they will work together. A sense of co-operation will develop. Most of the boys when they came to India were at first weak in mind and body. “They brought with them an intolerable mental perversity, the outcome of vitiated blood and starved physical constitution. The Brahmin was supercilious, the Non-Brahmin pitiable in his shrinking self-abasement. They hated to do any work of common good. They were

not ashamed of living upon charity but were ashamed of self-help.” (7) But this selfish jealousy did not last long. Within a very short period they were changed. They worked together and lived together. As they came nearer they felt the bond of sympathy and knew remarkably quick time all that was good in them, and the accumulated rubbish of impurities was swept off.” (8)

Every school must have an athletic department where students will participate. Boys generally play Football, Cricket, Volleyball, Tennis, Hockey and other games, where girls take part in Jiu-jitsu, dagger playing and lathi-charge. Though today women are taking part in so many international games, these games are not for creating thrill but also to prepare them for self-help. Thus mental training makes them virtuous and physical training makes them bold.

Students do hard work and that will lead them to self-sacrifice. So Swami Vivekananda was always in favour of manual work. The students will on the one hand understand the importance of labour and on the other hand it will make them economically independent. So he always said “Let them take up manual work in school, wash dishes, draw water, dig wells, fill up tanks which is a menace to their health, do the building work. This would be good in both ways”(9).

Education is not only concerned with mental and physical power I am also concerned with the moral side of life, i.e., character building. Real education will empower them from within what we are lacking in our character is co-operation and sympathy. “Mutual trust is feeble; in those



who are themselves weak. Indeed absence of self-esteem is the basis of disrespect,”(10).

It is the magic touch of knowledge that destroys all the impurities of our character. Character, self-respect and self-reliance are essential. They do not produce vanity.

2. Education should be imparted in the natural back-ground. Children should never be pressed to learn. They should be invited to learn. Swami Vivekananda had bitter experience of formal education in his childhood. He always used to run away from the school. Having seen the situation alarming his father and arranged a private tutor at home to teach him.

It is the duty of a teacher to provide opportunity of direct contact with nature for student. Teachers must first create interest in the student for knowledge. Too much insistence and guidance arrest the growth of their original talent. “The main object of teaching is not to explain meaning, but to knock at the door of the mind,”(11).

Education in natural background will make them curious for and sympathizer of not only human life but of all forms of life.

Education should be imparted through play and work system i.e., learning by doing. Children are fond of play. Interest is latent attention and attention is interest in action. First of all students must have “will to learn” that is the first condition of learning. Vivekananda strongly opposed the system of English education. “Our English teachers are birds of passage

they cackle to us but do not sing, their true heart is not in the land of their exile,”(12).

The medium of education must be our own mother tongue. If we try to make our country educated it is never possible by a foreign medium. “Foreign goods may be brought to the city bank by foreign ship but if we think to distribute the same goods in the village market by that ship it is simply foolishness. If we are too much attached with the ship the goods will be detained in the city and cannot be carried to the villagers,”(13).

Japanese tried their best to learn through their own language. Whatever they from the West disappeared within a very short period. The retaining capacity of their language is not higher than ours. But what is the difference? They acquired knowledge through their own language and we became dependent on foreign language. That’s why they have reached the highest level of development. Sister Nivedita was right when she said, “All great expressions whether by writing or by drawing or sculpture or what not to some extent is the outcry of a human sympathy, and men do not so cry in an unknown tongue,”(14).

Secondly, it must follow the process of eating. When we feel appetite and eat we enjoy the taste of food. He puts the ideas in the following words. “ When taste begins from the first bite, the stomach is awakened to its functions before it is loaded, so that its digestive pieces got fully play, but what happens, “the first bite bids fair to wrench loose both rows of teeth like a veritable earthquake in the mouth and ley the time he discovers that the morsel is not of the genus stone but a digestible bondon, half his

allotted span of life is over. While one is choking and spluttering over the spelling and grammar, inside remains starved and when at the length taste is felt, the appetite has vanished. If the whole mind does not work from the beginning its full powers remain undeveloped to the ends,”(15).

3. The ideal of education is to cultivate aesthetic sense in the students. The surplus in man tries to find expression through art, music and painting etc. so the necessary work of education is to promote art, literature and music. Art is a matter of joy. “In the words of Sasadhar Sinha, ‘Swami Vivekananda wanted joy brought back in to the life of the Indian people through art, and music and dancing and Santiniketan provided the ideal locale for the cultivation of these arts,”(16). The value of music is above all. It is not new in India. In Greek philosophy we find that Plato also accepted the importance of music in education.

4. Thus being restrained and disciplined we express our-selves well through the medium of art, literature and music. “Literature, art and music are all median of artistic self expression through the language of word, the sound, the light and the colour,”(18).

5. Upanishad also reveals this fact that one truth manifests itself in the form of beauty in this world. If we want to realise Him we have to taste the everlasting joy that is this world. “Rase vaisah Rasam evayam Lavdhvandi Bhavati....”(19). Now the question may arise why Vivekananda insisted on aesthetic feeling. “Culture is free and culture of every man is part of the universal culture of mankind. We understand art, literature and music as things of beauty

which we produce together and there lies the secret of the unity of mankind,”(20).

6. In Upanishad also Brahman is known as Truth, Good and Beauty. Our soul is the part of that Brahman. Therefore, our own self finds manifestation in the works of art and music. So without art and music teaching is incomplete. It increases the creativeness in the students and without this creativeness education will simply be formal and fruitless. So he made art and music compulsory for education. But he never pressed the students for learning rather he created an atmosphere to learn spontaneously. When his school was first started students had no interest in music. He did not press them. In his words “I merely created opportunities when those of us who had the gift could exercise their musical culture. It has the effect of unconsciously training the ears of the boys. And when gradually most of them showed a strong inclination and love for music I saw that they would be willing to subject themselves to formal teaching,”(21). Occasionally he invited artists from different places of India and asked the students to learn and enjoy the bliss of art.

Education must be correlated with religion and culture. It was a firm belief of Swami Vivekananda that real education must promote a harmonious life. Harmony is the basic theme of his educational philosophy. “Religion is not a fractional thing that can be doled out in fixed weekly or daily measures as one among various subjects in the schools syllabus. It is the truth of our complete being the consciousness of our personal relationship with the infinite, it is the true centre of gravity of our

life,”(22). Education aims at disciplined and restrained life with faith in one’s own religion and respect for the others. Dharma means virtue or duties. Education isolated from religion will lead us to devastation and destruction.

Our education can be perfect when we realize Santam Sivam ADvaitam. The one reality is pervading the whole world in the form of peace. He is Santam or Peace and can be only realized when we are mentally and physically restrained. So long we are guided by egoistic motives and passions we cannot realize this peace. It is present in the form of good. If we want or

realize the Siva, we have to give up all that is not-Siva. The whole world is good for us. From the dust of the earth to the Sun of the sky all are good. At the same time he is one manifesting Himself in countless forms. So a real learned man is he who perceives that one Reality in all and works for the good of all. He is really a world-worker. ■

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### List of Life-Subscribers:

..... Contd

(642) Ms. Bismitamanjari Biswal  
Shaheed nagar, Bhubaneswar, Odisha

(643) Principal, Anchal Mahavidyalay  
Padampur, Dist. Bargarh, Odisha

(644) Principal, Women’s College  
At / Post - Bargarh,, Odisha

(645) Dr. Rama Chandra Yadav  
Dept of English, Dr. K P J I C  
Allahabad Prayagraj, U. P.

(646) The Principal  
Mukunda Patra Degree College  
Balarampur, Jenapur, Dist. Jajpur Odisha

647) Ms. K. Kaavyaa, D/o R. Prema,  
No. 53/4-1, Friend’s Garden,  
Convent Rd., Mittapudur, Salem,  
Tamil Nadu.

648) Jachindra Kumar Rout,  
Reader, Dept. of Englishm  
B.B. College, Chandikhole,  
Dist: Jajpur, Odisha.

649) Mr. Baikunthanath Sahoo, Editor  
MANISHA (Odia Literary Journal) Plot No.  
1440, Acharya Vihar, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

## Spiritual Uprootedness of a Modern Man in Arun Joshi's *The Strange Case of Billy Biswas*

S. Suganya & R. Jothipaul

Arun Joshi stands out as an exceedingly significant novelist on the contemporary India-English literature. He is an outstanding and thought provoking novelist with uncompromising propensity towards novel concerns the post-Independence Indians with Western education. They are set against the post-Independence socio-cultural milieu with moral and spiritual problems of the contemporary Indians. Trapped between the Indian ethos and Western influence, his protagonists suffer from uprootedness, cynicism, evils of materialism, loss of faith and identity crisis. Joshi takes up the challenges and problems resulting from the bi-cultural milieu of the country and suggests ways out of the beleaguered existence of the contemporary Indians.

His fiction demonstrates the universal lessons of our cultural and spiritual heritage that might have been temporarily relegated to the background but are still relevant despite the materialism and rapid westernization of our country. For Joshi they still hold the key to the tormenting problems of our times.

*The strange case of Billy Biswas* (1971) is different from *The Foreigner*. It is an introspection of Sindi Oberoi to the strong determination and decisive action of Billy Biswas. In many ways, this second

novel is a continuation of and a development upon the first. It continues Billy Biswas' search for identity and meaning of life. But it carries the exploration deeper, combining the Lawrentian quest for the essence of life with the Upanishadic search for soul's spiritual reality. It is at once a severe indictment of the meaningless trivialities and spiritual uprootedness of the post-Independence, Anglicized Indian society and a fictional representation of the union of the male and the female in the final embodiment of the human spirit.

The strange case does not merely record an existential protest against the superficialities of a grossly materialistic civilization and a romantic nostalgia for the simple mode of life of a primitive society. It is a study in the total estrangement of its protagonist, Billy Biswas, from the upper crust of Indian society with its material concerns, spiritual shallowness and blind imitation of Western culture in utter defiance of its traditional values and beliefs. Joshi uses Billy's (1971:23)- to look critically at the inner decay and sterility of this society. Side of side, there is an endorsement of an anti-materialistic, essentially Hindu, worldview. Lack of ambition and its harmonious relation with nature-a life given to the cultivation of man's inborn endowments as well as of the higher things of life-is

represented in the novel of Tuula Lindgren, Billy's Swedish girl friend, and Bilasia, his tribal wife. The primitive banality of the so-called civilized society-have a clue to the vitalizing spirit of this life and they carry about 'their knowledge in silence, locked behind their dark, inscrutable faces'. (124) The tribal life of Maikala Hills in Central India becomes a concretization of this world-view and Billy's return from white America to India and his ultimate rejection of the post-Independence, pseudo-Western values of his Delhi society to join the primitives and accept their life, thus, turn out to be a symbol of Billy's quest for self-realization and for his identity. The story mediates between New Delhi and Maikala Hills, between two distinctly identifiable cultures that these two geographical locations embody. The juxtaposition, and also the conflict, of these two cultures reveal the spiritual uprootedness of the Indian upper crust and the utter falsehood of its superficial glamour and refinement. The novel does not enact any idyllic confrontation between the primitive and the civilized in some no-man's land of values. It brings into focus the spiritual decay of the Westernized Indian society and lives through-in the person of Billy Biswas-a rare spiritual rejuvenation. Each fictional device in the book-plot, characterization, and setting-dramatizes this central contradiction between spiritual uprootedness and spiritual reawakening. Despite the influence of Western authors-Arnold's *The Scholar Gypsy* and Thyrsis, Lawrence's *The Woman Who Rode Away* and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*-Joshi expresses in this book an Indian experience.

Joshi's novel points to a growing extent of alienation that is appearing in contemporary India among the sensitive youth, artists and intellectuals. Billy's predicament results from his bi-cultural situation. His is the authentic problem of a perceptive young man belonging to the Westernized Indian society that has lost its spiritual anchorage. He suffers from discontent, a sense of irrelevance of life and a 'constant blurring of reality' (97). The moral confusion prevailing in the post-Independence Indian society is voiced by Billy thus:

At the time of his meeting with Romi, Billy is halfway through his Ph.D. in anthropology, although his father, who had once been the Indian ambassador to a European country and is at present a judge of India's Supreme Court, thinks that his Son is doing engineering. Billy himself explains his fascination for anthropology: "All I want to do in life is to visit the places they describe, meet the people who live there, find out... the aboriginalness of the world". (14) Even a casual glance at his library evinces not only the 'staggering range of his knowledge' but also his 'passionate involvement with his subject'. (14) It reveals his passion to penetrate deep into human life, not just the surface reality. At the same time, it clearly shows his deep love for the primitive men and their life, for bizarre happenings and places. It gradually dawns on Romi that "it was around his interest in the primitive man that his entire life had been organized". (14) Throughout the first section, Joshi suggests Billy's rich inner world and his concern with the secrets of life which lie under the veneer of



civilization. Billy is aware of a reality other than the tangible one and he has occasional glimpses of the 'other side' (18) of life. His experience in the mental hospital in America where he works for some time and his arguments with his justice father about the Krishna murder case (in which a petty government clerk, having received a message from a *Goddess* in a dream, sacrificed a child to cure his dying Son) unmistakably prove his perception of the other world and of the inadequacy of ordinary human laws to judge men like himself who act under extraordinary circumstances. He tells his father: "there are worlds at the periphery of this one, above it and below it, and around it, of which we know nothing until we are in them... Something happens, something strange and sudden like the clerk's dream or something very gradual, and you are catapulted into them'. (54-55)

One receives similar glimpses of this aspect of Billy's inner life from his discussion of the play *Avocambo* with Romi (10-11) and the Bongo session in George's apartment (20-21). The sound of the drum that Billy played on while sitting perfectly immobile, had "a mesmeric pull that held (the audience) by its sheer vitality" and "carried a more fundamental message". (21) At moments like this Billy seems to be transported to a different world and when he comes back to normalcy, he seems to have "returned from a long and difficult journey" (21) The intermittent feeling of unreality that Billy suffers from, and his interest in people who live outside the pale of modern civilization are given central importance in the first part of the novel. In fact, as Romi says, 'there were many things. Which Billy

saw and which, step by step, led him to the only end that awaits those who see too much'. (39-40) Tuula is, perhaps, the only person who detects this mysterious and powerful urge in him. As she tells Romi, "Billy feels something inside him, but he is not yet sure. Sometimes he is afraid of it and tries to suppress it". (23) It is what she calls "a great force, aircraft..... a primitive force (23) which can explode any time. Such a character is bound to feel restless in the superficial any time. Such a character is bound to feel restless in the superficial and hollow world around him, and Billy, a misfit in the civilized society, only waits for the final explosion.

Though Billy has stayed in America for long, he, unlike Sindi Oberoi, has not lost his roots in India and does not "suffer much, except for passing spells of loneliness, from that alienation that many other Indians seemed to be burdened with". (25) He has the advantage of a shared background. While uprootedness is the source of Sindi's alienation, his lack of commitment, and pusillanimity, Billy retains his roots in the tradition of his society and draws his strength and sense of purpose from his inner vision. Consequently, he is not bothered about cultural roots that men like Sindi desperately seek. He is concerned with deeper and far more serious problems, with the question of his spiritual identity and with the mysteries of life. His entire life is attuned to that mysterious, primitive urge which finds occasional expression in incidents already referred to and in his informal talks with his confidants like Romi and Tuula which reveal "not only the mind of the speaker but also the dark unknowable layers of the mysterious world that surrounded us". (26)

Billy-a misfit in civilized America-soon finds himself “itching to be back” (27) in India. His ‘itching’ is symptomatic of his craving for deeper things in life which are absent in white America and in the Anglicized Indian society and which the primitive society of Central India subsequently comes to represent. Billy returns to Delhi to experience only a change of scene with the reality remaining almost the same as in white America. In fact, the upper-upper crust of Indian society in Delhi which he originally hails from, is as spiritually dead and emotionally empty as materialistic America. The people he meets here are nothing more than a group of artistically dry and intellectually barren mimics aping shamelessly the long-forsaken ideas of the West. It is against the perspective of this degenerate and money-centric society that Billy’s primitive urge and his quest for a richer life of emotional wholeness acquire a great significance.

Billy feels like a fish out of water in the westernized Delhi society and among its members, because ‘beneath the shared façade of society, there was little contact between his world and theirs’. (63) In spite of this sense of estrangement from and lack of meaningful communication with the society, Billy decides to marry in order to settle down in life and get rid of his obsession. He feels, erroneously thought, that his marriage will enable him to put a check on his “runaway imagination” (128) He joins Delhi University as a teacher of Anthropology and marries a Bengali girl named Meena Chatterjee who is “quite unusually pretty in a westernized sort of way”, (37) loquacious and shallow. He

marries in a hurry, because his strange hallucinations and constant awareness of the meaninglessness of life leave him depressed and he has grown terribly afraid of ‘some part’ of him. He feels that something terrible may happen unless he does something drastic and his marriage is like ‘taking out an insurance on (his) normalcy’. (182) But soon after marriage, he realizes that he has committed a blunder. Meena’s concern about money, lack of empathy and of a ‘sufficient idea of human suffering’ (185) lead to a marital fiasco. There is absolutely no communication between the husband and the wife and their conjugal life turns into the ‘most precarious of battle-fields’. (81) Billy starts getting estranged from his family with every passing day. In spite of a certain apprehension for her husband, Meena never attempts to understand him and know what troubles him inwardly. As she herself acknowledges to Romi, ‘perhaps I just don’t understand him as a wife should’. (76) This failure to establish meaningful contact with his wife and with the society she represents only enhances Billy’s inner restlessness and his sense of isolation. His outward appearance also undergoes a thorough change. His ‘inhumanly sharp eyes’ (43) wear a tortured and haggard expression and betray ‘emotions that one tends to associate with a great predicament’. (44) He turns introvert and lackadaisical. To Romi, who meets Billy after a year of his marriage, the change seems astonishing: “Gone was the staggering intelligence, the spectroscopic interests, the sense of humour... the Billy Biswas I had known was finished, snuffed out like a candle left in the rain”. (70)

The insensitive and corrupt society with its artificiality and phoniness seems to

smother Billy's sensibility and claw him apart. He feels himself 'pinned down there, like a dead butterfly' (47) and his sense of disgust at the civilized society finds expression not only in such Hamlet-like outburst "Oh, how dreary, how dreary, and how dreary!" (47) but also in occasional incidents of violence. (60) He begins to lose his grip on life and experiences a blurring of reality. Thus, even before his physical disappearance, Billy ceases to belong to the civilized world. He is estranged not only from his society and his family but also from his true self, as is evident from his seduction of Rima Kaul. The brief but shameful affair with Rima lays bare his fraudulent nature and offers him the first glimpse of his degradation. The more he delays to answer the call of his inner voice, the more restless he becomes until it dawns on him that a great corrupting force is working on him: 'It was as though my soul were taking revenge on me for having denied it for so long that Other thing that it had been clamouring for'. (189) The shocking realization of his own corruption accelerates his flight from civilization. In order to forget himself and the agony of life, Billy takes to anthropological expeditions to various parts of India with his students. During one such expedition he disappears into the wild and dark terrains of Maikala Hills in Central India. It is followed by a tremendous commotion and a massive manhunt. Various theories are advanced and the one which is more or less accepted is that Billy might have been killed by a man-eater. Billy's mother cannot survive the shock and his case is closed. Arun Joshi is one of the major figures in the realm of Indian literature. He is widely acclaimed as one of the most

accomplished stylists and prolific writers of his generation showing remarkable versatility and range.

Joshi's novels are concerned with the intricacies of familial relationships and the isolation of the individual within the family. Familial environments clearly afford not only his major resources for wisdom about the world as an infant, but also a luxuriant ground for studying how people adjust themselves and tolerate the pain of loss and disappointment of life, and also shows how they adjust living with these and yet continue to live and love. All the major conflicts and central themes of his novels evolve from this concern for the family, the individual isolation, and relationship to the community. Joshi's early isolation and struggle for identity provide both style and material for his fiction.

Arun Joshi's novels portray the barrenness of familial relationship, the existential themes of the individual isolation and struggle for independence and identity as well as the lack of meaningful communication among people living together. Particularly his four widely acclaimed novels reflect the basic principles of human relationship. ■

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# Psychological Imbalance : A Thematic Analysis in Rebecca West's *The Sentinel*

P. Nithiyakalayani & K. Jayapal

As one of the illustrious novelists Rebecca West became involved in journalism, contributing frequently to the left-wing press and making a name for herself as a tireless fighter for woman suffrage. In 1916 she published a critical biography of Henry James that revealed something of her lively intellectual curiosity, and she then embarked on a career as a novelist with an outstanding novel, *The Return of the Soldier* (1918). Describing the return of a shell-shocked soldier from World War I, the novel subtly explores questions of gender and class, identity and memory. Her other novels include *The Judge* (1922), *Harriet Hume* (1929), *The Thinking Reed* (1936), *The Fountain Overflows* (1957), and *The Birds Fall Down* (1966).

In 1937 West visited Yugoslavia and later wrote *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* (1942), an examination of Balkan politics, culture, and history. In 1946 she reported on the trial for treason of William Joyce ("Lord Haw-Haw") for *The New Yorker* magazine. Published as *The Meaning of Treason* (1949; rev. ed., 1965), it examined not only the traitor's role in modern society but also that of the intellectual and of the scientist. Later she published a similar collection, *The New*

*Meaning of Treason* (1964). Her brilliant reports on the Nurnberg trials were collected in *A Train of Powder* (1955). West was created a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1959. During West's lifetime, her novels attracted much less attention than did her social and cultural writings, but, at the end of the 20th century, feminist critics argued persuasively that her fiction was formally as inventive as that of her female modernist contemporaries.

*The Sentinel* is an astonishing novel written about a teenager, and abandoned. There is a same chiefly Midlands setting and many of the same characters, including the rich, condescending relatives who humiliate and enrage the disadvantaged young girl while the grace and ease of their lives provoke her envy. In both versions, Adela herself is a brilliant, confused young girl at odds with society's expectations. She is politically precocious, bursting with vitality, and emotionally naive. No prizes for concluding that the autobiographical content is substantial.

*The Sentinel* will be fascinating to readers interested in the development of West as a woman, because it is obsessively concerned not only with feminist politics but with sexuality, and with the compelling

beauty of certain girls and women, pored over in erotic detail. Different kinds of men are violently attracted to 17-year-old Adela; overwhelmed by her own involuntary animal response, she sleeps with one of them.

But this is no liberation. Adela is appalled by what she did. She should have been her own “sentinel” against the brute animalistic which turns ruined girls to prostitution, and women who marry for sex into domestic slaves. Adela feels unworthy now to be a mother ‘Motherhood’ requires a practical genius, a physical courage, a cleanness of soul, and an unconquerable creative instinct that not many women can hope for.” There is a sad irony here. West and the son she bore out of wedlock only a couple of years later developed a mutually destructive relationship which darkened both their lives.

There are in *The Sentinel*, not surprisingly, a wobbliness of structure, some clumsy sentences, a good deal of overwriting - and many acute observations and marvelous phrases which presage the writer she would become. But the most striking passages, which foreshadow the vivid reportage of her maturity, are the accounts of suffragette marches, protests and riots. West makes much, convincingly, of the emotional bonding between suffragette women of all classes, and of their heroic elation in a shared cause. Exactly what the protesting women endured in prison, and the full horror of the forcible feeding of hunger-strikers, have never been so dramatically and horrifyingly documented.

The young Rebecca marched with the Votes for Women groups, and knew and

adulated some of its leaders. But she was never arrested, never imprisoned. She wrote these startling passages intuitively from what she was told, and from accounts in contemporary feminist publications. Standard biographies of suffragist leaders somehow do not convey so graphically the heroism and suffering of the women who won us the vote. For these sections alone *The Sentinel* was worth publishing. But the flurry of reissues of all her novels, and the biographical interest in West in the dozen years after her death, has died down, even though much of her work is still in print. This unfinished, apprentice-work novel was probably not something that a mainstream publisher could well take on, and nor, probably, was Laing’s scrupulous, professional, but not unobtrusive editing.

Laing has triumphantly won her academic spurs with this publication, even if sledgehammers and nuts may momentarily come to mind. She could take on anything now, and without her this intriguing piece of work, which carries in it the seeds of almost everything that was to preoccupy West throughout her writing life, would never have seen the light of day. West’s early journalism has already given her status in academe as a feminist pioneer and propagandist. “West studies” are on the up, and Laing’s treatment of *The Sentinel* may complete the transition of her fiction, and of her work as a whole, out of the overcrowded 20th-century mainstream and into the canon. This is both the kiss of death and the kiss of life, and Rebecca West would appreciate the paradox.... We’re asking readers to make a New Year contribution in support of *The Guardian*’s independent journalism. More people are reading our



independent, investigative reporting than ever but advertising revenues across the media are falling fast. And unlike many news organizations, we haven't put up a pay wall – we want to keep our reporting as open as we can. So you can see why we need to ask for your help.

This is important as it enables us to give a voice to those less heard, challenge the powerful and hold them to account. It's what makes us different to so many others in the media, at a time when factual, honest reporting is critical. In her earlier novel, She demonstrates a keen awareness of, concern for, and dedication to African people in America. *The Sentinel* a collective struggle against slavism as the only viable solution possible for the African people in the white-dominated society. This inordinate craze for ownership manifests itself in its worst forms, but is countered throughout the novel by the non-appropriative view of life, most often represented by the women.

To show the historical truth that collective struggle is the only practical solution for African people, Rebecca writes a historical novel, *The Sentinel*, which explores the most oppressed period of slavery in the history of African people. The novel is based on a newspaper clipping about a fugitive slave in Ohio who killed her own infant rather than sees her return to bondage in the South. Rebecca found the news clipping in *The Black Book* which chronicles the life of the African people in the United States from slavery through the civil rights movement.

She said, that when the officers and slave-hunters came to the house in which they were concealed, she caught a shovel

and struck two of her children on the head, and then took a knife and cut the throat of the third, and tried to kill the other, that if they had given her time, she would have killed them all that with regard to herself, she cared but little, but she was unwilling to have her children suffer as she had done. With the essence of this news clipping, Rebecca concocts the story of *The Sentinel*. She, however, expands, refines, and shapes it so that The Sentinel picks up where leaves off. While mulling over this news article what evidently clicked in Rebecca's mind was the fact that conditions of oppression then and now as well as our reactions to them have not qualitatively changed.

Because Britan are faced with circumstances almost equally oppressive as those in slavery, Rebecca shows them the need to unite as one to confront a common enemy-slavism, the same enemy they struggled against more than one hundred years ago. Certainly Rebecca has come to understand that "Slavism is but the gentleman's form of slavery".

Rebecca's conscious focus on collective rather than individual struggle is clarified through her repeated assertions that The Sentinel is the story of a people rather than a person. She says: "The book was not about the institution-Slavery with a capital S. It was about those anonymous people called slaves. What they do to keep on, how they make a life, what they are willing to risk, however long it lasts, in order to related to one another-that was incredible to me".

Although the novel begins as Adela's story, it evolves into a story about "these people who don't know they are in an era of historical interest. They just know

they have to get through the day... and they are trying desperately to be parents, husbands and a mother with children". Rebecca's conscious focus on the collective rather than Adela's personal history is further clarified when she says that the novel "has to be the interior life of some people, a small group of people and everything they do is impacted on by the horror of slavery, but they are also people. The impact of slavery on a people, thus, involves the way internalization of oppressors' values can distort all intimate human relationships and even subvert the self.

*The Sentinel* deals with not only 'reconstructed memory', but also deconstructed history. Set in post-civil war Ohio, this haunting narrative of slavery and its aftermath, traces the life of a young woman, Adela, who has kept a terrible memory at bay only by shutting down part of her mind. The novel deals with Seth's former life as a slave on Sweet Home Farm, her escape with her children to what seem a safe haven, and the tragic events that follow. Although Adela physically survives, she remains emotionally subjugated, and her desire to give and receive love becomes a destructive force. Rebecca also addresses the difficulties faced by former slaves in keeping the horrors of their pasts submerged within the subconscious. Rebecca "twists and tortures and fractures events until they are little slivers that cut. She moves the lurid material of melodrama into the minds of her people, where it gets sifted and sorted, lived and relived, until it acquires the enlarging outlines of myth and trauma, dream obsession". Thus, Rebecca recreates a past, however painful, to undercut the ideological basis upon which it has largely been

constructed by whites, employing not only available accounts in slave narratives, but also disengaging the materials from historical documents in order to revitalize them as lived experience.

The novel hinges on the death of Adela's infant daughter, who mysteriously reappears as a sensuous young woman. *The Sentinel's* spirit comes back to claim Adela's love. Adela struggles to make *The Sentinel* gain full possession of her present and throw off the long, dark legacy of her past. Adela's experience is treated with many ironic overtones that point to certain paradoxes and many fundamental complexities of her quest for freedom.

On a socio-psychological level, *The Sentinel* is the story of Adela Suggs' quest for social freedom and psychological wholeness. She struggles with the haunting memory of her slave-past and the retribution of *The Sentinel*, the ghost of the infant daughter whom she has killed in order to save her from the living death of slavery. On a legendary and mythic level, *The Sentinel* is a ghost story that frames embedded narratives of the impact of slavism, race and sex on the capacity for love, faith and community of black families, especially of black women, during the Reconstruction period. Set in post-civil war Cincinnati, *The Sentinel* is a womanist neo-slave narrative of double consciousness, a post-modern romance that speaks in many compelling voices and on several time levels of the historical rape of black American women and of the resilient spirit of blacks in surviving as a people.

*The Sentinel* contains Rebecca's most extraordinary and spellbinding

womanist remembrance of things past. As Alice Walker's epigraphs to *In Search of Our Mother's Gardens* suggest, womanist connotes a black feminist, "a woman who, among other things, is audaciously committed to (the) survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female". And it is "because of the silences in the slave narratives due to authorial compromises to white audiences and to self-masking from a painful past, Rebecca sees her role as a writer as bearing witness to the interior life of people who didn't write their history and to filling in the blanks that the slave narrative left". Unlike James Baldwin, who also defines the role of slave as bearing witness, Rebecca privileges the authority and epistemology of black and Third World women in America.

As in her previous novel *Judge*, the need for women to re-establish connections with one another is powerfully rendered in Rebecca's *The Sentinel*. It was all the more important in that era of slavery because there was a profound and real need for physical as well as psychological survival commenting on her effort to explore a relationship between two women. Rebecca says: "We read about Ajax and Achilles willing to die for each other but very little about the friendship of women, and them having respect for each other, like it's something new. But black women had always had that, they have always been emotional life supports for each other"(48). When Adela arrives with her new-born daughter tied to her chest, Baby Suggs welcomes her. Adela has a powerful culture mentor in Baby Suggs who kindles a desire in her to know her past and to love herself as a person.

Adela, like Rebecca's brilliant female protagonists, is a victim of both sexist and racist oppression. She is runaway slave woman, a slave mother, who is brutally treated by white men, the school teacher and his nephews. Rebecca explores a black woman's self-conscious protest to the dual oppression. It is not only the sexual exploitation that Adela feels most oppressed by, but the humiliation of her nurturing abilities as a mother-the stealing of her milk.

One of the most damaging effects of the dual oppression of black women, against which Rebecca writes, is murder of one's own child. Murder becomes Adela's act of mother love, which she explains saying, She prefers to murder her daughter, Balancing the polemics-racial and sexual-that is at the back of every personal outrage suffered by Adela, is the brilliant "poetics... of the long black song of many thousands gone". Adela's back is so hardened that she cannot feel Paul D. pressing against it, "but could not feel, that his cheek was pressing into the branches of her chokecherry tree". (21) Similarly, through another powerful image, that of the truckles quiet forest abruptly appearing after the first dialogue of Adela the implied author brings out the metaphysical ambivalences of Adela, the slave mother. As observed by Bernard W. Bell: "This metaphorical silence is an ingenious, ironic use of the technique of call and response that invites the implied reader in Wolfgang Iser's words, that network of response inviting structures, which impel the reader to grasp the text".

By choosing to narrate the real life and actual experiences of a run-away slave woman, Rebecca proves the power of art to

demolish stereotype. Adela's experience is treated with many ironic overtones that point to certain paradoxes and many fundamental intricacies of her quest for freedom. Adela's black awareness and rejection of white perceptions and inscriptions of herself, her children, and other slaves as non-human are synthesized with her black feminist sense of self-sufficiency.

Thus, the stress on shared relationships, community and race responsibility the traditional African principle of collectivism is the dominant theme of the novel. As we go through the

novel, we find that life is hell, but togetherness, shared experience and brotherly love help the characters to survive, if not to forge better lives for themselves. This emphasis on social responsibility, the unselfish devotion of Brittan helping other Brittan, makes *The Sentinel* Rebecca's most conscious novel. ■

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# Exploitation of the Kenyans in Ngugi Wa Thiong's *The River Between*

V. Jothimani & J. Jayakumar

Ngugi is one of the well acclaimed author's in the realm of Nigerian literature who extremely dedicated toward the support of confident beliefs and programs particularly, pertaining to his own African community. His beliefs radiate starting his intellect of ethical feeling, conviction and righteousness. He, in his works, reports the exploitation of the Africans at the hands of the Europeans: I believe that African intellectuals alien themselves with the struggle of the African message for a meaningful national ideal... The African writer can help in articulating the feelings behind the struggle (1).

These lines expose Ngugi's sensitiveness on the way to the civilization about him and his concern for shaping and molding his community. Ngugi, in his fictional works delineates vividly the exploitation of the Africans by the Whites and the consequential crippling result of such exploitation on the lives of the Africans. He largely identifies three facets of bump into of the Africans with the European imperialists-slavery, colonialism and neocolonialism. His first three novels *Weep Not, Child* and *The River Between* and *A Grain of Wheat* agreement by the era of slavery and colonialism. In *Petals of Blood*, *Devil on the Cross*, although the emphasis

is on neo-colonialism, the other two facets are also acknowledged no less conspicuously. G.D.Killam says, "obviously here is a good deal of overlapping in the novels in the way in which the three phases, Ngugi identifies are treated" (2).

Previous to depicting in his fictional world a variety of methods by which the Whites exploited the Africans, Ngugi describes at extent in his first novel, *The River Between*, the impassable Kenya in all its gorgeousness. At that time he explains how the Kenyans had been without any horror of interference by 'Ukabi' (outsider) most important a happy, peaceful and united life with their traditions and customs which bound them to their earth. The African citizens believed that the land on which they lived was their God, Murunga's gift to their first parents Gikuya and Mumbi Murunga showed them the vast fertile land and told them: "This land, I give it to you, oh, man and woman. It is yours to rule and till you and your posterity" (2).

*The River Between* begins through Ngugi's declaration to the productive land of Kenya belonged fundamentally to the Africans. Mugo wa Kabiro, one of the great seers of old who had been all over the Gikuyu nation prophesied the assault of the Gikuyu nation by the Whiteman thus:



“There shall come a people with clothes like butterflies” (2).

Chege, who was a ‘respected man’ of the ridges, a believed descendent of Mugo wa Kabiro, as well predicted the influx of the White man and told the citizens of the ridges that the Whites had already set up their houses and have taken their land in the neighboring places of Murungu, Nyeri and Kiambo. However citizens refused in the direction of provide credibility to their words. Although the railway row lay in the Whites ran across the nation, the citizens not knowing this whispered: “The White man cannot speak the languages of hills. And knows not the ways of the land” (7). The Africans, due to their lack of knowledge, and deep belief in their impenetrable nature of the hills could not forestall the arriving invaders starting settling downward through their spiritual missionary at Siriana, a position located on the outer edge of Makuyu and Kamenno ridges. Ngugi “succeeds in evoking the atmosphere of the ridges and chronicling the traditions and customs they embrace” (3).

These Whites almost immediately engaged the nearby soil and through their spiritual preaching and catechism, they were able to convert to their faith quite a few natives like Joshua and Kabony. The act of conversion is the first step of colonialism.

Livingstone, the most important missionary, visited the hills only infrequently toward provide new life and energy to his followers. He made Joshua, the black exchange whom he used as his agent to carry on his main work of preaching to the Africans about the existence of one God Jesus. Through Joshua, a firm and

capable preacher, Livingstone was able to convert many Africans to take to the new faith shedding their faith in the native religion. Since of the new belief, the old conformity of the African society was broken. This is brought out symbolically by Ngugi through Joshua’s building:

The round thatched huts standing in groups of three or four convey a picture of conformity broken only by Joshua’s house which has a tin roof and is rectangular. The very presence of the house is an indication that the old isolation of Makuyu from the rest of the world was being broken down (28).

The preaching of innovative ways and values of life through a fresh religious conviction had a drastically adverse effect on the old beliefs. The collision between the two antagonistic ways of life was indeed most catatrophic and tragic. Ngugi remarkably portrays in *The River Between* the tragic predicament of the Kenyans torn by a lacerating conflict between the loss of cultural heritage and identity in the exploitative colonial context at both the individual and societal levels. Thus “the disinheritance of the Gikuyu religion, tribal culture and White colonialism depicted in this novel” (4).

The Whites began to pour into the interior in large numbers. The newly built railway line, the settled land of the Whites around Siriana mission and ever-increasing number of converts eased their way to spread further.

The impenetrable thick line that distinguished the outsider from the insider

became penetrable. The White people as well as the Indians started business on Kenyan land. The White regime began to run from Siriana. The regime administrators were not seen directly but were heard through the missionaries. This was announced to the Makuyu ridges that a regime placement was soon going to be established there and that the public would be ruled from there. Follower citizens as well spoke of the taxes the natives had to pay to the White regime in Nairobi. The lands being intact then, the native citizens did not take stern observe of the ways of the Whites or of the taxes being compulsory by them.

Siriana follower centre as well started a school. Chege, who believed in the early prophecy of Mugo that salvation, would come from the blood that flowed in him, idea of imparting his knowledge to his son Waiyaki, whom he named after the great Gikuyu warrior. He told him: Arise. Head the prophecy. Go to Mission place, learn all the wisdom and all the secretes of the White man. But do not follow his vices. Be true to your people and ancient rituals (20).

Chege's verbal communication resembled Ezelu's verbal communication to his son in Chinua Achebe's *The Arrow of God*. Both followed the universal principle according to which the topic group of students educated those tricks of the aggressor and used them against the aggressor himself. It was not only the belief of Chege but also of many traditional Africans at the time of religious conflicts. They believed that White man's magic lay in education. They were not able to realize the kind of education that was imparted at

Siriana missionary centre. As Robson says: "The learning and wisdom that the pupils hope to acquire much potential to destroy the old ways as to preserve them by fighting the White man with his own weapons" (7).

The writer does not hesitate to draw attention to the theme of exploitation in the field of education imparted by the colonizers. The education imparted to the students in the Siriana missionary school was directed mostly toward advance the interests of the British Empire. They wanted to change the Africans to believe in their belief and support them to increase their religious conviction. They also required the students on the way to assist them in the management of the natives. Thus, Livingstone pinned his hopes on Waiyaki and saw in him 'a possible Christian leader of the Church'. Education directed to these reason asserted the superiority of their religious conviction and began to censure the native rituals, customs and traditions. Ngugi comments thus:

A is sitting on B... what kind of education will A want B to set? In other words, education what kind of culture and consciousness? 'A' will want 'B' to believe that he, B has no culture or his culture is inferior. 'A' will want 'B' to imbibe a culture inculcates in his values of self-doubt and self-denigration, in a word a slave consciousness. He will now look up to A, a superior culture (5).

Livingstone and his follower citizens measured the customary traditions as satanic works. They called the Gikuyu God, 'the prince of darkness'. At Siriana it was taught thus: Those who refuse him are the children

of darkness; these, sons and daughters of evil one, will go to Hell; they will burn and burn forever more, world unending (29).

These 'strong words' frightened converts like Joshua. It is said that Joshua's complete dead body shook 'to the very roots of his being'. It is simply while he was baptized that he felt at quiet and stopped up 'trembling'. The result of such preaching was consequently a great deal on Joshua that he repented all his life for having matrimonial circumcised Miriamu. He did not like his children to experience such rituals. He felt that they would get contaminated yet if they listened toward the opening songs. Having got methodically influenced by foreign religion, he began preaching to the citizens on the way to believe in the Bible and provide awake the custom. Through condemning the native tradition in favor of the new faith and by becoming a preacher himself, he was at once the exploited as well as the exploiter.

Chege witnessed the power of the strange forces of new belief, which influenced a lot of Africans on the way to find changed. He was disappointed that he was not able to do anything in his lifetime. He feared if his son, Waiyaki, as well force start on the way to hate the conduct of the ridge and its rituals, in fact, he had pinned great hopes on his son that he would be the rescuer of the ridge. Although Waiyaki did not censure the rituals, as Joshua did, the impact of follower learning was obviously seen on him on the day previous to circumcision, at first, he stood, as a foreigner, although he liked to be concerned like other boys of his age. He grew troubled on the way to pay attention toward the songs

of circumcision sung by the young Kenyan boys and girls of his age. Later, when he was pushed into the circle dancing around the fire, his body mechanically moved musically according to the music of the whistles and horns but the voice of White man's education made him culpable and he could not put his soul in it. In fact, he remembered Livingstone and what he might have felt about it. Ngugi comments on the disruptive influence of Christianity on the African life thus: Christianity as an organized religion is corrupt and hypocritical: besides acting as an agent of imperialism, it exercised a highly disruptive influence on African life and was the chief villain in alienating the African from his own culture (6).

Waiyaki who could not make a choice between two contradictory faiths in the society suffered among two loyalties. In spite of being the son of Chege who was well versed in the importance of all ritual of the tribes, Waiyaki became under enemy control beneath the power of the follower public and the White man's learning. Muthoni, the younger daughter of Joshua was not completely accepted away by her father's doctrine to condemn the rituals of the tribe. Like Waiyaki, she also held to the ceremony of the circumcision was significant toward the public who lived there. But unlike him, she was able to contribute completely into the celebrations of circumcision. At the same time, she thought into the foreign belief her parents had embraced. Waiyaki was astonished on the way to identify to Muthoni revolted against her father's will to get circumcised. He could not think of being a revolutionary placing himself in Muthoni's place. With his

under enemy control intelligence, he was not capable on the way to create an obvious selection and therefore the chances of his becoming a victorious rescuer become less. In fact, he always felt 'a stranger to his land' and behaved detachedly from the political affairs of the land.

Ngugi makes circumcision the middle position roughly which he rotates his work of fiction and describes into an influential method the civilizing abuse of the Africans by Whites. Robson comments: "In his narration of the ceremony of circumcision, he draws a number of elements closely together" (8). In chapters III and IV of *The River Between*, Ngugi describes on duration the significance of the circumcision toward the people who lived here. He makes it openly obvious to the act of circumcision is the majority middle into the Gikuyu method of life.

Circumcision was an important ritual to the tribe. It kept the people together, bound the tribe. It was the core of the social structure and something that gave meaning to a man's life. End the custom and spiritual bias of the tribe's cohesion and integration would be no more (79).

Obsessed through the foreign belief, Joshua forgot paternal love towards his daughter

Muthoni, when she got unhygienic behind cleriodectomy, and disowned her for following customary belief of the land. Yet while her physical condition deteriorated, he did not move: on the other hand, he wanted to plant to curse on her and finally when she died, his consideration to her deserved it for following satanic ceremony. This he consideration would educate a tutorial on the way to the traditional citizens who followed it. The early change "had to prove how Christian he was through rejection of his past roots.... So that in Kenyan missionary robbed people and their soul" (7). The death of Muthoni had far-reaching consequences. Livingstone, earlier, believed in plodding annihilation of the traditional customs of the Africans. In spite of pressure by his superior powers that be on house and into Kenya, he refused on the way to take on rash and desperate measures. But he realized, after his twenty-five years of stay in Kenya, that he was not making much development. ■

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## Classism, Racism and Slavism in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*

K. Gomathi & K. Jayapal

Black feminist perspective pervades contemporary African-American literature. Happily, the perspective governs the aesthetic and the aesthetic informs the landscape and the vision. The status of the black women writers is no longer relegated below the status of the males. Instead of being secondary to the literary dominance of black males, the literature of black women is expansive and, what is more, liberating. Unlike in the past when women were supposed to be seen but not heard, the women of today are recognized writers in all fields and genres. Most importantly, black women are dealing with the political machinations of the racial and sexual beliefs, feelings and actions that black men writers have maintained towards black females, in the street, in the family, and in the bedroom. Their perspective, which is consistent with the aesthetic, is faithful to the actual experiences of black women in America. As a result, we have in their works a woman-to-woman approach rather than a woman-to-man approach. It is, in brief, a black feminist aesthetic in which the form, language, syntax, sequence and metaphoric rendering of experience are markedly different and expansive in comparison to the male-authored literature. This can be meaningfully witnessed in the works of Toni Morrison, the richly deserving recipient of the Nobel Prize for literature for 1993.

Toni Morrison is, perhaps, the most formally sophisticated novelist in the history of African-American literature, whose work has been described as “amazingly high”. She astutely describes aspects of the blacks’ lives and especially of blacks as the people they are. There are many writers who are willing to describe the ugliness of the world as ugly, but the uniqueness of Toni Morrison lies in revealing the beauty and the hope beneath the surface of black America. Combining the aims of the Black Freedom Movement and Women’s Liberation, she seeks to produce literature which is irrevocably and indisputably black. But the artistic excellence of Morrison’s fiction lies in achieving a balance between writing a truly black literature and writing what is truly universal literature. Although firmly grounded in the cultural heritage and social concerns of black Americans, her work transcends narrowly prescribed conceptions of ethnic literature, exhibiting universal mythic patterns and overtones. To put it in Faulkner’s phrase, her novels “grieve on universal bones”.

The signal accomplishment of Toni Morrison as a writer is that she has managed uncannily to invert her own mode of literary representation. Her themes are often those expected of naturalist fiction-the burdens of history, the determining social effects of race, gender or slavism-but they are also the great themes of lyrical modernism-love,



death, betrayal, and burden of individual responsibility for her or his own fate. Like Golding's, her novels have a fabulistic quality as she has been directly influenced by Afro-American folktales. Like George Eliot she has a rare gift for characterization. She can compel her readers to learn about themselves by experiencing through her characters, states of mind which they would ordinarily disavow. Morrison's extraordinary distinction as a novelist also lies in restoring the language the black people speak to its original power.

As a result of her literary and artistic abilities and competence, Toni Morrison stands in the vanguard of contemporary writers of fiction, transcending both her racial identity and gender. Her acclaim is international as her novels are translated into many languages. Scholars and doctoral candidates the world over critique and assess her works, seeking to unravel the complexity the Morrison prides herself upon. An astute scholar as well as a uniquely creative writer, Morrison has won the deepest respect and admiration of both her fellow writers and populace at large. In addition to the feature coverage she has received from the popular media, from major national magazines and journals, she has been the recipient of several honorary degrees, literary awards, and domestic recognitions. The numerous awards she has received, culminating in the Nobel Prize awarded to her in 1993 for her distinctive writing, bear testimony to her genius as a writer. With her powerful narratives set against a historical as well as mythical backdrop, Morrison has captivated the hearts of the common reader as well as scholars of literature. She enjoys today the unique distinction of being both a popular writer and an outstanding literary figure.

In *Beloved* gender oppression is not a visible problem that exists between African men and women, but is one that exists within the context of the economic relationship between master and slave and race is only a later justification for the oppression of the African people. Clearly, then Morrison's choice of setting is germane in crystallizing the nature of the African's oppression, for the economic source of both race and gender oppression is unobscured in slavery.

Refreshingly, the relationship between African men and women is generally positive. Paul D. is the Son of *Tar Baby* who returns to the struggle, wiser and more committed. In regard to women, he is characterized as a man who has never mistreated a woman in his life and as a man who is grateful to women for his life. He is described as Christ-like on occasion, at least in his manner. Women saw him and wanted to weep-to tell him that their chest hurt and their knees did too". (17) Not long after he sees Sethe for the first time in many years, "he rubbed his cheek on her back and learned that way her sorrow, the roots of it; its wide trunk and intricate branches". (17) It is his presence at 124 Bluestone that forces the necessary purgative confrontation between Sethe, the community, and *Beloved*. Paul D. is, in fact, the only major male protagonist in the Morrisonian canon who has a positive relationship with a female and, further more, who struggles with a female to forge this positive relationship. He believes that "only this woman Sethe could have left him his manhood like that. He wants to put his story next to hers". (273)

It is a mark to Toni Morrison's heightened consciousness that she depicts

the life that Paul D. struggles to build with Sethe as one based on a common history and a common struggle. It is not based on sex like the Milkman-Sweet affair in *Song of Solomon*, nor on physical appearance like the Son-Jadine affair in *Tar Baby*. Sethe is a typical African woman who is satisfied with the real happenings love brings, not with the artificial contentment bought by status and wealth:

Perhaps, it was the smile, or may be the ever-ready love she saw in his eyes—easy and upfront, the way colts, evangelists and children look at you; with love you don't have to deserve—that made her go ahead and tell him what she had not told Baby Suggs, the only person she felt obliged to explain anything to. (161)

Unlike Son and Jadine, Paul D. and Sethe struggle together to forge a positive life under the most oppressing conditions.

Like gender oppression race oppression is examined as a consequence of the economic exploitation of African people. The thesis of Eric Williams' *Slavism and Slavery* is threefold. According to him the economic demands of the budding capitalist nations led to the slave trade and slavery. And out of the need to justify the enslavement of human beings, these nations institutionalized racism. He rightly feels: "Slavery was not born to racism: rather, racism was the consequence of slavery". Morrison seems to agree with William's thesis. The very fact that African people today are oppressed equally because of the colour of their skin their poverty clearly proves that race is a later justification for the enslavement of African people.

To accomplish her goal of clarifying

the dialectical relationship between race oppression and slavism exploitation, Morrison documents history by showing that the European and the Native American Indian were enslaved before the African. The European slave is represented by Miss Amy Denver of Boston. Denver says: "My mama worked for these here people to pay for her passage. But then she had me and since she died right after, well, they said I had to work for 'em to pay it off". (34) The parallels between her experience and those of Africans are similar. She shared the same work experience and punishment as those of Africans. She too is denied education, making her English vernacular almost indistinguishable from that of the African slave.

Thus, realizing that to overcome his crisis he must first understand how he became crisis-ridden, thereby knowing his history, Milkman comes to understand how equations of power operate at the levels of slavism, race and gender and, what is more, learns to identify himself with the African masses and not, like *Sula*, to distinguish himself from them. However, it is important to remember that such a realization and identification are not enough. Milkman must understand that his awareness of the common oppression of African people as manifested in their history and in their present is relevant only if it used to struggle against the cause of that oppression. But, unfortunately Milkman sees himself as an African exploited by capitalism and oppressed by racism, but offers no solution to this dilemma. While his race and slavism consciousness develop sufficiently to allow him to recreate self, it never reaches the point where he moves beyond self-healing

to other-healing. To conclude, in spite of the growth her writing of *Song of Solomon* evidences, Morrison has not yet sufficiently matured to understand that while the African is exploited both racially and economically, his economic exploitation forms the basis for his national oppression. In the words of Kwane Nkrumah, while “capitalist exploitation and race oppression are complementary, the removal of the first ensures the removal of the other”. Without such an understanding, Morrison cannot propose a viable solution to the eradication of capitalism. And, proposing, with such an understanding, a viable solution to the problem seems to be Morrison’s chief concern

Morrison seems to be at her best in documenting slavery and its aftermath. The treatment of slaves as beasts of burden and the sexual exploitation of African women by European men are driven home to the reader. Perhaps, more important than Morrison’s skilful way of bringing to life the facts about slavery is her adeptness at correcting myths about slavery. One such myth is that slave life for some was good. Morrison shows how slavery was slavery, on Sweet Home or any other plantation. The conditions of slavery were qualitatively indistinguishable whether the slave had a ‘good’ master or a ‘bad’ master. For instance, Baby Suggs reveals that life for her has been one continuous cycle of oppression. Her past has been intolerable like her present. Also for a ‘free’ African living in a slave society, life is not qualitatively different either. Morrison, therefore, demonstrates that the African’s plight can be potentially extirpated only through a collective struggle: “Days of company: knowing the names of forty, fifty other Negroes, their views, habits; where

they had been and what done: of feeling their fun and sorrow along with her own” (95).

Unity is the only way by which African people can survive. It is only when the African, through self or forced isolation, exists outside the collective that the struggle appears endless and the burden unbearable. In *Beloved*, Morrison reinforces her theme of one people, one struggle, and one solution in several ways. First, she begins each chapter in the novel in the present, and then returns to the past in order to bridge the gap between occurrences of the past and those of the present. Second, the beginnings are often structured in such a way that they seem more like middles thereby emphasizing the fact that oppression for the African exists as one uninterrupted continuum. Another skilful structural device that Morrison uses to reflect the unchanging status of African people is the repetition of key words, phrases or sentences.

Morrison further shows that Africans all over the world are one people having the same history and sharing the same plight since they are seen as one by those outside the African nation, no matter what their slavism status might be. Clearly she wants African people to see themselves as one people, undivided by their slavism status. The novel reiterates its theme of solidarity by implicitly reminding the reader chapter after chapter that collective struggle is the only practical way to alleviate the oppression African people have been experiencing.

Thus, in *Beloved* Morrison comes to terms with both the dilemma confronting African people and a part of the solution that must be exposed by them. The novel makes it clear that the plight of African in America

stems from their nation-slavism oppression, that their primary enemy is slavism in all its disguises, and that the solution to this problem lies in collective, not individual struggle against slavism. Furthermore, Morrison crystallizes the strategy which ushers in the solution of collective struggle.

Morrison's greatness as a novelist, however, lies in her extraordinary power of achieving a harmonious fusion of her social concerns and the demands of novel as an art form. The ultimate solution of collective struggle to the problem of economic exploitation of the blacks in white America is offered invariably in terms of fictional art. What Morrison has worked out in *Beloved* is an extraordinarily effective Gothic blend of post-modern realism and romance as well as of racial and sexual politics. For the characters of the novel as well as the implied author, the scars of racial, sexual, and slavism oppression are more horrible on the soul than those on the body.

Thus, Morrison has brilliantly succeeded in her attempt to make *Beloved* "unquestionably political and irrevocably beautiful". It is a beautiful narrative about the survival of the heritage of slavery, on the power of re-memory, and the collective memories kept alive through oral tradition. It is also a story of the genesis of a culture and of a people who, living on the edge of life and death, have managed to create that culture and to keep their history alive. Morrison's self-conscious interest in the celebration of black women's strength their values and beliefs, stems from a desire to correct the wrongs that have been historically leveled against black women. She seeks to celebrate the legends of black women like Baby Suggs and Sethe, and

weave their dreams into myths that allow us to recover their past.

By using the kind of narrative pattern in which each character becomes part of his or her own history and must be put together in quilt fashion, Morrison reminds us that the oral tradition is so strong in black culture that it is still alive. The stories of different characters bear witness to the past, to the struggle of black slaves to survive and escape to freedom. The reality and fantasy of their lives create history. Thus, in form and content, *Beloved* is about gaps which must be imaginatively filled in and intelligently interpreted by the reader.

Thus, *Beloved* is as artistically appealing as it is socially and politically gratifying. It is full of beautiful prose, dialogue as rhythmically satisfying as music, living characters and scenes so clearly etched. Morrison tries to do what Dickens did—"create wild, flamboyant, abstractly symbolic characters who are, at the same time, not grotesques but sweetly alive, full of deep feeling" (23). Usually in contemporary fiction, the grotesque is mixed with irony, not with passion and romance. Morrison rejects irony, a choice that immediately sets her apart. Instead, like Alice Walker, she wants to tend the imagination, search for an expansion of the possible and nurture a spiritual richness in the black tradition even after three hundred years in the white desert. ■

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# Language Learning Through Games

**Karunakara B.**

English Language learning through games is an effective mode of improving language skills. Play is an entertaining and educating activity that is pleasurable. Children's physical, mental abilities are improved by employing this method. Edutainment is a newly coined word which explores the possible ways of entertainment in the course of learning. Different types games like Board Race, Call my Bluff, Simon says, word jumble race, Hangman, Pictionary, The mime and hot seat, where shall I go, what's my problem and many Online games are very useful to improve language skills. Thus, play activity has a vital role in shaping learners. This article focuses a light on all such possible awareness to improve the English language skills through various games.

**Key words: Language games, edutainment, Pictionary, online games, shaping learners**

## **1. Introduction**

It is widely accepted that a game could be a vehicle for developing a more rational or metaphorical way of thinking. The idea of combining education with entertainment has been widely used for many formal and informal educational purposes. Two commonly known terms that most people are familiar with are "learn through play" and "edutainment". In the

most basic form, the focus of edutainment is learning through play. Nevertheless, there are some differences between them. Thus, this is the focus of this paper to analyze their similarities and differences in terms of definition, importance, effectiveness and exemplification of successful cases in some learning foundation in school.

## **2. LEARN THOUGH GAMES**

### **2. 1 Definition of a game**

"game" is described as the activities involved during childhood from babyhood to early teenager years. It also referred to some activities in adulthood as well. There is no exact meaning of game/play and could be different under different context.

In the Oxford English Dictionary, we can find that the definitions of play under different context are more than ten pages. Some definitions, for example, are play is intrinsically

Motivating, that is, it is pleasurable for its own sake and is not dependent on external rewards; play involves some level of active, often physical engagement; play as power is concerned with winning competitions; play as progress is the learning that can be gained through play activities however, people from different backgrounds included.

Philosophers, psychologists,



novelists, historians, and educators said have different definition of “play” as follows;

“work and play are words used to describe the same thing under differing conditions.”— Mark Twain, novelist, Journalist, river pilot; “It is a happy talent to know how to play.”—Ralph waldo Emerson, philosopher, poet, essayist, “When kids play, they remember. They may not aware they are learning , but they sure are aware they are having fun.”—

Rebecca Krook, play facilitator for kids with disabilities, “It is a paradoxical that many educators and parents still differentiate between a time for learning and a time for play without seeing the vital connection between them.” Leo Buscaglia, author

## **2.2 The Reason Why Play is so Important**

Play has seemed to be a natural and universal learning tool for children and adults. Through play, human can acquire skill without knowing it and in the most natural way. It can be lifelong and enjoyable activity to carry out. As most educators have pointed out, plays are recreation activities which are easy fun to do. How play is so important and what does play provide benefit to the players? Lindon [9] pointed out that “ from babyhood, children use play to promote their own learning; they do not have to be persuaded into playing.”

Through play, learner can develop, alter and understand. All these basic skills are developed as they explore, construct, imitate, discuss, plan, manipulate, problem solve, dramatize, create and experiment [21]. Play supports children in all aspects of their development including [9], [15],

[21]: to explore intellectually and physically; to extend their skills of communication; to give free run to their imagination; to promote their physical and healthy development; to demonstrate their knowledge; to represent their experience; to develop all skills children need, including literacy, mathematical reasoning, creating and social skills; to manage environment through cooperation , helping sharing and social problem-solving; to further explore their world.

## **2.3 Learn Through Play in Formal**

Education Circumstance so far we know that play is an essential activity to improve and develop children physically, mentally, emotionally and socially. Play also teaches a child to react and handle circumstances around enjoyable activities. It is an integral part of child’s development process. Consequently, play has its value as a mean in children’s learning. It is a natural way to learn because it uses all their senses to solve problem and understand their environment. Play prepares children for academic learning as they begin their school years and each step along the way. The idea to modify traditional games and toys into the classroom become one of the most essential areas for psycho-pedagogy[4]. Therefore it makes sense to see play as having a valued and valuable place within.

A school curriculum [23]. Teacher has an important role in helping children learn through play by selecting material they know, guiding them when they need help and sparking their thinking by asking questions. When children are free to follow their interests and organize their own experiences, learning happen naturally [18]

### 3. EDUTAINMENT

Edutainment, similar to infotainment, technotainment, educational electronic games, is a new term coinage. This term was first used in computer industry describing CD ROM programs that we use to teaching with entertainment. “the concept of entertainment is not new, although are term is a neologism. Entertainment facilities have large used the education aspects while adding entertainment or amusement”

[22]. The term edutainment is defined in several ways. Hutchison Encyclopedia, for example, defines edutainment as multimedia-related term, used to describe computer software that is both education and entertainment. The American Heritage Dictionary defines edutainment as “the act of learning through a medium that both educated and entertains.”

According to Buckingham and Scanlon[2], edutainment is “a hybrid genre that relied heavily on visual material, on narrative or game-like formats computer games-education-implications for game developers, and on more informal , less didactic styles of address.”

In conclusion, edutainment is the act of learning heavily through any of various media such as television programs, video games, films, music, multimedia, websites computer software. Entertainment is the media and education is the content[22]. The development of edutainment environment is also intended to implement technological innovations in education[7]

#### 3.1. Application of Edutainment

Edutainment is an interesting form of education that has been successfully used by many education systems around the world. One example is the use of edutainment with in Singapore explored by Resnick [14]. “Whilst Singaporean students achieved some of the highest scores in mathematics and science literacy in the world, the Singapore government became increasingly concerned with the lack of creativity being displayed in secondary and tertiary level graduates. To counteract this trend, some school systems experimented with the use of Robotic edutainment, where children would integrate their knowledge of maths and science in to a practical, working model robot. The result was children that were better able to enjoy their studies as they saw it could lead to interesting and colorful practical application.”

#### The effectiveness of “learn through play” and “edutainment” Effectiveness

Social behavior	Self control, more positive social interacts and companionship, more altruistic behavior, less stereotyped views of other, cooperative, helping, sharing, solving social problems, understand their life experiences, ability to take turn, negotiate, compromise, work out conflict
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Cognitive development	Memory, creativity and divergent thinking, extending skills of mathematical reasoning, basic skills such as counting, reading and writing
Intellectual development	Resolving, problems, understanding how things work, devising strategies
Emotional development	Love , caring, empathy, curiosity, focusing attention on task, lower anxiety
Physical development	Develop gross muscle control, eye hand coordinative, coordination of movement and speed, a critical precursor to reading and writing skills
Therapeutic effects	Health care (learn good eating habits from computer game Hyperactivity (active play may reduce impulsivity) Brain development (increase neural structure)

#### 4. Different types of games

Games and fun activities are a vital part of teaching English as a foreign language. Whether you're teaching adults or children, games will liven up your lesson and ensure that your students will leave the classroom wanting more.

Games can be used to warm up the class before your lesson begins, during the lesson to give students a break when you're tackling a tough subject, or at the end of class when you have a few minutes left to kill. There are literally hundreds, probably thousands of games that you can play with your students. EFL games are used to test vocabulary, practice conversing, learn tenses-the list is endless.

This list of ten classic ESL games every teacher should know will help get you started and feeling prepared. Having these up your sleeve before stepping into the classroom will ensure your lessons run smoothly, and should things get a little out of control, you'll be able to pull back the

attention of the class in to time.

##### 4.1. Board Race

There isn't an EFL teacher I know who doesn't use this game in the classroom. Board race is a fun game that is used for revising vocabulary, whether it be words from the lesson you've just taught or words from a lesson you taught last week. It can also be used at the start of the class to get students active. It is a great way of testing what your students already know about the subject you're about to teach.

- Why use it? Revising vocabulary; grammar
- Who it's best for; appropriate for all levels and ages

##### How to play:

- First, watch this helpful video of real teachers using this game in the classroom by Bridge TEFL
- This is best played with 6 students or more-the more, the better. I've used it in classes ranging from 7-25 years of

age and it's worked well in all age groups. Here's a step by step explanation:

- Split the class into two teams and give each a colored marker.
- If you have a very large class, it may be better to split the students into teams of 3 or 4.
- Draw a line down the middle of the board and write a topic at the top.
- The students must then write as many words as you require related to the topic in the form of a relay case
- Each team wins one point for each correct word. Any words that are unreadable or misspelled are not counted

#### **4.2. Call My Bluff/Two Truths and A Lie**

Call My Bluff is a fun game which is perfect at the start of term as a 'getting to know you' kind of game. It is also a brilliant ice breaker between students if you teach classes who do not know one another and especially essential if you are teaching a small class size.

The game is excellent for practicing skills, though make sure you save a time for after the game to comment on any mistakes students may have made during the game. (I generally like to reserve this for after the game, so you don't disrupt their fluency by correcting them as they speak.)

With older groups you can have some real fun and you might be surprised what you'll learn about some of your students when playing this particular EFL game.

- Why use it? Ice-breaker; Speaking skills

- Who it's best for: appropriate for all levels and ages but best with older groups

How to play:

- Write 3 statements about yourself on the board, two of which should be lies and one which should be true
- Allow your students to ask you questions about each statement and then guess which one is the truth. You might want to practice your poker face before starting this game!
- If they guess correctly then they win
- Extension: Give students time to write their own two truths and one lie
- Pair them up and have them play again, this time with their list, with their new partner. If you want to really extend the game and give students even more time to practice their speaking/listening skills, rotate partners every five minutes
- Bring the whole class back together and have students announce one new thing they learned about another student as a recap

#### **4.3. Simon Says**

This is an excellent game for young learners. Whether you're waking them up on a Monday morning or sending them on a Friday afternoon, this one is bound to get them excited and wanting more. The only danger I have found with this game is that students never want to stop playing it.

- Why use it? Listening comprehension; Vocabulary; warming up/winding down class
- Who it's best for: Young learners

How to Play:

- Stand in front of the class (you are Simon for the duration of this game)
- Do an action and say Simon Says(action). The students must copy what you do
- Repeat this process choosing different actions-you can be as silly as you like and the sillier you are the more the children will love you for it.
- Then do an action but this time say only the action and omit 'Simon Says'. Whoever does the action this time is out and must sit down.
- The winner is the last student standing
- To make it harder, speed up the actions. Reward children for good behavior by allowing them to play the part of Simon

Take your students outside for interactive games

#### 4.4. Word Jumble Race

This is a great game to encourage team work and bring a sense of competition to the classroom. No matter how old we are, we all love a good competition and this game works wonders with all age groups. It is perfect for practicing tenses, word order, reading and writing skills and grammar.

- Why use it? Grammar, word Order, Spelling; Writing Skills
- Who it's best for: Adaptable to all levels/ ages

How to Play:

The game requires some planning before the lesson

Write out a number of sentences, using

different colors for each sentence. I suggest having 3-5 sentences for each team

Cut up the sentences so you have a handful of words

Put each sentence into hats, cups or any objects you can find, keeping each separate

Split your class into teams of 2,3 or 4 you can have as many teams as you want but remember to have enough sentences to go around

Teams must now put their sentences in the correct order

The winning team is the first team to have all sentences correctly ordered

#### 4.5. Hangman

This classic game is a favorite for all students but it can get boring quite quickly. This game is best used for 5 minutes at the start to warm the class up or 5 minutes at the end if you've got some time left over. It works no matter how many students are in the class

- Why use it? Warming up/ winding down class
- Who it's best for: young learners

How to play

In case you've never played, here's a quick rundown

- Think of a word and write the number of letters on the board using dashes to show many letters there are
- Ask students to suggest a letter. If it appears in the word, write it in all of the correct spaces. If the letter does not appear in the word, write it off to the side and begin drawing the image of a hanging man



- Continue until the students guess the word correctly (they win) or you complete the diagram (you win)
- Repeat this until all the words are gone- make sure you have enough words that each student gets to draw at least once!

#### **4.6. Pictionary**

This is another game that works well with any age group; children love it because they can get creative in the classroom, teenagers love it because it doesn't feel like they're learning, and adults love it because it's a break from the monotony of learning a new language- even though they'll be learning as they play.

Pictionary can help students practice their vocabulary and it tests to see if they're remembering the words you've been teaching.

- Why use it? Vocabulary
- Who it's for: All ages; best with young learners

#### **How to play**

- Before the class starts, prepare a bunch of words and put them in a bag
- Split the class into teams of 2 and draw a line down the middle of the board
- Give one team member from each team a pen and ask them to choose a word from the bag
- Tell the students to draw the word as a picture on the board and encourage their team to guess the word
- The first team to shout the correct answer gets a point
- The student who has completed drawing should then nominate someone else to draw for their team

#### **5. The Mime**

Mime is an excellent way for student to practice their tenses and their verbs. It's also great for teachers with minimal resources or planning time, or teachers who want to break up a longer lesson with something more interactive. It's adaptable to almost any language point that you might be focusing on.

This game works with any age group, although you will find that adults tire of this far quicker than children. To keep them engaged, relate what they will be miming to your group's personal interests as best as possible.

- Why use it? Vocabulary; speaking
- Who it's best for: All ages; best with young learners

#### **How to play:**

Before the class, write out some actions-like washing the dishes-and put them in a bag

Split the class into two teams

Bring one student from each team to the front of the class and one of them choose an action from the bag

Have both students mime the action to their team

The first team to shout the correct answer wins a point

Repeat this until all students have mimed at least one action

Don't be afraid to be a little goofy

## 6. Hot Seat

This is one of my student's favorite games and is always at the top of the list when I ask them what they want to play. I have never used this while teaching ESL to adults, but I imagine it would work well

Hot seat allows students to build their vocabulary and encourages competition in the classroom. They are also able to practice their speaking and listening skills and it can be used for any level of learner.

- Why use it? Vocabulary; speaking and Listening
- Who it's best for: All ages and levels

### How to play:

- Split the class into 2 teams or more if you have a large class
- Elect one person from each team to sit in the hot seat, facing the classroom with the board behind them
- Write a word on the board. One of the team members of the student in the hot seat must help the student guess the word by describing it. They have a limited amount of time and cannot say, spell or draw the word.
- Continue until each team member has described a word to the student in the hot seat

## 7. Where Shall I Go?

This game is used to test prepositions of movement and should be played after this subject has been taught in the classroom. This game is so much fun but it can be a little bit dangerous since

you'll be having one student in each pair be blindfolded while the other directs them. So make sure keep your eyes open!

It is also excellent for the adult EFL classroom, or if you're teaching teenagers.

Why use it? Prepositions; Speaking and Listening

Who it's best for: All ages and levels

### How to Play:

Before the students arrive, turn your classroom into a maze by rearranging it. It's great if you can do this outside, but otherwise push tables and chairs together and move furniture to make your maze

When your students arrive, put them in pairs outside the classroom. Blindfold one student from each pair

Allow pairs to enter the classroom one at a time; the blindfolded student should be led through the maze by their partner. The students must use directions such as step over, go under, go up, and go down to lead their partner to the end of the maze.

## 8. What's My Problem?

This is a brilliant EFL game to practice giving advice. It should be played after the 'giving advice' vocabulary lesson has taken place. It is a great way for students to see what they have remembered and what needs reviewing. This game works well with any age group, just adapt it to fit the age you're working with.

- Why use it? Speaking and Listening; Giving Advice
- Who it's best for: All ages and levels

### **How to play:**

- Write ailments or problems related to your most recent lesson on post-it notes and stick one post-it note on each student's back
- The students must mingle and ask for advice from other students to solve their problem
- Students should be able to guess their problem based on the advice they get from their peers
- Use more complicated or obscure problems to make the game more interesting for older students. For lower levels and younger students, announce a category or reference a recent lesson like "Health", to help them along.

These games will keep your students engaged and happy as they learn! Remember, these are just ten on the hundreds of different EFL games that you can play with your students. As you get more confident in the classroom, you can start putting your own spin on games and eventually make up your own.

Whatever the age of your students, they're guaranteed to love playing EFL games in the classroom. An EFL classroom should be fun, active and challenging and these games are sure to get you heading in the right direction.

### **9. On line games:**

Today many young people spend much of their time on computers and online games. With this trend, online gaming has attracted the interest of educators and researchers (Godwin-Jones, 2005) A

growing number of educators and researchers believe that the use of online games can induce student motivation and engagement in their learning process. For instance, online games promote student's socializing skills (Shimai, Masuda & Kishimoto, 1990; Steinkuehler, 2006) and language skills (Meskill, 2005) through collaboration among multi players. In spite of its popularity among young learners, there is little empirical study done on the educational benefits of online games in language education.

One of the difficulties that English as a foreign language(EFL) learners face is limited opportunities to use and the target language. Interaction and communication is a key requirement for learning a language. In an EFL setting, lack of interaction often fails to promote student engagement and their self efficacy in communicating the target language. As multiplayer games promote learner's collaboration and their application of learned knowledge in real-world settings (DeKanter, 2004), use of interactive games

Will benefit EFL students in learning English. There is a need for examining whether the use of interactive online games improves EFL Student's self-efficiency and their English skills and whether the experience of online games relates to student's social-affective values.

### **10. Discussion:**

Even though learn through play and edutainment have attracted attention over the year, the success of them is continuously controversial. Most educators believe that the combination of education and

entertainment is one of the key factors of the educational success, while others disagree and believe that the problem of joining play is not easy. When learners play, in a computer game for instance, they are focus to the experience of play itself like how to follow the rules; how to move the objects; when to hit the ball, “but there can be no guarantee that we will learn just what someone else plans we will learn” [12]. Some teachers commented that adding entertainment in the classroom will make the content and value of education down [17]. They then argue that learning should not be fun, and therefore edutainment is dangerous. Of course the questions here are whether there is anything wrong with making education fun and whether edutainment software is really harmful. As Buckingham argues [8], a lot of learning can be done through play, but not all play is learning. Edutainment software is a great idea, if it is used in the correct manner.

Most studies show that play-based learning session proved to be successful in both formal and in formal situations [11] and they agreed that play is an important educational rule, especially during their childhood [4]. Researchers suggest that education administrators should consider play as a method of learning with new technologies beyond the foundation stages [11]. The school future may look more like a park or

Interactive museum than the traditional classroom [3]. They also forecast that within the next decade the technologies and content development will allow policy makers to rethink the entire process of education [10]. Teachers will play significant role as guide and nurturers. They

can use more interactive edutainment mediums and act as the entertainment actors. Learner can enjoy more interactive classroom while teachers can also monitor and analyze the performance of students.

## Conclusion

“Learn through Play” and “Edutainment” are important areas that both use entertainment activity for learning. While learn through play is a much broader term in fun activity, edutainment relies heavily on technology, especially computer software. They are effective teaching strategy both inside and outside school. Play activity has a vital role in shaping learners’ scientific, mathematics literacy as well as their language and “edutainment”. Similarities and dissimilarities have been presented. ■

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# Man Woman Relationship and Race in Neela Larsen's *Passing* - A Study

**Jachindra Kumar Rout**

Nella Larsen was an American writer of the Harlem Renaissance. The story of the novel "Passing" surrounds the reunion of two women, Clare Kendry and Irene Redfield and their struggles they face because of 'passing'. Nella demonstrates the challenges that the gender constructs during the time. Larsen dives into the subject matter that was relevant and important to her as well as fellow authors black women passing for white in Harlem as many critics have noted, there is the presence of underlining same sex desire in the friendship of the main characters Irene & Clare. In other words, Larsen highlights, perhaps to an uncomfortable degree, the female need for completion in a male dominated society. The relationships between these men and women form rather complicated dynamics as everyone seems to be identifying themselves disguising their innate identity for various reasons, such as Brain's attempt to keep the pace between him and Irene regarding his extra-marital desires, on the presence of insecurity in the example of Irene's suspicions of her husband.

Since the beginning of her career, critics have praised Nella Larsen as a gifted writer commending her skill at the craft of fiction- most notably, successful characterization narrative unit, and economy. Nella Larsen a prominent writer of the Harlem Renaissance, published her second and final novel "passing", both

novels quicksand (1928) and 'passing' (1929) reveal Larsen's difficulty with rounding off stories convincingly a problem she shared with her black female contemporaries Jessi Fause and Zora Neale Hurston 'Both novel features daring and unconventional heroines who, in the end, are sacrificed to the most conventional fates of narrative history marriage and death, respectively. In quicksand, the cultured and refined Helga Crane marries a rural southern-preacher, follows him to his backwoods church to "uplift" his parishioners, and at the end of the novel, is in a state of emotional and physical collapse from having had to many children. In passing, the defiant and adventurous Clare, who flouts all the social rules of black bourgeoisie, falls to her death under melodramatic and ambiguous circumstances.

Nella Larsen a prominent writer of the Harlem Renaissance published her second and final novel, passing in 1929 (quicksand) 1928 and passing (1929) both novels include heroines whose racial identities are ambiguous to, if not directly contested by other characters. While quicksand's central character is a biracial woman – whose ancestry and light complexion are continual sources of complication for her throughout the narrative, passing takes the issue of racial ambiguity much further. It tells the story of an embattled, friendship between two black

woman who are both fair enough to “pass” as white Irene Redfield, with a visibly black husband and child. Does so rarely, while Clare Kendry makes her life as a white woman.

Larsen situates these racial issues within narratives of domestic disruption and conflict: Helga Crane, the mulatta protagonist of *Quicksand*, is contained by marriage until the disastrous conclusion of the novel and Clare Kendry, the ambiguously raced figure in *Passing*, not only exists outside of a traditional black bourgeois family structure, but repeatedly defies the confines of this structure, suggesting an overlap for ;Larsen between ambiguous racial character, suggesting an overlap for Larsen between ambiguous racial character and sexual or familial impropriety. *Passing* stresses the interpretive anxieties and sexual paranoiaes that make convention bound people reluctant to allow others the freedom to travel freely throughout the many worlds identities and sexual paranoiaes that make convention bound people reluctant to allow others the freedom to travel freely throughout the many worlds identities and sexualities of American society. Larsen's novel not only explores a legally fraudulent interracial marriage between Clare Kendry and John Bellew but also subtly delineates the intraracial sexual attraction of Irene Redfield for Clare. While the former projects her taboo desires for Clare onto her husband Brian. Ironically, Brian Redfield, who the Irene nonetheless being to suspect that Brian and Clare are connotation of being accepted for something one is not, the title of the novel serves as a metaphor for a wide range of deceptive appearances and practices that encompass sexual as well as racial “passing”.

The story is narrated from the point of view of Irene Redfield, a light skinned, middle-class African American woman who disdains “passing” and is married to a successful doctor, too dark to “pass”. By whom she has had two sons. Irene, self-consciously proud of her African racial heritage. The well regulated surface of her existence is shattered, however, by the unexpected arrival of Clare Kendry, a light skinned African American from Irene's long forgotten childhood past who has, through a combination of personal adventurousness and familial mishaps, ended up marrying John Bellew, a prosperous white businessman who knows nothing of her racial identity and by whom she has had a daughter. Hence, these once intimate childhood friends are simultaneously separated and tethered together, so to speak, by the divergent strategies they have adopted as adults to cope with their racial identities and their option to “pass” racially. Larsen connects the arbitrarily segregated lives of these two married women by having them meet accidentally in the rooftop restaurant of a Chicago hotel, where they are not in company with their husbands, and where Irene, in this instance, has resorted to “passing” to escape a sweltering heat wave. Clare's chance meeting with her long-lost childhood friend instigates a potent desire in her, described in an effusive letter intertwining romantic and racial longings for Irene, to escape the isolated life of deception and secretiveness forced upon her by “passing”:

For I am lonely, so lonely... can not help longing to be with you against, as I have never longed for anything before; and I have wanted many things in my life... you can't

know how in this pale life of mine I am all the time seeing the bright pictures of that other that I once thought I was glad to be free of it's like an ache, a pain that never ceases... (174) (Part 1,CG -1).

These profound if, significantly, some what inarticulate yearnings to return to the condition of her childhood, before she and Irene “fell” into the self divided condition of adult women, culminate in her decision, near the end of the narrative, to abandon her husband and child and return home to Harlem. As Clare’s plans to reassume her earlier identity as an unmarried African American crystallize, Irene convinces herself, with inconclusive evidence at best, that Clare actually intends to steal her husband Brian, a discontented if wittily urbane man who expresses periodic disgust with United States racism and who cherishes a dream, actively suppressed by Irene, of emigrating with his family to Brazil. In the denouement, which again takes place on a rooftop, Clare, Irene and Brian assemble for a party hosted by a couple ironically named the freelanders, John Bellow, who, unbeknownst to everyone save Irene, has accidentally discovered the racial identity of his wife by running into Irene with a woman to dark to “pass”, bursts into the apartment. Before the scene can develop beyond Bellow’s initial reaction of pained horror and outrage, Irene “accidentally” pushes Clare from the window and she falls to her death. In the end, Clare- whose death, the text indicates, is interpreted and dismissed by the authorities as an “accident” or “suicide” becomes a poignant symbol of the victory of *de jure* segregation and narrow social conformity over integration and self-creation, and thus a symbol of

eclipse of the potential of both Irene as an independent woman and the Harlem Renaissance as an artistic movement:

Grne! The soft white face, the fright hair, the disturbing scarlet mouth, the dreaming eyes, the caressing smile, the whole torturing loveliness that had been Clare Kendry. That beauty that had torn at Irene’s placid life. Gone ! the mocking daring, the gallantry of her pose, the ringing bells of her laughter (272).

Tragedy ensues in passing once Irene Redfield misinterprets her own attraction for Clare Kendry, however, also clarifies the complex cultural and historical precedents of recent supreme court decisions that, deploying the hatred of homosexual as an “invisible” fulcrum, have developed a mode of historically-based legal reasoning that threatens to erode relatively recent extensions of constitutional protections to both women and racial minorities. The most striking of such scenes is an afternoon tea at Clare’s home, which includes a third childhood acquaintance, Gertrude Martin. Gertrude, also a black woman who looks white is married to a white man just as Clare is, but unlike Clare, her husband known her racial background. The full import of this distinction is made clear when Jack Bellow, Clare’s husband, arrives to join the group for tea. Writes Larsen, “The first thing that Irene noticed about [Bellow] was that he was not the man that she had seen with Clare Kendry on the Drayton roof” (170) Disconcerted by this evidence of Clare’s marital indiscretions, Irene is further amazed when Bellow affectionately calls his wife “Nig”. Prodded by Clare to explain this curious moniker, Bellow says good-naturedly, “well you see, it’s like this. When we were first

married, she was a white as well as, white as a Lily. But I declare she's getting darker and darker. I tell her if she don't look out, she will wake up one of these days and find she's turned into a nigger" . (171) . All present enjoy this little joke, none more than Irene, who in recognizing its true irony laughs for longer than is prudent for the circumstances.

Further, Clare's sexually daring interactions with whites seem to parallel her perceived availability to already married black men, a group just as socially forbidden by black bourgeois community. The sexual and domestic propriety embraced by up-list driven race conscious figures such as Irene Redfield absolutely prohibits these behaviors that would threaten the safe function of the black nuclear family and its attendant patriarchal stability, the "security: that Irene sculps to throughout the novel. This social prohibition suggests that Irene's suspicion of Brian and Clare's sexual involvement is based at least in part on an assumption about Clare's political disloyalty. Of based at least in part on an assumption about Clare's political disloyalty. Of course, no concrete evidence is given in passing for the adulterous indiscretion, and beginning with Deborah McDowell's ground breaking analysis of the novel as a covertly Lesbian text, numerous critics have suggested that Irene's suspicious only expose her sublimated desire for Clare. Whether or not Irene's suspicious are founded, however, or based in her own desires and jealousies, there remains a sense in the text Clare would be capable of such betrayal, empowered as she is with the "ability to secure the thing that she wanted in the face of any opposition, and in utter disregard of the convenience and desire of others' (201). Clare's potential for

an adulterous involvement with Brian is emblematic of the potential for racial "infidelity" that resides in the mulatta figure more generally in Larsen's work.

It is no wonder, then, that the novel concludes in Clare's death, as mentioned ostensibly at Irene's hand. Irene, representative of a bourgeois black community driven to maintain sexual and racial decorum at any cost, destroys Clare because the latter woman's misconduct proves too much for Irene's to tolerate (38). This misconduct betrays a "respectable" reconceptualization of blackness, and insofar as the novel's sexual transgressiveness recalls the common primitivist stereotype about black erotic passion and excess, it also reifies a stigmatized version of blackness that many bourgeois blacks long to escape.

Thus the issue of passing in twentieth century American literature is inextricably linked to the issue community and the possibility of communal stability, characters who refuse to align or identify themselves with the communities to which their lineage (and/or gender, class sexuality, etc.) assigns them deny their origins and, by implication, the communal stability upon which their when ever as individuals is based. They challenge the possibility of communal totalities and, thus , the possibility of a stable and coherent individual. In the text, passing, Clare disrupts and challenges the possibility of an essential social bond, or common "nature" , upon which communal ties are legitimated.

*Passing* suggests that racially - and sexually ambiguous characters who embrace the full implication of their marginal status threaten the possibility of totalized or

totalizing communities because they frustrate the validity of the assumptions upon which their failure as individuals are necessarily predicated. Clare's passing state is a response to, or effect of, society's compulsion to organize itself according to certain absolute and fixed categories, or communities of being. Clare, passes, in this sense, because these categories of being are insufficient, impractical, illusory; they simply allow us to deny the impossibility that Clare's passing state ultimately signals.

On the surface, Larsen's novel is primarily interested in the phenomenon of racial passing. However, as the critical debate surrounding passing suggests, the thematic of the text (as well as the implications of the title) are not necessarily limited to the problematic of racial transgression. Ultimately, we consider the possibility that "passing" (as an act and as the title of the novel). Has multiple implications, implications that encompass race, class and sexuality.

In stark contrast to Clare's multiple transgressions, Irene is only over passing twice in the novel. Both times she feels compelled to pass. Immediately before reuniting with Clare, Irene passively agrees to the cab driver's suggestion that she go to the Drayton (a posh establishment for whites); and during her first meeting with John Bellow, his blatantly racist opinions force her to pass for Clare's sake. In these instances, and throughout the novel, Irene is both attracted to and abhorred by the idea of passing. Larsen emphasizes Irene's desire for permanence. Most obviously, Clare's passing state compels Irene to reaffirm her own racial identity and her responsibility to the community that legitimizes that identity.

Reflecting on her own willingness to pass in front of below, particularly during his racist tirade, Irene chastises herself for betraying the very community to which her blood assigns her:

"And mingled with her disbelief and resentment was another feeling, a question. Why had n't she spoken that day?... why simply because of Clair Kendry, who had exposed her to such torment, had she failed to take up the defense of the race to which she belonged ? (212). But just as Clair is passing between more than two dialectally opposed communities of being, Irene's desire for permanence extends across a multiple range of identity for example, Irene's need to maintain a fixed national (i.e American) identity compels her to resist her husband's desire to move to Brazil " for she would not go to Brazil. She belonged in this land of rising towers. She was an American. She grew this soil. And she would not be uprooted (367)

Moreover just as Irene attempts to confirm the fixity of her racial and national identity, she stresses the essential characteristics that define her (and, by implication, every woman's) identity as a mother. Yet, not surprisingly, she is horrified by and self-loathingly curious about Clare's apparent ambivalence to motherhood. In an attempt to counter Clare's offhand remark that "children are n't every thing (240) Irene reifies her allegiance to the community of mothers : you know you don't mean that Clare you are only trying to tease me . I know very well that I take being a mother rather seriously I am wrapped up in my boys and the running of my house I can't help it (240) Presumably she can't help it because like being "black" or being "American" Irene can't help being



a “mother” this is what or rather what desperately wants to believe- she is.

Even if we bracket the various instances in which she appears to be in danger of, and struggling against becoming unfixed from her heterosexual identity, the above, example clearly highlight the disparity between Irene and Clare’s approach to their own racially ambiguous status. Unlike Clare Irene rebels against the larger ontological implications suggested by her ability that all identity categories are social constructions, Irene disparately tongs to be black, to be a mother, to be an American, to be hetero sexual and so forth.

By exposing “the menace of impermanence” (passing 262), Clare effectively disrupts this ideological fantasy and forces Irene to acknowledge the fundamental impossibility of the social bond, of the “fixed socio-symbolic identity” Clare forces Irene to face the fact that there are no “ties of race”, that there is no essential “duty” that neither woman has ever been “bound” Clare manages to expose the impossible social bond, the impossible Real, the “barrier” of ineffaceable difference that permits the possibility of community and identity . Clare passing thus highlights the fundamental lack (or “Real”) that eternally prevents the formations of the self identical subject while simultaneously suggesting that “this negative, disruptive power, menacing our identity is ... a positive condition of it (Zizek176) Clare also learns from her white adoptive aunts that her role in the division of labor is to be a worker, one of the “daughters of Ham” condemned “to sweat” doing “hard labor” (159). As a light skinned malatta, she can opt out of the black working class by passing for white. Passing is a way

to circulate like money, to become acceptable everywhere. It allows Clare to transgress the color line to acquire more of those “things” that Helga hoped would displace the social significance of her blackness.

Irene relationship with Clare also underscores the ways in which passing is a “hazardous business” (157), and not only because it is a form of counterfelt circulation that may reveal the “dirty Nigger” (238) underheath the gold leaf. Irene grows increasingly dissatisfied with her black middle class life, she begins to see that her own desire for “security of place and substance “ (190), comes at a cost to her ability to feel and live life more deeply (195). Even before the suspicion of her husband’s affair with Clare dawns on her. Irene intuites the logic of the racist market place of human value, where a black woman is worth less than a white woman. And the moment she realized “she didn’t count she was to him only the mother of this sons. That was all. Alone she was nothing worse an obstacle” (221) she wants to restore the security of her middle-class home and marriage by taking Clare out of circulation. And she did it as a way of raising her own value for brain. Critics of Larsen have been rightly perplexed by these abrupt and contradictory endings. But it examined through the prism of black female sexuality, not only are these endings more understandable. They also illuminate the pecilr pressures on Larsen as a woman writer during the male-dominated Herlem Renaissance. They so her grappling with the conflicting demands of her racial and sexual identities and the contradictions of a black and feminine aesthetic. And while the ending of quicksand and passing appear to

be concessions to the dominant ideology of romance- marriage and mother hood, viewed from a feminist perspective, they became much more radical and original efforts to acknowledge a repressed female sexual experience.

Since the very beginning of their 130 year history. Black woman novelists have a treated sexuality with caution and reticence . these pattern is clearly linked to the network of social and literary , myths perpetuated through out history black woman's libidinousness. It is well know that during Slavery the white slave master constructed an image of black female. Sexuality which shifted responsibility for his own sexual passions on to his female slaves.

Given this historical context it is not surprising that a pattern of reticence about black female sexuality tended to dominate novels by black woman, particularly in the nineteenth and early twentieth century's. Like the club woman, black woman writer responded to the myth of the black woman's sexual licentiousness by insisting fiercely on her chastity. Fighting to overcome their heritage of rape and concubinage a fight the club woman waged they stripped the character they created of all sexual desire imprinting instead the purity the sexual morality of the Victorian bourgeoisie.

The blues lyrics and the club woman symposium capture, respectively, the dialectic of desire and fear, pleasure and danger that defines woman's sexual experiences in male- dominated society. As Carole vance observes "sexuality" is simultaneously a domain of restriction, repression and danger as well as a domain of exploration, pleasure, and agency" for

women in general, sexual pleasure leads to the dangers of domination in marriage and repeated pregnancy: for black woman move often. It leads to exploitation and loss of status.

Both quicksand and passing wrestle simultaneously with this dilatory between pleasure and danger . in their reticence about sexuality. They look back to their nineteenth-century predecessors , but in their simultaneous flirtation with female sexual space desire they are solidly grounded in the liberation of the 1920s. their ideological ambivalences are rooted in the artist politics of the Harlem renaissance regarding the representation of black sexuality especially black female sexuality. In the final section of the novel Clare comes to learn her house before they go to the festive Christmas Party. Coming again in to Irene's room, Clare kiss (3) her bare shoulder, seeming not to notice a slight shrinking (p.233). as they walk to the party Clare at brain's side Irene describing live thing pressing against her (p.237). this live thing represented clearly as full- blown sexual desire must be contained and it takes careful death to contain it significantly in Irene's descriptions death all the images used to describe Clare throughout novel converge.

Gone! the soft white face, the bright hair the disturbing scarlet mouth the dreaming eyes the caressing smile the whole tortured loveliness that had been Clare Kendry that beauty that had torn at Irene's placid life Gone the mocking daring the gallantry of her pose , the ringing bells of her laughter (P.239).

Although the ending is ambiguous and the evidence circumstantial, Larsen

strongly implies that Irene Pushes Clare through the window and, in effect becomes a psychological suicide, if not a murderer” Clare is both the embodiment and the object of the sexual feelings that Irene banishes.

Both quicksand and passing are poised between the tensions and conflicts that are western culture’s stock ambivalences about female sexuality: lady/ Jezebel or virgin/ whore. Larsen sees and indicts the sources of this ambivalence: the network of social institutions-education, marriage, and religion, among the most prominent all interacting with each other to strangle and control the sexual expression of women.

Conclusion:- Clare and Irene are often at centerfocus when discussing Larsen’s passing however the men or male presence in equating in his own right. Brain Redfield Passing is built his entire existence around a house in which he pretends to be happily married heterosexual family man. But he is truly stuck between his desires and his wife’s fears actually true human relationship particularly the man and woman relationship is the focus of discussion in the novel which portrays a factual matters in the real lives of human being through passing Nella Larsen demonstrates the challenges that the gender constructs during the time as women are powerless against race and main. ■

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# Challenge the Unchanging Submissive State of Rural Women in Flora Nwapa's *Feuru*

**R. Shanthi & J. Jayakumar**

Women were always an integral part of the oral tradition of narration in pre-colonial Africa as they covered all aspects of social life including governments and even military forces. A large number of pre-colonial societies were quite democratic and granted more or less equal rights to both women and men. In fact it was only with the coming of colonialism in the continent, first through the Arabs and then the Europeans that the condition of women in Africa really deteriorated. The impact of colonialism on the women of Africa is therefore a significant subject of investigation because it foregrounds the strong note to protest in the voice of many women writers.

Historically speaking, women in Africa had always played a significant role in several political movements and participated along with men in the Anzanwan struggle, Kenya's Mau Mau freedom movement, the Namibian liberation movement, South Africa's anti-apartheid movement and the Biafran Civil War. They had legal and social security that enabled them to become effective heads of state and military strategists. Participation in political life including community decision-making; public affairs such as economic activities, memberships in numerous associations;

active involvement in religious and social life; economic independence despite the existing patriarchal structures etc. lasted only till the colonial interference.

The drastic reduction in the status of women in Africa, both at the economic and social level, was a direct outcome of colonization. It was especially after the European colonial intrusion that women were deprived of their traditional initiative and status in society. Prior to colonization, both men and women were engaged in the production of some kind of socially necessary goods and this gave women access to and control over the products of their labour. But when the colonizers introduced cash crop cultivation, women became displaced from a position of centrality to margins. It is not that after colonization, people in Africa, particularly women, accepted their fate and degradation silently. There were voices of protest.

Both men and women writers of Africa have depicted this deplorable condition of women in their writings. For the female writer in Africa, the main dilemma has been to articulate her silence and make her voice heard. Due to lack of opportunity, most African women did not reach the University. Hence, African literature became a male-dominated, male-

controlled and male-oriented field. The pain of the colonial experience and the trivialization of her role in society added to her disability as a writer struggling to make her voice heard. African woman's perception, experience and awareness are most explicit in the works of protest writers. The major women writers who think that the woman's experience revolves around her own identity rather than around man's needs are: Buchi Emecheta, Efua Sutherland, Ama Ata Aidoo, Flora Nwapa and Bessie Head.

Generally, the protest of all these writers is directed at sexual inequality in traditional as well as modern Africa. This protest is usually interwoven with a frank emphasis on the woman's own need to develop and assert her own strength of will. In this connection Lloyd W. Brown says:

It is not enough to complain about one's sexual victimization: one need to do something about it... Buchi Emecheta started out primarily as a protest writer whose early scathing indictment of male chauvinism in England and Nigeria is passionate and direct, but often marred by sloppiness and long-winded preachment that leaves little room for complex and credible characterization... her fiction has become more complex, blending the continuing notes of protest with interesting, often arresting characterization and with a more interesting narrative style (39).

Nigerien novelists like Flora Nwapa and Buchi Emecheta portray women who function within the traditional African society. But they challenge the unchanging, submissive rural women who accept the

male-oriented societal norms without questioning it. These writers give expression to the dilemmas in the lives of the protagonists whose difficulties are instigated by the conflict between desired personal aspirations and authorized societal norms deeply ingrained in the system and in their own psyche. At the same time, these writers also accept the importance of wifedom and motherhood.

The lives of middle class Nigerian women differ greatly from those of most western women. From pre-colonial days women retained certain economic opportunities within the social system. In fact, before the middle of the twentieth century, Nigerian women traditionally played a more significant role in society than the western women. Traditional or tribal society in Nigeria expected women to be significant wage earners in the family. They labored in farming, fishing, herding, and commerce. For instance, they work along with Nigerian men in pottery, cloth-making, and craft work. In fact, women traditionally had the right to profit from their work, although the money usually served as a contribution to the family income. This economic freedom was much different from many western societies, where women had to fight for the right to work. These traditions still survive in modern Nigeria.

However, Nigerian men do not value the economic contributions of their wives. They do not view the woman's job and household work as especially strenuous. For the most part, Nigerian men consistently take their wives for granted. Moreover, even with economic opportunities, Nigerian women lack certain rights. As a rule, men



do not have any legal responsibility for their offspring, and they often abandon women, expecting them to carry the financial burden of the family.

The Nigerian institution of marriage is unconventional by western standards. The traditional and an systems of polygamy flourish within every social class. Women expect very little from men in terms of companionship, personal care, and fidelity. Their relationships exist without the emotional elements. Polygamy is a crucial component of many women's lives. Women depend on the other wives of their husbands. The younger co-wives take on many of the household and financial responsibilities. As women get older they have the comfort of knowing that the burden of their marriage does not fall solely on their shoulders. Woman's position in society changes vastly once they marry since she becomes a possession, with relatively no rights in her husband's family. In fact, the husband's mother and sisters have much more of an influence over him than his own wife. The wife resents this lack of control or even respect within their marriage. The Nigerian system of inheritance reflects the lack of male responsibility to his wife and children. If a husband dies, the woman usually receives nothing, although the law entitles her to a share. If she has no children, the treatment is worse. Since property can only pass between the same sexes, women can never inherit from their fathers. Within marriage, women have an obligation to have children. Traditionally, society blames the woman for a marriage without children. Society condemns not only women who cannot have children, but also unmarried and divorced women.

Efuru is the detailed study of a woman's calamity and success. Flora Nwapa has succeeded in conveying an idea of the African woman at her best: respectful, hard-working, patient, loving, helpful, uncomplaining and beautiful. Efuru's character evokes the live figure of the African woman. Efuru "distinguished herself" fills the entire picture of the novel. Having determined her life with Adizua she does not complain about his ways. It is she who engages herself in trade and saves the money necessary for her dowry to be given to her father. By doing so she saves the honour of both her husband and her father. In a short time she becomes popular with her husband's people. But in spite of her inherent capabilities and outward success, Efuru is a sorrowful figure. She is like a bird with beautiful feathers, but killed within. The first years of married life with Adizua are stained by her childlessness, which is a curse to African womanhood. A visit to the Tibia, prayers and offerings to the ancestors, bring her the fulfillment of motherhood. Ogonim is born, but Adizua is lost. However, even in the midst of her sorrows, Efuru turns to Ogonim for comfort, but this too is soon denied to her. Ogonim dies suddenly, and Efuru goes back to her father's house and engages herself in trade and charity.

Having gone through a life of pain and sorrow, Efuru becomes at last, in the years of her maturity, the chosen worshipper of Uhamiri. A new life begins for her; she is dedicated to the goddess Uhamiri and to the good of the people. There are two most important strains in Nwapa's characterization of Efuru. Firstly, Efuru is presented to us as a woman full of enthusiasm for life who on the other hand is

also a woman of sorrows. Secondly, she is portrayed as a woman capable of a great unselfish love towards fellow human beings. Even in her darkest moments Efuru can make her life purposive by simply and unselfishly caring for humanities he does not lose her faith in humanity though Adizua has deserted her and Gilbert has blamed her. Efuru is no doubt a realistic portrayal of everyday Africa. The protagonist, Efuru, who becomes the chosen worshipper of Uhamiri, is also a symbolic figure. The local myth of Uhamiri, the woman of lake, has skillfully been exploited by Flora Nwapa.

The myth speaks of Uhamiri being married to Okita, the God of the river. Their marriage is fruitless and people say they have quarreled and live alienated from each other, each ruling over a separate domain. At the union of the river and the lake, the waters are always troubled and muddy. And yet, the blue waters of the lake are always peaceful and calm. Uhamiri, the deity presiding over the lake, helps trade and fishing, lends life-giving waters to the farms around and generously helps the people to grow prosperous and rich if they but pay her due reverence by keeping her day with devotion. She is particularly benevolent to her women-worshippers. She is rich and lives a content and happy life independent of her husband and she blesses her devotees with riches, contentment and happiness.

Efuru is Uhamiri in flesh and blood. She has the golden touch of Uhamiri. She is large-hearted and is benevolent to innumerable people in her community. She has married and yet circumstances compel her to live single and all by herself. Like Uhamiri she is all equanimity and like her

patron deity she chooses to live a life that is independent of men folk. She withdraws herself voluntarily from the narrow bounds of family only to take into her loving embrace the whole humanity. Thus, it is very clear that the local Uhamiri myth has helped Nwapa to project a truly heroic African woman who by her exemplary life proved to be a new African woman in the male-dominated African tribal society. Efuru, in her meager way, is the independent African woman constricting tribal norms which have for ages consigned woman to an inferior position in her society.

Efuru's village is a polygamous village. However, Efuru, as a woman, has more rights than other women. When Efuru's husbands are unfaithful to her, she also, unlike in other polygamous villages, is able to leave her husbands. Efuru is independent and thinks of herself as well as her husbands. Though she loves both men she marries, Efuru does not forget about her own rights. Efuru thinks of her husbands and although she is not able to bear more than one child, she is willing to bring a second wife into her home in order to give her husband more children. However, she keeps her dignity and leaves her husbands when they abandon her illustrating her strength to take care of herself. Efuru, not able to depend on her husbands, turns her faithfulness to the goddess of the lake, Uhamiri, Efuru begins by dreaming about this elegant woman, very beautiful, combing her long black hair with a golden comb. This dream signifies the beginning of her worship of Uhamiri. Efuru is chosen to be one of Uhamiri's worshippers. Rather than give women children, Uhamiri grants beauty, riches and wealth. Uhamiri is rather a

symbol of hope for all women so that her devotees such as Efurū can taste of her kind of freedom and happiness with or without children. To Uhamiri, her independence becomes desirable and blessed. Efurū sets not only a feminist example through her independence, but she is also a symbol of survival and independence from a colonial empire. Efurū is successful, happy, and free from her oppressive and abusive first husband, Adizua, and from her equally disappointing second husband Gilbert. Both men symbolize colonial power, Adizua by his abuse after having profited by marrying Efurū without having paid a dowry, and Gilbert, by his Christian name and ideals after having attended a colonial school.

Discussing Gender relations in *Efurū* Flora Nwapa put a lot of emphasis in marriage and procreation. Both these aspects are indispensable in creating new family units and in increasing the population of the family or lineage. Nwapa is reflecting, in *Efurū*, the situation, as it exists in her society. Children are greatly valued in *Efurū*. Each marriage is expected to produce many siblings, both male and female (with preference for a male). In Igbo culture, the most important reason for marriage is procreation. Even in marriages where love is the main attraction that brings couples together, the desire to have children is always the ultimate goal. This is the reason why most marriages, including those that are built on affection, crumble or are seriously threatened when they are not blessed with children. Why do everyday Igbo woman, whether married or unmarried, have a strong desire to have a child?

The concern with procreation is not

limited to the married couple. It is their relatives, friends, and neighbours who first express these concerns when the woman has not become pregnant. A year after their first marriage, Efurū and Adizua (in her first marriage) and she and Eneberi (in her second marriage) are still enjoying new and fresh marital life when gossip spreads about Efurū's barrenness, among her female neighbours, as anxious gossips are made over the fact that she has not had any children. An important role that women play in the family is the upbringing and nurturing of children. This role limits, confines, and domesticates women. It also distracts women from achieving higher goals or roles for themselves. In "Efurū", Flora Nwapa constantly refers to the proper upbringing of children; especially girls who are expected to become wives and mothers.

If motherhood is so vital to the mental health of the African woman, why does Flora Nwapa punish the heroine, Efurū, with the malignant trauma of childlessness? The pain of infertility is inflicted in Efurū, Idu, Amaka in one is enough and Rose in *Women is Different*. When these women eventually conceive a child, it brings about a lot of difficulty to them and doesn't bring about total satisfaction. Perhaps the Lake Goddess is responsible for the fact that these women do not have children, the state that they eventually find themselves in. I say this because it is strange that the women who either worship her or share her attributes long hair, beauty, wealth, and independent spirit are the women that do not have children or are not capable of being mothers. Efurū's mother only had Efurū, and Efurū loses Ogonim, her only child. Uhamiri, The Lake Goddess, is barren and her state

justifies the others. The fact that she does not have any children and is very wealthy, have a structural and thematic relevance to the lives and experiences on Efuru. The concern showed by mothers and elders in Igbo society underscores how seriously they take the socialization of young people to proper behavior. Women always express these concerns and they also enforce the code. This means that women are the custodians of tradition.

What Flora Nwapa is trying to convey in *Efuru* is that children alone do not bring about happiness or self-fulfillment to women. In *Efuru*, Uhamiri is said to be happy even though she doesn't have a child. She is probably consoling those women in Igbo society that cannot have children and are barren, by relating how happy the Lake Goddess is even though she cannot have children. It is as if Flora Nwapa is saying

that there are other factors to happiness. Companionship and love in marriage are as important as motherhood, if not even more. Originally, a marriage fails or succeeds depending on the circumstances that affect it. Childlessness, in Igbo society and in "Efuru", is one aspect to a marriage that fails but there are other aspects to consider, like neglect, incompatibility, lack of trust, and unfaithfulness. Efuru's marriages fail because her husbands are unfaithful, ungrateful, and irresponsible where she is concerned. Efuru survives her failed marriages. After her marriages end she gains strength and an increase in her stature.

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# Teaching English as Communication

**T. Chandrasekharan**

English, though plays the role of a second language in India, consequent upon the modernization and globalization, constantly strives to reach the level of associate language in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. But still the teaching materials and the methodology of teaching being followed in colleges across the country leaves much to be desired. The teachers actively follow the lecture method even in a class with a sizable strength of forty students and neither the learners are given the opportunity to speak in English nor is any attempt made to ascertain whether the learners understand even the content of the lesson that is being taught. The teacher attempts only to explain the meaning of the text without making any effort to exploit the eagerness of the students to experience the text or to make use of their potential to understand it by themselves. No systematic effort is made to teach English as a language to students nor are they being trained to use English in a variety of situations. The result is that most of the students graduating from colleges can barely write a paragraph in English correctly and coherently.

In the communicative paradigm currently prevalent in the area of language teaching and learning, the concepts of 'learner-centredness', 'interaction' and 'negotiation of meaning' are the dominant principles seen as crucial to meaningful learning. However, many of the features of

a communicative classroom are conspicuous by their absence and most of the classes are conducted in the 'lock-step' pattern seen as an anachronism in recent times.

## **Difficulties Perceived in the Teaching-Learning Processes**

One pertinent problem with regard to teaching and learning of English raised by language teachers across the country is the perceived passivity of most of the learners. This means that there does not seem to be any feedback or response from the learners. The reasons for this passivity could be a lack of motivation in a non-stimulating academic environment. It could also mean the manifestation of an inability to interact appropriately in an abstract and academic environment for which the learners were not adequately equipped with their conceptual or linguistic means. Whatever could be the reason, however, this passivity on the part of the learners should be viewed as pedagogically unsound. Therefore, learners should be made aware that effective learning involves their active participation in the classroom.

Another potentially negative feature decried by most of the language teachers is the tendency of many learners to take the easy way out. They are not seen as putting in enough efforts to develop their cognitive and academic potential. They do not try to actively engage with learning activities of

the class, do not really try hard to understand the core of the subject matter but eagerly depend on the so-called 'company notes' to answer questions. Thus, besides authentic materials, just as trained teachers are seen as necessary to create a more stimulating ambience in the academic environment, it is required of the learners to be motivated and to interact actively with learning tasks at hand in order to produce an environment conducive to effective teaching and learning outcomes.

### **The Aim of Language Teaching**

The aim of language teaching is to develop communicative competence, that is, the ability to use language for communication. Communicative competence is defined as the ability to make utterances that are appropriate to the context in which they are made, and ... to comprehend utterances in the light of the context in which they are encountered (Bruner: 1960). The goal of language teaching then goes beyond the attempt to develop linguistic competence and communicative competence would include the teaching of what Bruner describes as analytical competence.

Consequent upon the development in the field of linguistics and English language teaching (ELT), language is viewed as communication, whereby meaning and use are emphasized. This has resulted in a new approach to language teaching, namely, communicative language teaching (CLT), which is based on the belief that acquiring a language means, above all, acquiring a means to communicate effectively and confidently. In other words, in order to communicate effectively, a

learner needs more than knowledge 'about' the language and must be able to 'use' English effectively, fluently and confidently.

### **The Components of Language Teaching**

Language teaching involves developing in the learners the ability to exploit their grammatical knowledge in creative acts of communication. It means that the ability to compose sentences cannot be equated with communicative competence. Communication only takes place when one makes use of sentences to perform a variety of different acts of essentially social nature. Thus one communicates by using sentences to make statements of different kinds, to describe, to record, to classify or to ask questions, make requests, and to give orders. Knowing what is involved in putting sentences together is only one part of what is meant by knowing a language, and it has very little value on its own. It has to be supplemented by knowledge of what sentences count in their normal use as a means of communicating.

Broadly, then, what is involved in communicative language teaching is a shift of the focus of attention from the grammatical to the communicative properties of language. The difficulties which the learner encounters arise not so much from a defective knowledge of the system of English, but from unfamiliarity with English use. Consequently, their needs cannot be met by a course which simply provides further practice in the composition of how sentences are used in the performance of different communicative acts leading to communicative competence.



## **Communicative Competence**

Hymes uses the term 'communicative competence' to refer to the general sort of knowledge and ability to use linguistic forms to perform communicative acts and to understand the communicative functions of sentences and their relationships to other sentences. This happens at the level of discourse and involves knowledge of the rhetorical rules of use that govern the patterning of such acts, the interpretative strategies of the language user and also the contextual meaning of an utterance. According to Hymes and Munby, to communicate effectively a speaker must know not only how to produce any and all grammatical sentences of a language, but also how to use them appropriately. The speaker must know what to say with whom and when and where.

## **Communicative Approach**

As communicative language teaching aims at teaching communicative competence, the focus changes from the accurate production of isolated sentences to the fluent selection of appropriate utterances in communication. In order to do this, learners take on roles and interact with other learners who also have roles. What they say is determined by the role they have, their communicative intentions, and the contribution of other learners. The range of communicative models will reflect the learners' needs. A communicative approach does not try to get the learners to use the different skills for the purpose of reinforcing one skill through another but rather look for ways and means whereby the skills are used in a natural, meaningful and purposeful way.

## **Communicative Methodology**

As Brumfit observes, communicative teaching should not simply be a matter of the specification of the elements in a course but that it should involve a profound change in the methodology. This implies the idea that a communicative methodology should make use of synthetic and analytic procedures. A synthetic procedure would involve students in learning forms individually and then practising how to combine them. On the other hand, an analytic procedure would introduce complete interactions of texts and focus for learning purposes on the way they are constructed. Both of these can be made to share the same concern with the whole rather than the parts, thereby making use of both.

Another critical aspect of communicative methodology is that it places learners in a position to choose not only what ideas they want to express at a given moment but also what linguistic forms are appropriate to express them. Deciding on these under the severe time pressure which language use involves is one of the main problems which foreign users of a language face and is an aspect of communicative ability which has been frequently overlooked in the classroom. Further, a choice which is open for the speaker implies listener's doubt. This means that an exercise where speaker and listener are controlled in their language use by the teacher fails to practise this aspect of communication.

Education must be ultimately concerned not just with teaching but with learning. One consequence of this is that what happens in the classroom must involve the learners and must be judged in terms of

its effects on them. Another equally important consequence is that learning becomes to a large extent the learners' responsibility. Both of these ideas have a direct implication for the communicative methodology.

### **Need for Reorientation of Communicative Methodology**

The constructionist approach to communicative language teaching, as has already been mentioned, recognizes the importance of structures and use of language. But it tends to separate the two in actual practice. For instance, in the teaching of structures and use a two-stage overall strategy is followed, with structure being taught first followed by a second communicative stage at which use is taught and where structures are 'activated' or 'recycled' in relation to functional categories. In some materials a parallel rather than a sequential relationship is followed where structures and uses are both focused on but in separate units. The position is 'separationist' basically because it seems to imply divorce between the teaching of forms and uses, though other kinds of related separation are often also being implied as between knowledge and its 'activation', between correctness and fluency. The divorce of form and use is undesirable and also untenable on linguistic and psychological grounds. In Widdowson's term to describe communicative function in dissociation from the set of generative rules which realize it is to cut communication off from its cause and effect in system.

### **An Alternative Approach to Language Teaching Methodology**

As has already been hinted at, the learners at the undergraduate level have attained dormant linguistic competence and that a large majority of them have miserably failed in developing communicative competence in them. This has resulted partly from the teaching materials which tend to separate the linguistic form from its communicative use and partly from the teaching methodology being followed in the language classroom which does not adequately serve its purpose. As the aim of language teaching is to develop communicative competence in the learner, a communicative methodology which involves a unificationist approach to language teaching is imperative. It places the learner at the centre of the learning activity. It activates the learner's dormant language competence through learning-centred activities thereby enabling them to develop communicative competence. It is based on the belief that when the learner's attention is focused on performing specific tasks, the language required for successfully performing the tasks is acquired naturally through meaningful use of the language involved. This can be called 'using to learn view' rather than 'learning to use view' of language learning. It establishes the mutual interdependency of language use and usage in communicatively-oriented teaching of language. This facilitates both learning of the language and appreciation of it and this is what learning a language successfully means.

### **Materials and Method for a Communicatively-oriented Language Teaching**

It is viewed that language can be taught by using literary texts alone. But this article postulates that language can be equally effectively taught by using non-literary texts as well. Accordingly, texts from

matrimonial columns are utilized as authentic text materials to construct teaching learning activities in a meaningful way. The text is given as under:

**Text : 1**

Wanted beautiful, educated bride for handsome Bengali, Brahmin 31 years 5' 7.5" highly placed IIM graduate. (M):+91 95850
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**Text : 2**

Wanted handsome groom for B. Tech Arora girl 5' 2.5". 4 Dec 93 birth 4.05 am. Shaharanpurwking MNC B'lore. (M) +91 81017 01322 E. Mail: chawlanp@gmail.com
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**Text : 3**

Seeking beautiful, intelligent, educated bride from high status family for extremely h'some brilliant scientist working in USA 29/5'9" high status family. (M) +91 98714 42112
--

**Text : 4**

B'ful 5.6' fair doctor doing MD medicine born 1996, seeking tall, handsome, well-built doctor groom born between 1992-94 preferably vegetarian, Brahmin doing MS/MD. (M) +91 98690 06534. E. Mail: ohowl@liv.com
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**Text : 5**

Extremely b'ful, extremely fair girl for scheduled caste boy. Haryana civil service (executive branch) 28 years 5'7" smart very fair. Caste no bar. Contact: +91 95831 60685.
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**Text : 6**

Bengali Brahmin 28/5'3" doing Ph D (US) father IAS (Rtd). Preferred groom at west coast (US). 033-40042138/ +91 98315 00691.
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**Text : 7**

Alliance sought for B'lore settled well placed Vishwakarma boy 34 years. Preferably B'lore based. (M) +91 99455 97713.
--

**Text : 8**

Wanted alliance for a good-looking doctor (MD, Dermatology) girl, age 25/ 5'6" belonging to a very cultured and high status Punjab based business family. Looking for a handsome postgraduate doctor from established medico family or a well qualified boy from a good industrial background. Interested may send their profile at sikka840@hotmail.com
--

**Text : 10**

Wanted alliance for Brahmin M.Sc, PhD 39/ 5'7" working US seeks cultured, veg bride preferred 34 years & below. Call: +91 99343 44523/ 40925 60753 (US). E.mail: akm3412@gmail.com

**Text : 11**

Alliance invited from grooms working in the USA for 27 year old Comp. Engg girl. Tamil nadu CSI Christian settled in the USA. Reply: yesukirubai@gmail.com

**Level**

This course is meant for first year degree students of mixed ability, heterogeneous group who have got exposure to English for a minimum period of twelve years.

**Aims and Objectives**

The aims and objectives of the course are to develop communicative competence in the learner. It is based on the principle that when the attention of the learner is focused on performance of a task, the language required for doing the task successfully is mastered by the learners unconsciously. In other words, successful performance of the task depends on a meaningful selection of the variety required for the completion of the task at hand. It will be ascertained that on successful completion of the task, each student irrespective of his or her entry behaviour (EB) has learnt something which he or she did not know before and that the something is communicatively useful.

**Organization**

The entire class is to be divided into ten groups and each group is to be provided with a piece of the text.

**Teacher's Role**

The teacher should make the students clearly aware of what they should do in group in the successive stages. Further, he/she should play the role of a facilitator with minimum interference. He/she should refrain from learning away from the learners themselves. The group activity is to be performed in five stages as follows:

**Activities****Stage – 1: Information Transfer**

In this stage, each group is required to read the given text, comprehend it and transfer the information into a tabular form. This stage is intended to develop the reading and comprehension skills, skill to transfer meaning from one medium to another and also to activate their knowledge of adjectives and voice.

Available									Requirements								
Bride/ Groom	Age	Colour	Height	Weight	Qualification	Family	Caste	Others	Age	Colour	Height	Weight	Qualification	Family	Caste	Beauty	Others

## **Stage – 2: Communication Gap**

In this stage, the groups having bridegrooms will interact with those having brides to seek information with a view to finding suitable match for the grooms. It is predicted that the students actively engage in doing the tasks and use the language naturally.

## **Stage – 3 : Zig Zag**

In this stage, the information provider of the previous stage will function as the information seeker, thus exchanging their role in the communicative act. Once again, each group will be engaged actively to complete the task at hand.

In stages 2 and 3, real life-like interaction takes place which results in the acquisition of the language. These two stages are intended to develop the spoken skill of the learners.

## **Stage – 4 : Decision Making**

Based on the information gathered, each group engages itself in lively discussion so as to find a suitable match for the bride or groom each group is entrusted with. This stage is intended to develop the analytical skill of the learners.

## **Stage – 5 : Reporting**

Having successfully performed the tasks, each group is required to report to the class as to why the particular bride or bridegroom is found to be suitable.

## **Ideal Match**

When all the groups complete their reports, the class as a whole finds the ideal match.

## **Appropriateness of the Materials**

The materials are non-literary texts well within the comprehension of the learners at the first year degree class. As the materials are authentic texts, they maintain the interest of the young learners.

## **Appropriateness of the Method**

The method being followed is communicative language teaching. It takes care of all the language skills, namely, listening, speaking, reading and writing (LSRW). Further, it fuses the language use and usage into a meaningful whole. The learners are placed in a position to decide not only what to say but also what linguistic item would adequately express their ideas better in real life like time. They are thus encouraged to use the language to learn where fluency and not accuracy is highlighted. This may be called ‘using to learn view’ rather than ‘learning to use view’ of language learning.

## **Conclusion**

The learning of the second language involves not merely the codified grammar of that language but also acquiring the basic skill in it in order to be able to function meaningfully through that language. As English, besides as a complementary language, has taken over the equative function, it is imperative on the language teacher to teach English to his learners in such a way that they can function in a variety of communicative contexts. The focus of language teaching should be on providing the learners with the ability to participate in any communicative act irrespective of whether they know their grammar well

enough or not. Once the learners are exposed to language and are inspired to use it, they will slowly but surely internalize its use and usage. What is important, therefore, is not making them memorize the rules of grammar but helping them use English in a variety of situations.

As illustrated, designing authentic course materials and refining communicative methodology which will bridge the gap between the linguistic and communicative competence would prove to be viable areas for prospective research studies in this area. ■

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# *The Power of Curse : Voice of the Voiceless*

**Sushanta Kumar Sahu**

Premchand's short story "The Power of Curse" was written in 1911. The story is set in a village, namely, Chandpur contextualizing the miseries of a poor Brahman widow, Munga. Being a realist writer of the twentieth century India, Premchand creates enough space in his fictional compositions to portray every problem of the village life in detail. For this, he took inspiration from realist fiction writers like Dickens, Tolstoy and Chekov from various cultures. He was also influenced by Karl Marx. As Francesca Orsini says in the introduction of *The Oxford India Premchand*.

*Influenced by Dickens, Tolstoy, Chekov and Marx, Premchand very early directed his fiction toward social reform. The inhumanity of caste hierarchies and the plight of women stirred his indignation and remained constant themes throughout his works. (Orsini 05)*

In the present context, Premchand's focus is on economic exploitation rather than caste hierarchy. Munga is a Brahman widow, therefore, she does not belong to the lower caste but she is looked down upon as the lower class and she is the victim of the exploitation and oppression of Munshi Ramesevak, the representative of the upper class people.

The story centers round the predicament of the Brahman widow, Munga

who is exploited and oppressed by Munshi Ramsevak, an upper class people. Munshi Ramsevak is a rich man who lives in the same village of Munga. He is never seen to argue a case, yet he is called by the villagers and 'attorney', a veritable lawyer. Being a rich and powerful man he possess enough power to exploit the poor and helpless widow like Munga. Ramsevak is trusted and respected by everyone in the village. As a result of it, many poor and helpless people keep their money with him for the security, believing him an honest and reputed man. During that time bank was not accessible to the poor and illiterate people so much, hence they were forced to keep their money with such kind of people. Munshi Ramsevak earns a meager amount of money from his profession and he spends his life very easily with the money of the poor people and thereby exploits the poor and helpless people. Sometimes the poor people would die before regaining their own money from Munshiji. So, Munshiji is such kind of a man who cheats the poor, helpless and illiterate people of their money:

*The widows handed over their money to him for safe-keeping and old men who feared their wastrel son entrusted their wealth to him. But once any money went into his fist it forgot the way to come out again. When the need arose he himself would borrow-after all, without borrowing whose work would make any headway? He*

*borrowed in the morning to give back by evening, but the evening never came. In brief, Mushi Ramsevak knew how to borrow but not to give. This too was the family tradition. (Premchand "The Power")*

Munga is a Brahman widow who lives in the village where an exploiter like Munshi Ramsevak also lives. Munshiji is renowned as an honest and reputed man; hence Munga keeps her money with him for security. Munga had been given Rs. 500 by the government for the better service of her husband who was a sergeant in the native Indian battalion in Burman and he had died in a battle fought in Burma. Thinking of being robbed of her savings, Munga keeps the amount of Rs. 500 with Munshiji. She takes a small amount out of it per month for her livelihood from Munshiji.

Munshiji carries out the duty by giving her back the money thinking that she would die soon. But ultimately Munshiji notices that Munga is still strong enough and there is no symptom of her death. Munshiji again realizes that Munga would consume all the money given to him by the time of her death; hence he would not get even a single rupee. Therefore, Munshi asks her, "Munga, are you going to die or aren't you? Or just say straight out that you'll look after your own funeral fees" (Premchand). Having heard these words from Munshiji, Munga realizes that she is being exploited by Munshiji and this prompts her to demand the remaining amount, that is, Rs. 250. But Munshiji, being cunning, does not keep any proof in the account book that Munga would get back any money. Though Munga is an illiterate woman, she is very conscious about the amount of her remaining account:

*That day Munga's eyes were*

*opened, her dream was dispelled, and she said, 'Give me back the full amount!' The amount book was ready not a pice of it remained according to the book. She violently grabbed his hand and said, 'You've made off with 250 rupees of mine but I won't let you keep a pice of it!' (Premchand "The Power")*

But her words have very little effect in the mind of Munshiji. As an illiterate woman she does not understand the complications of the court but she has some faith in the panchayat, the village council. But her words are of little value to the villagers in comparison with the decorative words of Munshiji:

*"..he stood up in the council and addressed the members: 'Friends! You are all noble and devoted to the truth. I bow top you all. I am grateful to the core to you for your generosity and mercy, your charity and love. Do you people really think I really made off with the money of this unfortunate widow?*

*With one voice the councilors said, 'No, no! You couldn't do such a thing!'*

*Munshiji said, 'If you all agree that I've stolen her money then there'll be nothing left for me except to drawn myself. I'm not a rich man, nor can I take pride in being munificent. But thanks to my pen and your kindness I cannot call myself needy. Am I so petty as to embezzle a widow's money?'*

*The councilors were unanimous, 'No, no, you couldn't do such a thing! (Premchand "The Power")'*

Being a widow and at the same time poor and powerless, she has nothing to do but to express her rage helplessly. Because

there is no one to hear the words of the poor creature like her: "There was nobody now to help or listen to her grieving. Whatever woes poverty bestowed she had no bear them all" (Premchand "The Power"). Being hopeless, helpless and hapless in the judgement of the human world, she is compelled to do nothing but to await the heavenly judgement: "Munga heaved a sigh and, making the most of it, said to herself, 'If I'm not to get it here, then all right, I won't; but I'll get it back in heaven'" (Premchand "The Power"). Premchand, being a progressive writer does not keep his poor, powerless and helpless characters like Munga meek and passive till the end of the story. If they are defeated by the cruelty of the human world, they repose faith in divine power. However, the ultimate triumph would come to the helpless and powerless people; and the exploiters, oppressors and the powerful people would always be punished or doomed eventually.

Munga is now always obsessed with her money. Having been deprived of her money, she continues to curse Munshiji:

*Now she was obsessed with the thought of her money. All day and all night, walking or sitting, she had only one idea; to inveigh against Munshi Ramsevak. Seated day and night at the door of her hut she fervently cursed him. For the most part in her pronouncements she employed poetic speech and metaphors so that people who heard her were astonished. (Premchand "The Power")*

Her obsession with the money and her rage towards Munshiji culminate in her curse saying "I'll drink you blood!" (Premchand "The Power" 36) Gradually, she becomes almost mad wandering everywhere

specially in the cremation area, in the river bank and sometimes in the area of Munshi Ramsevak's house. Her frenzied appearance and the wild laughter along with her horrible words of curse

make everyone frightened in the village especially Munshi Ramsevak and his pregnant wife Nagin:

*Nagin, who was pregnant now, was a very shrewd woman. She advised her husband about all his business dealings. The people who said Munshiji possessed the eloquence of Goddess Saraswati were mistaken: this virtue really belonged to his wife. She was as brilliant in speech as he in writing. And these two, husband and wife, would now consult together on what to do about this situation in which they found themselves powerless. (Premchand "The Power")*

Munga's power is latent in her curse to the cruel people like Munshiji. In this context, Francesca Orsini does rightly say in the introduction to the book *The Oxford India Premchand* that "As in 'The Power of Curse' (an early short story written in 1911), the only weapon the weak have is a curse, a public invocation of divine retribution...." (Orsini xxiv). Munga remains voiceless in the face of the judgement of the panchayat, but she becomes now more eloquent with her curse and her repeated saying "I'll drink your blood!". Her sudden appearance to the door step of Munshiji makes him and his family terrified and hence they are now powerless to defy the curse of Munga.

Eventually, Munga dies in front of Munshi's house and that becomes a nuisance to Munshiji. It seems that Munga wants to entrust her corpse too to the exploiter and

oppressor, Munshiji: "She had come just to die at her door. To the man who'd taken her life savings she had her corpse as well, she was making him a gift of the very clay of her body" (Premchand "The Power")

The situation is worsened to Munshiji and his family when the ghostly appearance of Munga becomes a threat to them as if Munga continues to frighten them: "But munga had got under their skins. Seeing their own shadow they'd jump, sure it was Munga. It seemed to them that she was sitting in every dark corner. The emaciated body and scattered hair, the mad look, the horrible eyes-it was Munga to a tee!" (Premchand "The Power" 40) Each and every moment they are haunted by the image of Munga. They can hardly get away from that kind of adverse situation as if the ghost of Munga has come and crept everywhere in their house:

In this way, the continuous presence of Munga's image disturbs them. She is dead and logically she is completely absent from the mundane world, yet she is very present in their minds. Therefore, the seemingly poor, powerless, exploited and oppressed person like Munga becomes more powerful and threatening at the same time. Munga is thought powerless; hence she was cheated and exploited by a powerful person like Munshiji. But the moment the poor, exploited and oppressed person like Munga resists the power of the oppression like Munshiji, it becomes intolerable to the oppressors like Munshiji.

Munga's plight becomes more intensified with the death of his wife Nagin. The fear of Munga's horrible image pushed his wife Nagin into a hallucinatory condition form which her extrication was quite

impossible; therefore she has to die:

At midnight Nagin was startled from her sleep. It seemed to her that Munga, with her red eyes and sharp pointed teeth, was sitting on her chest. Nagin screamed. She started running toward the courtyard like a madwoman, and suddenly she fell senseless to the ground, sweating all over. Munshiji had been awakened by her yell but he was so frightened he didn't open his eyes. Like a blind man he felt his way to the door. After a long while he found it and came into the courtyard. Nagin was lying on the ground writhing. He lifted her up and brought her inside, but she didn't open her eyes the whole night. Toward dawn she began to rave incoherently. In a little while her fever rose, her body turned hot as a griddle. By evening she was in a delirium and at midnight when all the world was plunged in silence she took her leave of it forever. Fear of Munga had killed her. While Munga lived she had always feared Nagin's hissing. But sacrificing her own life, she could now take Nagin's. (Premchand "The Power")

Moreover, Munshiji's predicament becomes more evident when everybody in the village refuses to carry out the last rites of Nagin because his reputation in the village has gone and he is now known to be a murderer: "The night passed, day drew on, but not one person in the village showed up to bear Nagin's corpse away. Munshiji went from house to house, but no one answered the door. After all who will go to a murderer's house?" (Premchand "The Power") His fear is now doubled because "Outside was Munga, inside Nagin" (Premchand "The Power"). Thus, in Premchand's story power does not seem to

reside in a single position rather it appears to move in every direction. Munga had to remain voiceless because of the judgement of the panchayat, but now her power of curse forces the exploiter and oppressor, Munshi Ramsevak to be rendered speechless. Once Munshiji was trusted and esteemed by the villagers, now in his pathetic condition nobody approaches to help him or console him. What is even more ironical is that the people attending Nagin's cremation were less than the number of people who had attended Munga's cremation. And finally, becoming depressed, due to his present situation, Munshiji goes to the shrine of Badrinath. And later he comes back to the village in the guise of a saint and set fire to his house along with himself. And his young son Ramgulum was arrested by the police for setting fire to a granary of his employer.

Thus, Premchand addresses the idea of power through this short story, "The Power of Curse". Premchand shows that the poor, helpless and oppressed widow can even possess power to resist the oppression of the sovereignty of the upper class people. Munga's power of curse has become a serious matter of concern to the upper class and powerful people like Munshi Ramsevak. It is through the power of her curse, Munshiji is destroyed pathetically. Munshiji's apparently decorative words move the villagers to believe that he has not exploited Munga. But the poor, exploited and oppressed widow woman, Munga's voice becomes more eloquent when it destroys Munshiji and his family through the power of her curse. ■

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# Feminine Sensibility in Anita Desai's Novels : A Study

M. Suganthiya & S. Florence

Literature is a powerful tool in the hands of a writer to change the society. Anita Desai is one such eminent writer, who seems to be seeking to change the attitude and outlook of the society through her novels. Her novels are important in the project to make feminine sensibility work out wide and effective changes in the thinking of both women and men so that women's role in transformation of their lot could be the most convincing. An analysis of her novels from this position is attempted in this paper.

Anita Desai is widely recognized as an Indian feminist writer in English. She is a remarkable painter of her characters. She always tries to project the desolation and problems of women in the Indian society. Though there are many other feminist writers like Nayantra Sahgal and Kamala Markandaya, Anita Desai is known for her deft handling of the psychological state of her characters in *Cry the Peacock* (1980) and in *Fire on the Mountain* (1977). The present novel *Fasting Feasting*, which was also short-listed for the Booker's prize, shows the Indian society in light of the troubles of women.

The main concern of the present paper is to focus on the feminine sensibility as has been presented by Anita Desai in terms of her delineation of character. She

depicts the female character that lives in separate, closed, and sequestered world of existential problems and passions. All her female characters – Maya, Monisha and Sita are obsessed with the idea of death. Anita Desai is not interested in portraying every day, average characters, but peculiar and eccentric characters.

Anita Desai is known for her sensitivity to the pattern of her novels, integrity of artistic vision, imaginative mind, keen observation, sharp awareness, and competent craftsmanship. For Anita Desai, the quest for Truth consists in the life of the mind that her characters live. For this, she deals with their inner life while letting them have significant reference to their outer life. She seeks to change the ordinary traditional notion of reality by leading her readers to the very depths of things where the clue to understanding the inner reality of characters' lives lie. That makes her convincing as an artist as she insists that life has to be understood in terms of the storms and stresses of life.

Anita Desai's first novel, *Cry, the Peacock* (1963), shows Maya, the Heroine of the novel as a young girl who is possessed by a childhood prophecy of a disaster that could not be averted. Anita Desai successfully penetrates into the chaotic world of Maya's consciousness and her



psychic state caused by her gloomy thoughts of death, and records them with a subtle truth. The husband-wife alienation caused by temperamental differences between them forms the very crux of the novel.

Anita Desai aptly explores the violent emotional world of the mad heroine, Maya who was born in an old orthodox family, and enjoyed life, which provided her love and pleasure along with order and discipline in her father's house. She finds herself totally helpless in her husband Gautama's house where there is a different code of conduct and restrictions.

The chief character Maya believes in horoscopes and is constantly haunted by the disturbing memory of the prophecy of the albino horoscope reader about the death of either her husband or herself four years after their marriage. She is desperately in need of someone to remove the black shadow of death but no one treats her with love and understanding. In the words of Maya: "There was no bond, no love - hardly any love." Maya's husband Gautama, unimaginative and unsentimental by nature, thinks that she is spoilt child who cannot bear one opposing world instead of understanding Maya and offering her his company and affection.

The novel *Cry, the Peacock* begins with Maya's fourth year of married life; and she is now haunted by the astrologer's prophecy. Finally, she herself pushes her husband from the parapet of the roof of their house, bringing at once his death. Subsequently she herself commits suicide. Hence, the astrologer's prophecy becomes the cause of the tragedy of Maya's life. The myth about the peacock's cry is related to

the theme of the novel. It is said that the peacock's fight ferociously with each other before they mate. "Living, these peacocks are aware of death; and dying, they're in love with life. The novel's emphasis is as much on the principal characters as on the social, political, economic, and cultural backgrounds.

Anita Desai's second novel *Voices in the City* (1965) initially appears, to be very different from *Cry, the Peacock*. Though the husband-wife alienation as the thematic nucleus in *Cry, the Peacock* is also taken up again, it is not treated elaborately in *Voices in the City*. In this novel, the focus is on human futility. The three sensitive individuals, Nirode Ray and two sisters Monisha and Amla, move about in their own worlds. Monisha, unlike Maya comes to live with her insensitive, dull-witted parents-in-law. Maya's life is an abundance of feeling whereas Monisha freezes her emotions and trains herself to suppress them. Jiban, the husband of Monisha is not mature and accommodating. He is a "boring non-entity" as Amla puts it. Yet both Maya and Monisha are unhappy. If Maya pushes her husband off the roof in order to protect her world of sensuous abundance, Monisha sets fire to herself in order to reach the core of her being. But in both the novels, the search for reality, a meaning in life for a moment of balance is similar.

In *Voices in the City*, Desai analyses the dark regions of the consciousness of three characters, Nirode Ray and his sisters, Monisha and Amla. Desai presents the theme of depression, disillusionment, helplessness and existential despair. Nirode, Monisha and Amla like Maya of *Cry, the*

*Peacock*, feel utterly frustrated in the new situation and have a deep mysterious longing to return to their home and enjoy the solitude of jungles there. Nirode, Monisha and Amla, who are sensitive, educated and excessively self-conscious, are forced by circumstances to live in Calcutta, the city of despair and death. They have to choose a lifestyle quite contrasted to the one that they lived in Kalipong where they have left behind a strong-willed mother. There is a total absence of goals in their lives. *Voices in the City* has controlling forces, and thereby it leaves an impression of incompleteness, and a feeling that action and characterization have not been fully integrated' into an artistic design.

Her *Fasting Feasting* seems to be employed in her mission to promote the position of women by dealing with the sufferings and hardships that women face in the society to make women conscious of what change in their status is required so that they may be at par with men in all affairs of life. She deals with this theme seriously and always tries to highlight the problems of women in a male dominated society. In this novel, *Fasting Feasting*, she presents both female and male characters to expose the actual face of a patriarchal society. Anita Desai presents here various female characters that are wounded by the patriarchal society. She does it with mainly the character of a woman Uma who suffers the most in the circumstances that build up the narrative. Towards the end of the novel she realizes her condition and tries different means and ways to break the shackles created by various patriarchal norms. Though the goal of gaining freedom and emancipation is one important aspect that

Uma's attempts show, when her brother Arun enjoys full freedom as a male member of the family, it seems that striking down the age long tradition of male domination is a very important target for the novelist and she is successful at convincing the readers of this urgent social need.

Anita Desai writes well, lucidly and convincingly, when she describes the outside world. The reader feels everything. The passage in which Desai describes the meeting between the characters is one of the most beautiful ones in her novels. It is in such passages rich with symbols that one could finally glimpse Desai's craft. Anita Desai is a wonderful writer who achieves her powerful effects by stealth rather than by direct action.

Anita Desai remains primarily a novelist of moods, of persistent states of mind or psyche. Most of her novels are extended narratives of states of being which do not cohere into plot or structure in the conventional sense. Anita Desai sees the world in terms of experience as it emerges from the encounter of the experiencing self with the world outside. Her protagonists, who are usually sensitive women, haunted by a peculiar sense of doom, are shown as they withdraw gradually, but decisively into a sequestered world of their own. With the sensitivity and imagination of a novelist, she creates the variety and complexity of a limited world in which she puts her protagonists to push her own agenda hard. And it must be appreciated that her single important agenda is to expose the patriarchal world in its acute denial to woman her peace of life, her freedom, her need for a rich and

independent identity, and above all for a true and empowering sense of personal security and dignity. Anita Desai, right from her first novel, and also throughout her subsequent novels, has effectively dealt with the inner lives of her characters with emphasis that this is very important when their outer lives and their environment have to be understood to be properly recast only in light of how their inner lives demand for such a recasting. Through powerful psychological analysis, she has effectively shown how and where the women themselves have to take up their

very role to face the society in better ways while compelling the patriarchal society to adapt to a changing climate of attitudinal change. ■

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# Multicultural Heritage of an Individual in Paule Marshall's *Some Get Wasted*

T. Ezhilarasi & J. Jayakumar

The word experimentation to suggest that many of the patterns and images the author describes in these short selections are later augmented and perfected to give her longer fiction full verisimilitude within artistically contrived structures. Experimentation also refers to the author's multiple cultural identity, which ultimately does not allow one to obscure the other. In the short stories, Marshall begins to draw more consciously from her knowledge of African cultural survivals as they function in contemporary African-American, West-Indian-American, and African-Caribbean societies. In them she sketches more consciously the lines of the African-centered epistemology that informs her opus as a whole. In this article we will analyze Marshall's growing ability of writing novel and her experimentation with plot construction and character delineation.

In the novel *Some Get Wasted* written during the sixties are direct reflections of the cultural fervor of that period. Black Nationalism, as a political and aesthetic ideology, swept the country and provided for African Americans the inspiration for the bold, defiant, and jubilant voice that was soon to change the tone and content of both American politics and American letters. Indeed, in many if not most instances, politics and art were

deliberately brought together to create a decidedly new and exhilarating social consciousness. A case in point was Marshall's membership in the Association of Artists for Freedom, an organization created shortly after the 1963 church bombing in Birmingham, Alabama, where four little black girls were killed by racist whites. The association, which included such notable artists as Essie Davis, Ruby Dee, and the late John O. Killen's, resolved "to impress upon other Blacks the necessity to be actively involved in the independence of their own people". To that end, they even proposed a national economic boycott the following Christmas. Without the support of the NAACP, however, their efforts were unsuccessful.

But other political and social upheavals across the country inspired a dramatic transformation in African-American literature, especially in poetry and theatre. The first was readily accessible to the black population through private printings of small collections or through small black presses; the second was accessible through amateur or professional performances supported by repertory theatres, which began to flourish in major cities. It was also significant that various African nations gained independence during the 1960s, and expressions of black pride

were evident in open identification with things African; fashion, hairstyles, languages, etc. Among people of color, then, it might be said that assimilation of a different order (a reverse direction) was taking place. As Roy Bryce LaPorte wrote: "The more minute (not necessarily minor) differences (were) apparently... sublimated; terms such as "Black", "Afro-American", and "African" (acquired) symbolically generic properties representing a rising consciousness of tribes, statuses, shades, colonial states, religions, and language groups" (2).

"Black is beautiful" was the popular slogan resurrected from the 1920s and 30s, and all elements of black cultural began to be interpreted with new insight and pride. And in their search to uncover their unique cultural heritage to celebrate the positive values inherent in black cultural traditions black artists turned more decisively to the folk heritage. No longer writing to appeal to white society, they began to focus exclusively upon audience of color, using black settings, black themes, black language and customs, further, the "Black arts writers insisted that their works be evaluated only by critics sympathetic to the Black Arts Movement" (3). Marshall, though not specifically identified with this movement, was sensitive to the transformations in African-American life and drew upon themes compatible with the tenets of the Black Arts Movement. Divorced in 1963, she also experienced a personal transformation as she struggled to write her next novel, which, significantly, centers her artistic imagination not in America but in the Caribbean.

Through the range of settings in her short fiction, Marshall illustrates the differences within the amalgam of experience loosely referred to as "black". Black cultural diversity is evident not only in the story lines but also in the imagery used in each short story. In *Reena* the images reflect American subcultures: traditional Jewish, African-American, and West Indian-American. In *Some Get Wasted and To Da-duh: In Memoriam* the images are African-American and African-Caribbean, respectively, but especially in the latter story, the African world looms large to suggest the author's continuing movement toward a symbolic ancestral homeland. In all these short stories, the author presents a panoramic view of a multicultural society with which she is personally familiar. The strains of each seem to pull her in several directions, for she embodies all these cultural variants. She, of course, sees distinctions in her role as a black woman which, on the one hand, makes her a member (albeit secondary) of a male-dominated society and, on the other hand, excludes her (albeit racially) as a social outcast.

Although Marshall's experience as a first-generation African American closely parallels that of her African-Caribbean kin, the careful reader can detect differences that mark the separate cultures. An obvious distinction is in the language. Through characters like Aunt Vi and Da-duh, we once again are treated to the flavour and rhythmic lilt of the West Indian dialect already transcribed for us in *Brown Girl, Brownstones*. Another distinction can be readily deduced: West Indian immigrants travelled to America of their own volition

in pursuit of the American Dream. African Americans, we know, did not have this option. Thus, the two groups hold very different perceptions of “the land of opportunity”. Finally, these short stories examine lower-class black American life and middle-class immigrant life. Such classifications become artificial when viewed by the dominant society, for both groups are black and therefore relegated to second-class citizenship. What is of primary importance to Marshall, however, is the journey toward her own reconciliation with her immediate society and the larger world. In all the short stories discussed below, she documents her own search for a single unambiguous cultural source with which to identify. She also suggests that black societies, in spite of varying histories, reflect elements of a core African value system (4).

Her first and only commissioned piece, *Reena*, first appeared in Harper’s October 1962 special supplement on the “American Female”. *Reena*, deals with the conflicting attitudes of creative women who struggle with the questions of their responsibilities as women, as wives, as mothers. This time, however, the questions are entertained by women with whom Marshall is most familiar: urban, middle-class, West Indian-American black women those educated women of her own generation who understand the historical and social dimensions that shaped their own particularized responses to racism, sexism, and classism.

Choosing to write in the first person, the author immediately draws us into her private world of memories. Our suspicion that what we are about to read is

autobiographical is confirmed when we learn that the narrator is a writer named Paulie. Further, we read that the story takes place in Brooklyn, the place of Marshall’s birth. Briefly we see the world of a traditional Jewish community where “Sunday became Saturday, with all the stores open and pushcarts piled with vegetables and yard goods lined up along the curb, a crowded place where people hawked and spat freely in the streaming gutters and the men looked as if they had just stepped from the pages of the Old Testament with their profuse beards and long, black, satin coats” (5). Marshall’s description of Brooklyn, however, is targeted upon a small West Indian community where the brownstones of old have been replaced by city housing projects. A tone of sad nostalgia is evoked as she writes of the bittersweet period in which she “served out her girlhood”.

But Marshall is careful to make a distinction between the people and the places of her past. The former represent a community whose faces are but “myriad reflections” of her own. She continues: “Whenever I encounter them at a funeral or a wake, the wedding or christening those ceremonies by which the past reaffirms its hold my guard drops and memories banished to the rear of my mind rush forward to rout the present” (156). It is during one such ceremony, a funeral and a wake, that Paulie, after a twenty-year separation, is reunited with her friend Reena.

The story proper covers a period of only one long night, but compressed in that brief period is the history of generations of black men and women. The author’s



manipulation of time may be seen as a “Symbolic victory” over the chaos and dispossession that mar the lives of black people in general (6). Her major concern, however, is the black woman. In the words of the narrator, Reena’s story explores “the most critical fact of my existence that definition of me, of her (Reena) and millions like us, formulated by others to serve out their fantasies, a definition we have to combat at an unconscionable cost to the self and even use, at times, in order to source of pride: simply, what it has meant, what it means, to be a black woman in America” (155).

Marshall writes a story within a story, and it is so densely packed with historical and cultural information, so intense in its portrayal of ambivalent attitudes and emotions, that it is difficult to offer a coherent interpretation. *Reena* has no conventional plot line clearly delineating action that rises to a central conflict, reaches the point of climax, and ends with a standard resolution. Rather, there seems to be a series of plots in which conflict is assumed as part of the daily facts of black life. Resolution becomes not only a desirable end to perpetual conflict but, importantly, an essential impetus to continued existence. Only two active characters (the narrator and Reena) are foregrounded, and they become almost archetypal in nature, representing the millions of black women who have shared the experiences described. Furthermore, the story often reads like an essay, for scattered throughout are passages that clarify the ideas presented (7). Curiously enough, this authorial intrusion does not take away from the tale because, in many respects, we need a guiding hand to comprehend a pattern of life that is “foreign” to some and not yet

articulated for others. Marshall has already suggested in the passage quoted above that the lives of black women have been all too frequently misinterpreted most often to the detriment of black women. Reena’s story seems to offer a perspective that emphasizes the positive values of the black female experience. Perhaps this explains the titular character’s name, which in Hebrew means “joy”. In a sense, the story documents Marshall’s own life as a black woman growing in maturity during the 50s and 60s. As we begin to understand her purpose to show in microcosm the pain, the beauty, and the strength of a minority group experience, authorial intrusion becomes authorial inclusion instead. The result is a picture that is totally unified in its theme of collecting from one’s heritage the strength and vision to live with purpose and dignity.

The secondary story, which really takes prominence, extends over a period of several years and is a synopsis of Reena’s life. However, it is framed within the setting of an evening wake typical of African-American and African-Caribbean cultures. The two major characters remove themselves from the immediate scene and become engaged in a conversation which, on the surface, seems totally irrelevant to perhaps even irreverent toward the solemn occasion that has brought them together. As the others conduct their own private ritual, Reena is given full sway to describe the people and the events that have most influenced the direction of her lengthy a discussion. For the black female reader who nods assent to nearly every detail, the episodes might even appear redundant. Perhaps it is in recognition of this that Marshall chooses an unusual approach.

Early in the story, we learn that Reena has long possessed the sense of purpose that marks her character. From the moment she enters the church where the funeral service for Aunt Vi is being held, her presence seems to command attention. The narrator explains, "It was a though she, not the minister, were coming to officiate" (155). Through flashback we are told that even as a child, "she seemed defined.... all of a piece, the raw edges of her adolescence smoothed over" (156). Paulie remembers Reena as precocious, socially responsible, and politically conscious of the larger world around her. Her college years were filled with the crusading efforts of a young woman seriously committed to social equality and justice. She picketed, boycotted, handed out leaflets, solicited signatures for petitions all of which eventually led to her temporary suspension from college.

As Reena talks of occasional reomances, we realize how perceptions of color affect the black woman who is constantly bombarded with white society's standards of beauty; it is an experience of painful rejection that often leads to a negative self-image. Reena is not alone as she describes the physic wounds inflicted because of the imprint of color. "Like nearly every little black girl, I had my share of dreams waking up to find myself with long, blonde curls, blue eyes, and skin like milk" (58). (8). Rejection by one's own, however, carries the more devastating effect, and Reena is subjected to the humiliation and shame of being denied an innocent romance simply because the boy's parents see her as too dark: "We live surrounded by white images, and white in this world is synonymous with the good, light, beauty,

success, so that despite ourselves sometimes, we run after that whiteness and deny our darkness, which has been made into a symbol of all that is evil and inferior. I wasn't a person to that boy's parents, but a symbol of the darkness they were in flight from" (15).

Color, as a symbol and as a reality, impinges upon Reena's sense of self when she is involved with a white student: "Bob was always, for some odd reason, talking about how much the Negro suffered, and although I would agree with him, I would also try to get across that, you know, like all people we also had fun once in a while, loved our children, liked making love that we were human beings for God's sake. But he only wanted to hear about the suffering" (159). The relationship ends when Bob insists that she meet his father, who is visiting New York. The author's allusion to Conrad's "Heart of Darkness" is poignant: "I'll never forget or forgive the look on that old man's face when he opened his hotel-room door and saw me. The horror I might have been the personification of every evil in the world" (159).

Bob's reaction is a laughter filled with vengeance not against Reena, but against himself, against his own uncertainty, against his father with whom he shared a painful relationship. Reena, however, cannot be completely exonerated and confesses that she had used Bob "to get at that white world which had not only denied (her), but had turned (her) own against (her)" (159). Somewhat like Conrad's Kurtz, who loses his past in order for his true self to emerge, so also the truth of Reena's life emerges. Significantly different, however, is that her

past cannot be lost; it is inextricably woven into her present life. Both the then and the now must be confronted and ordered before the confusion that prevails can be dispelled.

At times, Reena is able to use her color to advantage. Speaking at a college debate on McCarthyism, she seems intimidating not only because of her radical position but also because of “the sheer impact of her blackness in their white midst”. Paulie recalls the following:

Her color might have been a weapon she used to dazzle and disarm her opponents. And she had highlighted it with the clothes she was wearing: a white dress patterned with large blocks of primary colors I remember (it looked Mexican) and a pair of intricately wrought silver earrings long and with many little parts which clashed like muted cymbals over the microphone each time she moved her head. She wore her hair cropped short like a boy’s and it was not straightened like mine and the other Negro girl’s in the audience, but left in its coarse natural state: a small forest under which her face emerged in its intense and startling handsomeness (15).

Her hair and her colourful, conspicuous presence contribute to Reena’s self-acceptance. In embracing her African ancestry, she develops the strength to combat all that the white world refuses her.

That strength is built upon the foundation of the extended family, which may be defined as a “philosophical orientation” toward a group identity. The priority afforded the community in traditional African society is widely documented. Marshall seems to

acknowledge contemporary kinship patterns as but a variant of that family system. Reena’s graduation from college, for instance, represents not just a personal accomplishment but a triumph for both her mother and father and their parents before them. “It was as if I had made up for the generations his people had picked cotton in Georgia and my mother’s family had cut cane in the West Indies” (160).

The extended ties are also connected through the relationship of the major characters’ mothers. They had known each other since childhood in Barbados and, further, it was they who initiated more accurately “forced” the relationship between Reena and Paulie. Aunt Vi provides another example. While she is blood related to Reena, she is god-mother to the narrator, who also refers to the woman as aunt. Both women know that because of her sleep-in job, Aunt Vi seldom enjoyed her bed of roses (“the pink satin bedspread with roses of the same material strewn over its surface”). Now seated on that bed, another generation connects once again with the now deceased family member. Over and over again, Marshall shows us both obvious and subtle connections between individuals who have shared a similar in time and who have gained from that sharing a special insight about conquering its exigencies to keep their past, present, and future communities intact. In both fact and symbol, the community thrives beyond temporal measurement to embrace perpetual duration (10).

While this perpetuity is affirmed in the reunion between Paulie and Reena, it is also celebrated in the wake itself. With the juxtaposition of specific cultural rituals that

mark the actual beginnings and endings of life, the author seems to be moving toward an exploration of the cyclical nature of time as perceived by termination of life, it becomes for this small West Indian community a celebration of the continuity of life. Again we see a clear example of an African cultural survival. John S. Mbiti explains that in traditional African society, the departed one, while physically dead, is categorized as the “living-dead”. That is, as long as the deceased is “alive in the memory of those who knew him in his life as well as being alive in the world of spirits.... he is in a state of personal immortality” (11). Marshall seems to be illustrating this concept.

The author’s description of the wake is also reflective of traditional African rituals for the dead. Foods and drink, gaiety and laughter attend the present Vi to

commemorate her special inclusion. Appropriate to the festivities is a bit of comic relief, which is provided by a brief reference to the time Aunt Vi “had missed the excursion boat to Atlantic City and had held her own private picnic – complete with pigeon peas and rice and fricassee chicken on the pier at the last Street” (56-57). Such memories distinguish the woman’s personality and are retained as a part of the present celebration, the recollection of which ensures her imprint upon the future. ■

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# The Role and Responsibility of an Individual in the Modern Society in Kurt Vonnegut

J. Jayakumar & R. Gopiram

An impressive and ever growing list of academic studies suggests that his reputation as one of the most important American novelists of the twentieth century is secure. Since the late 1960s, Kurt Vonnegut has been a public figure, speaking out on issues ranging from politics to censorship, from science and technology to the role of the artist in modern society. His face has become familiar, even to those who have never read his books or heard him give a commencement address, from his appearances in movies and television advertisements. Readers often become “addicted” to Vonnegut, devouring his books one after another and becoming curious about the man who wrote them. Vonnegut has provided plenty of clues about the connection between his life and work by weaving autobiographical details into his fiction and discussing the process of writing novels in the novels themselves. In countless interviews he has examined the major influences that shaped his life and career. In addition three collection of shorter works.

Kurt Vonnegut was an obscure writer when his fourth novel, *Cat’s Cradle*, was published. The modest success of his first novel, which had appeared more than a decade earlier, had been forgotten. His two previous novels had appeared as paperback

originals, so they had not been reviewed. Even though *Cat’s Cradle* was published in hardcover, it seemed at first that it too would attract little attention. Only one review was published in the United States, a brief but positive notice in the New York Times by Terry Southern. In spite of these obstacles, *Cat’s Cradle* found an audience and transformed Vonnegut from an obscure write into a cult figure. Although most Americans were still not familiar with Vonnegut’s work in the mid-1960s, he had a devoted group of fans who snapped up the paperback editions of his novels.

Vonnegut’s surprising imagination is on full display in *Cat’s Cradle*. This apocalyptic novel presents readers with a vision of the end of the world that is quite different from the nuclear annihilation that was widely feared in the 1960s. Vonnegut’s world does not come to an end in a fiery bang; rather, the end is like the “great door of heaven being closed softly” (261). To a world obsessed with the destructive fire of the atom bomb, Vonnegut brings a vision of the world locked up in ice that will not melt. *Cat’s Cradle* warns readers that science can devise many ways of ending the world, but it shows that human ingenuity can also make life worth living for the millions of human beings who currently live in poverty and despair. In *Cat’s Cradle*, Vonnegut creates

a new religion with a full set of scriptures and rituals, and he shows how it brings a sense of meaning and purpose to the lives of people who have found no consolation in other religions.

The novel *Cat's Cradle* begins with John, the first-person narrator, asking the reader to call him Jonah because, like the biblical Jonah, "somebody or something" has forced him to move from one place to another and to witness some pretty bizarre events. The opening page warns readers to expect strange coincidences and plot twists, and the rest of the novel does not disappoint. John is a freelance writer working on a book about what famous people were doing on the day that the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. *Cat's Cradle* tells the story of John's failed attempt to write this book and of his discovery of a new religion, "Bokononism", that provides him with a unique perspective on his own life and human history in general. As a Bokononist he looks back at his previous life as a nominal Christian with ironic detachment.

John's quest for information about what the "father" of the atomic bomb was doing on August 6, 1945, introduces him to the three children of Dr. Felix Henniker, Angel, a Franklin, and Newton. Newton Henniker, better known as Newt, is a freshman who has just flunked out of Cornell University. Although he was only six years old when the bomb was dropped, he has vivid memories of that day because it was the only time his father ever tried to play with him. In a letter to John, Newt describes how Dr. Hoenikker became fascinated by a loop of string, fashioned it into a *Cat's Cradle*, and thrust it into his

face, asking him to admire it. But Newt was more impressed by the ugliness of his father's face so close to his own, and he ran out of the house.

John makes no further progress on his book until about a year later when another assignment brings him to Ilium, New York, home of the General Forge and Foundry Company, where Dr. Hoenikker worked most of his life. Although the Hoenikker children no longer live there, John meets several people who knew them in high school and who describe them as social misfits. John tours the General Forge and Foundry research lab with Dr. Asa Breed, who was Dr. Hoenikker's supervisor, at least on paper. Dr. Breed admits that no one could really supervise Dr. Hoenikker because he was like "a force of nature" (21). He worked without regard for what other people considered important. On his tour of the lab, which is modeled after the General Electric lab in Schenectady, New York, where Vonnegut worked for four years, John becomes aware of the tremendous gap between the scientists and the young women who type the results of their research. The typists, like the public in general, are mystified by science. They consider it a form of magic, and the company's educational exhibits do nothing to dispel the air of mystery. John's visit coincides with the week before Christmas, and the typists, who are known collectively as the "Girl Pool", come to Dr. Breed's office to sing carols and receive chocolate bars. One line from "O Little Town of Bethlehem" seems especially appropriate in the research lab that gave the world the atomic bomb: "The hopes and fears of all the years are here with us tonight". While Dr. Breed sees science as



humanity's best hope for peace and prosperity, John is aware of its destructive potential and the fears it evokes in many ordinary people.

In order to explain Dr. Hoenikker's peculiar way of thinking, Dr. Breed tells John the story of "ice-nine". One day a U.S. Marine general visited the lab looking for a simple solution to a problem the marines have wallowed in since their inception mud. Dr. Hoenikker thought for a moment and proposed the idea of ice-nine, a solid form of water with a much higher melting point than conventional ice. A small chip of ice-nine would be able to "teach" water molecules how to arrange themselves so that they would be solid at room temperature. The problem is that once ice-nine is released into the world it will solidify not just one particular body of water but all the streams that feed it, and the rivers connected to these streams, and then the oceans, locking up all the world's water and putting an end to life on earth. Dr. Breed declares ice-nine to be impossible, but John reveals that it already exists. Just before he died, Dr. Hoenikker created a small amount of ice-nine with a melting point of 114.4 degrees Fahrenheit. He told only his three children about it, and after he died, they divided the compound among themselves.

After his visit to the lab, John goes to the Ilium cemetery to see the grave of Dr. Hoenikker. His attention is immediately drawn to an enormous monument marking the grave of Dr. Hoenikker's wife Emily, which was erected by her three children, complete with poems expressing their devotion to her. This touching tribute makes John's cab driver think of his own mother's

grave and inspires him to look for a larger stone to mark it. He takes John to a gravestone salesroom where they see a beautiful marble angel that is over one hundred years old. Carved by the present owner's great-grandfather, the stone was ordered by a German immigrant who went west to Indiana without paying for it. The name on the stone is the narrator's. As he looks back on the strange coincidence of finding his own name on the gravestone, he describes it as his first vender. Bokomonism term for a strong push towards the belief that God is guiding the course of one's life. Looking at his own name on the stone, he has a vision of "tunnels" connecting all human beings throughout history and giving their lives meaning and direction.

While he was in Ilium, John let a poet named Sherman Krebbs stay in his apartment. When he returns he finds that Krebbs has wrecked the place, killed his cat and his avocado tree, burned his couch, and written a poem in excrement on the kitchen floor. Krebbs is a nihilist, someone who believes in nothing and finds life meaningless. John says he was tempted to see the coincidence of the stone angel as meaningless and to conclude that life itself was meaningless, but Krebbs's outlandish behaviour convinces him that nihilism is a mistake. Krebbs gives him another shove in the direction of Bokomonism, which argues that everything happens for a reason, even if the reason is not immediately apparent.

A series of strange coincidences propels John into contact with Frank Hoenikker, who disappeared shortly after his father's funeral. John sees an advertising supplement in the New York Times for the

tiny island nation of San Lorenzo. On the cover is a picture of a breathtakingly beautiful woman, Mona Aamons Monzano, and John falls instantly in love (80). Looking inside for more pictures of Mona, he instead comes across Frank Hoenikker, who is San Lorenzo's "Minister of Science and Progress" (80). Then he is assigned to write an article on another resident of the island, Julian Castle, who gave up a life of wealth and privilege to found a hospital and care for San Lorenzo's poor. On the plane to San Lorenzo, he meets Horlick Minton, the new U.S. ambassador, and his wife Claire. The Minton's is devoted to each other and pay very little attention to anyone else. Having been dismissed briefly from the diplomatic service for expressing the opinion that Americans are not universally loved, they view their new assignment with cynical detachment. The Minton shows John a copy of a book on San Lorenzo by Philip Castle, the son of philanthropist Julian Castle. The book introduces John to the Bokononist religions and gives him a glimpse of the island's long, sad history. Bokonon, whose real name, Johnson, became "Bokonon" in the island's strange dialect, is a black man originally from Trinidad who travelled the world before his fate finally delivered him to San Lorenzo. Faced with the hopeless poverty of a large population on an island with few resources, Bokonon and his fellow traveller Earl McCabe created a religion called Bokononism and pitted it against a repressive government headed by McCabe. Bokonon used depression-era bodybuilder Charles Atlas's concept of "dynamic tension" as the basis for a system that turned life on the island into a morality play in which good and evil battle endlessly.

Bokonon took on the role of the persecuted holy man hiding out in the jungle, while McCabe became the dictatorial president who punished all Bokononists with death on a giant fishhook. Although the new system did not improve the economic conditions on the island, it improved the lives of the people by making them actors in a cosmic drama and giving their lives meaning.

John also meets H. Lowe Crosby, a bicycle manufacturer who hopes to build a factory in San Lorenzo, and his wife Hazel. Like the narrator, Hazel is from Indiana, and she delights in meeting other "Hoosiers" and expounding on the great things that have been accomplished by people from Indiana. Hazel's mania for Hoosiers gives John an opportunity to introduce the Bokononist concepts. While Crosby admits that this may be too brutal for a democracy, he does favour the reinstatement of public hanging to restore a healthy respect for the law in the United States. Crosby is the novel's spokesman for American capitalism. He claims to love democracy and freedom but actually prefers a dictatorship that promises him total power over his workers.

The plane trip also gives John time to get to know two of Dr. Hoenikker's children, thirty-four-year-old Angela and nineteen-year-old Newt, who are flying to San Lorenzo to attend their brother Frank's wedding. Frank is engaged to Mona Aamons Monzano, which is disappointing news for John, who claims to have fallen in love with her picture in the New York Times.

When the plane arrives in San Lorenzo, it is greeted by 5,000 of the island's listless inhabitants, a marching band that

does not play, and a seriously ill president who collapses in the middle of his welcoming speech. After Papa Monzano is whisked away to his mountain top caste in an ambulance, the Mintons are taken to the U.S. embassy, Angela and Newt accompany Frank to his home, and John and the Crosbys are taken to Casa Mona, a gleaming new hotel in Bolivar, the capital city. Soon after his arrival at the hotel, John receives a call from Frank asking him to come to his house for dinner. There he meets Julian Castle, the philanthropist he is supposed to interview. John is shocked to learn that the saintly Castle, founder of the *House of Hope and Mercy* in the jungle, is actually a sneering nihilist who believes that all human beings are “vile” (169). Castle fills John in on some details of the island’s history while they wait for Frank to arrive. Although Bokononism is outlawed and punishable by death, everyone on the island, including Papa Monzano, is a Bokononist. The persecution of Bokonism is an elaborate game, meant to give the religion more “zest” (173). With Papa Monzano on his deathbed, Frank is next in line to assume the presidency of San Lorenzo. However, like his father, Frank is not comfortable with people, and he prefers to work behind the scenes. He offers John the presidency. When he recovers from the shock, John agreed and explaining his decision in Bokononist terms as giving into what he feels is his destiny. John then learns that The Books of Bokonon predict that Mona will marry the next president of San Lorenzo, and it appears that the fantasy that began when he saw her picture in the paper will soon come true. Together they perform the Bokononist ceremony of book-maru, placing the soles of their feet together so

that their souls may also touch. Immediately afterward, John ruins this special moment by insisting that Mona reserve all her love for him. She counters that she loves everyone equally, as her religion requires. For a Bokononist, demanding all of someone’s love is the greatest sin. Faced with losing Mona, John decides to become a Bokononist, marry Mona, and become president of San Lorenzo.

Frank needs Monzano’s blessings and suggestion to enter in to the black castle which was above the sea level. It is observed that Monzano is on his death bed. He approves of John for the next President and tells him to kill Bokonon and also advised to teach science. He feels “Science is magic that works” (218). An arrangement was done to commemorate the deaths of the martyres of democracy. It is seen young San Lorenzans died on the fight in World Ward – II. Frank plans to declare John as the President at the same ceremony. Monzano is seen to eat ice slowly due to the pain of cancer. His doctor also dies after touching him. Frank, Angela, Newt and John begin a plan to dispose the bodies in a massive funeral pyre. But before the finishing of their work it is found that one of the airplanes saluting the hundred martyres crashes in to the side of the castle.

Almost immediately, huge tornadoes fill the skies and scatter the survivors of the castle’s collapse. John and Mona find refuge in an air-raid shelter that Monzano had stocked with food and water in anticipation of nuclear war. After a week underground, they surface to find an almost totally lifeless world. Although the killer tornadoes have retreated, death is

everywhere in the frost-like crystals of ice-nine. As Mona points out, “Mother Earth isn’t a very good mother anymore” (269). After wandering about aimlessly, John and Mona stumble upon the scene of a mass suicide. Gathered together in a round valley are thousands of frozen San Lorenzans. In the center of this group, under a rock, John finds a note from Bokonon explaining that the ice-nine statues in the valley are most of the survivors of the tornadoes that came in the wake of the freezing of the ocean. They found Bokonon and demanded that he explain why God had done this and tell them what to do now. He told them that God must be trying to kill them and that they should succumb to his will and die by eating ice-nine. John is appalled by Bokonon’s cynicism, but Mona finds it amusing, and she recalls that Bokonon always said he would never follow his own advice “because he knew it was worthless” (273). She asks John if he really wishes that these people were alived again, and he cannot answer her. Then she bends down, pulls up a crystal of

the ice-nine, touches it to her lips, and becomes a statue like the rest of her compatriots.

John soon finds the other survivors of the apocalypse, Frank, Newt, and the Crosby’s, living like the “Swiss Family Robinson” in the ruin of Frank’s house (276). Although no animals or plants have survived, ice-nine preserves pigs, goats, and chickens until the survivors are ready to thaw and eat them. They live this way for six months while John writes his book, Hazel sews an American flag, Newt paints, Crosby cooks, and Franks studies an ant farm. As far as they know, ants are the only other form of life to survive. ■

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# Miserable Future of Humanity in Phillip Roth's *Good Bye Columbus*

C. Krishnamoorthy & P. Kiruthika

Phillip Roth is one of the most prolific and popular writers of the twentieth century. His career has spanned fifty years and brought him prestigious awards and honorary degrees from many universities. Although his novels have sometimes come under savage attack from professional critics, an impressive and ever growing list of academic studies suggests that his reputation as one of the most important American novelists of the twentieth century is secure. Since the late 1960s, he has been a public figure, speaking out on issues ranging from politics to censorship, from science and technology to the role of the artist in modern society. His face has become familiar, even to those who have never read his books or heard him give a commencement address, from his appearances in movies and television advertisements.

Readers often become “addicted” to Roth, devouring his books one after another and becoming curious about the man who wrote them. Roth has provided plenty of clues about the connection between his life and work by weaving autobiographical details into his fiction and discussing the process of writing novels in the novels themselves. In countless interviews he has examined the major influences that shaped his life and career. In addition, three collections of shorter works contain many interesting and revealing anecdotes that help readers to understand the man behind the

novels. This article will draw our brief views on Roth’s own autobiographical essays to provide a brief overview of his life and explore the connections between his experiences and his writing. *Good Bye Columbus* was Roth’s first highly successful novel, and it earned many positive reviews. Several critics suggested that it announced the arrival of an important American novelist. In *Good Bye Columbus*, Roth introduces many of the themes that are central to his later novels.

*Good Bye Columbus* is set in the future after a fictional third world war. During the war, while most Americans were fighting overseas, the nation’s managers and engineers developed ingenious automated systems that allowed the factories to operate with only a few workers. The novel begins about ten years after the war, when most factory workers have been replaced by machines. Critics have often compared *Portnays Complain* with Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* and George Orwell’s 1984. The three novels are categorized as “utopian” because they describe future worlds where all-powerful governments attempt to control every aspect of human life. Utopian novels take their name from Thomas More’s *Utopia*, which described an ideal human society based on reason and logic. More recent utopian novels, such as those by Roth, Orwell, and Huxley, describe how governments can use technology to control individuals, and all three authors

predict a bleak future for humankind if current trends continue.

But upon closer inspection, *Good Bye Columbus* is not really about a distant, high-tech future. *Good Bye Columbus* is a satire on post-World War II America. Rather than focusing on amazing technological innovations, the novel describes the logical consequences of social forces already apparent in the 1950s. These forces include an uncritical faith in technology and “progress”, an insatiable desire for material possessions, a lack of interest in politics, and a deliberate effort to encourage women to leave the work force.

*Good Bye Columbus* takes these entire social trends one step further and asks, what will America look like if we continue down the path of mechanization? The novel describes an almost fully mechanized society run by a small, elite corps of managers and engineers. The entire economy is managed by an enormous computer that determines how many television sets and toasters the nation needs. Computerized tests determine who gets into college and which of the college graduates may go on to earn the doctoral degree that is required for all but menial work. Even those with doctorates are at the mercy of machines that decide who is fit for what job based on their records and test scores. Those who are not chosen for the few positions available in the manager-engineer elite are given two options: the army of the “Reconstruction and Reclamation Corps” (20). Known as the “Reeks and Wrecks”, these men who have been rejected by the system spend their days filling potholes and flushing storm drains. The sexist assumptions of the 1950s that tended to limit

employment opportunities for women seem to have been written into law in *Good Bye Columbus*. Aside from a few female secretaries for top male executives, only men work outside the home.

In *Good Bye Columbus*, Roth created a vision of the future that was intended to warn 1950s America about the perils of their worship of technological progress. Although some of the other details, like computers running on vacuum tubes, seem dated to the contemporary reader, Roth’s indictment of our unquestioning faith in science and technology is more relevant than ever in the twenty-first century.

*Good Bye Columbus* develops two parallel plot lines that converge only briefly, at the beginning and the end of the novel. The most important plot line tells the story of an intelligent, thirty-five-year-old factory manager. The second plot line describes the American tour of the Gladys of Bratphhr, spiritual leader of six million residents of a distant, under-developed nation. Although the two plot lines are almost entirely independent of one another, they work together to paint a more complete picture of American society than either one could produce alone. Proteus lives and works within the system, but the Gladys is a visitor from a very different culture. The parallel plot lines allow Roth to show how the system looks from the inside and from the outside.

Neil is the ultimate insider. His father was the first “National Industrial, Commercial, Communications, Foodstuffs, and Resources Director” (2). As his lengthy title suggests, Dr. Gladys had almost complete control over the nation’s economy



and was more powerful than the President of the United States. As its first director, Ronald's father is widely regarded as the father of the unified industrial system that was created during the Third World War. Ronald is expected to following his father's footsteps, and as the novel opens, he seems ready to do just that. At the relatively young age of thirty-five, he is already in charge of an enormous, almost completely automated factory, the Ilium Works. But in spite of his good fortune, Ronald is vaguely dissatisfied with the industrial system and his place in it. Throughout the novel, he considers alternatives, but the system is so large and complex that there are few opportunities to live outside of it. Ronald considers buying one of the few farms that has not been absorbed by the agricultural industry, but he realizes that he lacks the skills to do the wealth that he has accumulated, but a life with no work seems even worse than his current dilemma. Ronald fees his fantasy life with novels about barrel-chested frontiersmen who survive by their strength and cunning and revel in the freedom of unspoiled nature.

A visit from an old friend, Brenda Patimkin, shakes Ronald out of his dream world. Patimkin has risen to the top of the system because of his brilliance, even though he refuses to play by the rules. He is a rebel looking for a cause, and he sense a rebellious streak in Ronald that he hopes to develop. When he shows up at Ronald's door, he has quit his important job in Washington, D.C., and he intends to live outside the system, just as Ronald has dreamed of doing. Ronald and Patimkin visit a bar in the "Homestead" section of town, where workers who have been displaced by machines live out their

meaningless lives in shoddy, mass-produced houses. There they meet an Episcopal minister with an M.A. in anthropology named Lasher who puts into words the unfairness of the system that the two engineers have only vaguely sensed. Lasher tells them that his son, who did not pass the entrance exams for college, hanged himself rather than face a meaningless life in the army or the "Reeks and Wrecks". In fact, Lasher has so son, and he tells Ronald the story as a kind of psychological experiment, but it still has a powerful effect on Ronald. He realizes that by taking away their jobs, the system has robbed men of their dignity, and even of the will to live.

The story strengthens Ronald's resolve to quit the system, but he is not bold enough to make a clean break as Patimkin has done. Patimkin is disappointed with Ronald and takes up with Lasher, who is the leader of a rebel group known as the "Ghost Shirt Society". When Ronald's superiors ask him to betray Patimkin and Lasher, he finally summons the courage to quite. Soon after, he is given a drugged drink and captured by the Ghost Shirt Society. They intend to use his famous name by making him the official leader of the organization. But Ronald is a leader in name only. The Ghost Shirts keep him in a small, locked room for his own protection and allow him out only to appear at meetings.

One of these meetings is raided, and Ronald is captured by the police. At his trial for treason, Ronald responds to questions by reciting answers that have been carefully scripted by Lasher and Patimkin to serve as an indictment of the system. But the prosecutor forces Ronald to abandon his script by asking him about his relationship with his famous father. Because he is

wearing a lie detector, Ronald is unable to deny that his hatred for the system is based on his hatred for his father, who was too busy running the country to attend to Ronald when he was a boy.

The trial is cut short when the Ghost Shirts rise in rebellion and seize control of Ilium. The displaced workers smash the machines that took their jobs without stopping to consider which machines are useful, even critical, to human life. Ronald and the other leaders of the Ghost Shirts retreat to his old office and view the destruction from afar. Other cities also rebel, but their rebellions are quickly put down, and Ilium is isolated. The next day an automated helicopter broadcasts a tape that demands that the people turn over their “false leaders”, but most people are too busy repairing the machines they so recently smashed. As the city smolders and its residents enjoy their newly regained creativity, Ronald and the other Ghost Shirt leaders turn themselves in to face certain execution as traitors.

The second plot describes the Gladys of Bratpuhr’s visit to the United States. Both satirical and utopian novels often use visitors as a plot device because as the society is explained to the visitor, it is also being explained to the reader. A visitor who does not share the culture and values of the society provides a different perspective, which enables the satirist to point out the shortcomings of the system. For instance, when the Gladys sees a crew from the Reeks and Wrecks working on the road, he calls them “Takaru”, which means “slaves” (22-23). Although his guide struggles to convince him that the men are not slaves but “citizens”, the Gladys insists

on calling them slaves, and his mistake makes an important point. Although they are still officially citizens of the United States, the industrial system does not allow them to make any significant choices and has, in effect, reduced them to the status of slaves.

The Gladys’s tour of the United States also allows Roth to describe aspects of life that escape the notice of Ronald Proteus. The Gladys visits the home of a statistically “average” American citizen, a typical university, a barbershop, and even Carlsbad Caverns, the home of EPICAC XIV, the supercomputer that runs the American economy. More importantly, the Gladys’s reactions provide ironic commentary on the American gospel of technology and progress. When he visits the home of the “average American”, his guide proudly displays the “ultrasonic dishwasher and clothes washer” that allow the housewife to complete her chores “in a matter of seconds” (164). The Gladys is not impressed. He wants to know why she is in such a hurry to finish her work. What does she do then, he wonders. The only answer he can think of is that she has plenty of time to watch television. The Gladys’s perspective allows Roth to highlight the banality of middle-class American life. Appliances save time, but people do not know that to do with the time they have. As the Gladys leaves, he has one word of advice for the couple, “Brahouna!” – “Live!” (165).

Gladys begins and ends his trip in Ilium, which provides a physical connection to the main plot. More important are the thematic connections between the two plot lines, and these will be discussed in the section on thematic issues.

Ronald is the protagonist, or main character, of *Good Bye Columbus*. As the son of Gladys, the first director of the national industrial system, Ronald seems destined to rise high in the organization. He is intelligent and fortunate that his skill as an engineer and manager are just what the employment machines require. But as the novel opens, he is troubled by a vague sense of dissatisfaction with his job, his life, and the system in general. As he goes through the motions at work, he is “annoyed, bored, queasy” (7).

Ronald’s unusual name, “Proteus”, may provide some clues to his character. In Greek mythology, Proteus is a sea monster that can change his shape at will. His battle with Odysseus is found in Homer’s *Odyssey*. In a sense, Neil also lacks a definite shape. He has no true identity but changes to suit the circumstances. When he goes to Homestead, he takes an old, beat-up car and replaces his business suit with a leather jacket in a desperate attempt to blend in with his surrounds. However, unlike the original Proteus, Ronald’s changes are forced on him by circumstances beyond his control. He spends most of the novel looking for something to believe in and waiting for someone to give him orders so that he will not have to take responsibility for his actions. In his youth, the industrial system provided him with a ready-made set of beliefs and told him what to do, but he has lost faith in the system.

Ronald’s later involvement with the Ghost Shirt Society repeats the same pattern of unquestioning allegiance to a large organization. For Ronald, the main appeal of the Ghost Shirts is that they force him to do what they want or be killed. Rather than

resenting this loss of freedom, Ronald finds it “liberating” because he no longer has to make his own decisions and take responsibility for his choices (297). After the revolution fails, Ronald finally recognizes his motives for joining the Ghost Shirts. He was “eager to join a large, confident organization with seeming answers to the problems that had made him sorry to be alive” (334).

*Good Bye Columbus* shows that the primary motive for scientific progress is the “restless”, erratic insight and imagination of the gangster” that has been considered “peculiarly American” ever since the nation’s founding (4-5). But Calhoun, an engineer at the Ilium Works, is a perfect example of this love of invention for its own sake. He has modified his car so that it responds to voice commands and engineered the seats so that they recline at the touch of a button. But his love of gadgets and his skill at designing them leads to his downfall. He designs a machine that performs his job better than he can, so he is laid off. The irony is obvious and it points to one of the novel’s central themes. The inventiveness that provides so many Americans with their principal joy in life may eventually makes them obsolete.

Bud’s story also illustrates the short sightedness of many engineers. He is so engrossed by the problem of designing a machine to replace himself that he never thinks about what will happen if he succeeds. If engineers do not stop to think about the personal consequences of their inventions, how can we expect them to consider the social consequences? The novel suggests that we cannot expect engineers to do this, but that someone must think ahead

about what sort of technological progress will really improve the human condition. Ronald looks ahead to consider the consequences of their creativity, Bud and his friends are too engrossed in the joy of tinkering to think about the human consequences of what they create. As the Ghost Shirts planned the revolution, Bud was just as happy designing weapons as he had been tinkering with his car. Patimkin expresses the dangerous attitude of some engineers at the end of the novel, "If only it weren't for the people... always getting tangled up in the machinery... earth would be an engineer's paradise" (332). This quote clearly shows how some engineers lose sight of the fact that their machines should serve people and make their lives easier. In the future described in *Good Bye Columbus*, people have been made to serve machines with disastrous consequences.

In spite of the novel's clear warning about what will happen if machines become more important than the people they are meant to serve, it would be an oversimplification to say that the novel has an "anti machine" theme. In addition to the joy that comes from creating machines, *Good Bye Columbus* depicts the satisfaction that comes from watching retreats to the assembly line to listen to the "exciting music" of the machines (11). Ronald almost becomes hypnotized by the dance-like movements of a machine that wraps insulation around a cable. His reservations about the industrial system are put aside as he contemplates the "entertaining and delightful" machines (9). As a result of highly productive machines, the average American has a house full of useful, cleverly designed gadgets. No one hungry, and because of the nation's unquestionable

industrial superiority, there are no more wars. In strictly material terms, human life has never been better.

However, all of this prosperity comes at a great human cost. Ironically, as machines take on more human characteristics-as they dance, make music, and do useful work-human beings find fewer and fewer outlets for their creativity. The employment machines that match people with suitable occupations recognize only machine-like qualities in people, and this has disastrous results for those who do not excel at the official approve vocations of manager or engineer. Even Bud Calhoun, who has proven ability as a designer, is rejected for design work by a machine that regards his grades and test scores as too low. Artists fare even worse. Ronald comforts his wife by praising her artistic ability and pointing out that it is a "tragedy" that none of the machines can recognize it. But this criticism of the system overlooks a more basic problem. Although the issue is never discussed directly, women are evidently not allowed to work outside the home, regardless of their abilities. Sexism is built into the system, and opportunities for women are even more severely restricted than they are for men. ■

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# Literature and Popular Culture: A Study

Sheela Ramagiri

## ABSTRACT

*This paper gives the wide picture of literature and popular culture as well as globalization. Many new things were invented in this period of Indian history and did vast improvements that have taken place. The literary authors were inspired and used it as one of the instruments of their writings. The two terms come under modern Indian English literature and this paper includes the beginning; growth and its vivid impact on society that are discussed.*

In the Indian context, after independence, there are wide changes that occurred in the society levels which directly link with living beings and with culture of society. The popular culture which includes vast developments in all fields like literature, culture, food system, dressing, modernity, education, economic, changes in social structure, music, art, mass media, media, etc were filled with popular culture the number of young generation that follows this type new system in their day-to-day life.

Popular culture especially improved the field of literature and it was considered as 'modern literature', because in the twentieth century onwards people's style of living was completely changed by the western culture in all aspects. After industrialization in India, the rapid changes

appeared before the Indian culture and everything was accepted by all generations. There are many instances that stand for literature and popular culture like the style of writings which spread the new message to society through the different mediums. The Indian literature too adopts the popular culture in literature that we can see in various writers' writings of the novels, plays, poems, and some texts which focus on modern touch and popular culture in it. For instance, the writings by many feminists who once upon a time used to write on the base of female life and related problems but now in the modern style of writing they too follow the popular culture and discuss about current issues. It may be related to any field of society like the issues of Indian economy, culture, modernity, the supremacy of rich life in high city, city culture, etc which are related terms to Indian literature. Very rarely the authors focus on old issues of the society. By the several ways literature follows the popular culture, and empowers people. Stressing on national culture the writers were writing creative literature which was a new matter in the field of literature. The popular culture has developed the hierarchical system in society and in literature as well where all are equal with no difference between genders and other things. The growth of literature includes



everything like feminism, modernism, and globalization. The richness of literature improved in these period of popular culture, something which are splendid in writing about past history or present or future they exclaim on subject and decorate with new matters. For instance *Talé-Danda* by Girish Karnad and Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*, etc are the works of Indian literature which are the best examples of literature and popular culture.

In the context of Indian literature, when the term popular culture entered many fields the field of film, fashion, television, advertisement, the usage of electronic goods, life style and everything were new with brand and trade sectors. It offers all type of people to social media and produce new literature. Popular culture sometimes has purely impact of westernization in the society. Through these fields of new things, people reached every corner of society and problems by all type of regional films, giving modern touch to fashion-field, creativeness and equality to gender.

The literature and popular culture has its wide role in the society from various roots and angles it is going to change the world very rapidly. And a recent example of this is the modern feminist writer Shobha De. She too comes underneath of popular culture of literature because her way of writing was fully different. The focus is only on the life of high city people and their culture and life, which indicates how the Indian literature has changed according to new eras of society. De opens all the secrets of city life, merits and demerits of the life and its identity of modern style is considered as Indian literature and popular culture. The

term literature and popular culture is like new invention of literary texts where everything can possibly change itself. It is not a constant matter that popular culture must be like this or that. The new creations were held in this way and in all regional expertise persons indicate this style of popularity in literature by their own style and way.

### **Indian Popular Culture and Literature**

- **Folklore and Mythology:** Folklore and mythology are special reference of Hindu God and Goddess. These can link directly with great Indian myths (Ramayana, Mahabharata, etc), often the popular culture gives different angle of myths treating of characters different from old way to new way. Folklore has been slowly disappearing because in the modernity or globalized world this has become old especially in Indian levels. People move towards urbanization with high touch to life and folklore has become rare thing which is used in some occasional times and in few literary works.
- **Media:** when the matter of popularity comes, it is sure that it should be included with media. In post independence period of India science and technology invented many things for society and common people. Media was playing major role in popular culture and literature, from this way the style literature too changed with the help of media and many new things arrived for social structure.
- **Feminism:** The popular culture stepped into society, commonly all criticism,



ecology, and feminism too has changed its direction. Literature and popular culture has provided new plot for all feminists. The feminist approaches, style of living, social hierarchy, writing the way of everything have vastly changed popular culture and in literature.

- **Rise of Global Novel:** It also comes under the popular culture as we have discussed the literary style of people that change. It is a mixed culture or westernization that all literary works now deal with very common issues of society. There are no such old myths at the backdrop of literature.
- **Music:** Music, art are rapidly changing in customs and cultures.

Hence, the various fields of literature tackle with popular culture. In the literature and popular culture also are included global art, music from tradition to rock music or pop music, and global media. Popular culture produces new things to society where all the variation that come imitates modernity.

### **Impact of Literature and Popular Culture**

There are numerous developments and changes happening by literature and popular culture. The works of all regional authors introduce different styles of writing, it especially refers to the modernity and globalism, urban styles where the life of society people is going to change completely, many -isms rise in society. There are many causes that come to wide change but never stand constant; it is like variation in literary style. Literature and popular culture include things like stories, novels, plays, poems, and usage of theater to reach

the people. Theater or film, music create new way to society through this medium slowly steadily. Indian society has changed itself and the literary production is in different style and direction which is mixture of all things. Even sometimes science and technology are to touch literature.

The vividness of popular culture and literature comes out as vivid works. It may be a historical background, or modern background the themes of literature totally depend on popular culture. There are many western culture too entered through this popular culture to Indian society. Western writers like Raymond Williams in cultural study discussed the growth and impact of culture on society and literature which means literature and popular culture had its impact to society in world perspective. Variations in all the fields become common in the changes and the natural process swiftly moves. The writers of literature give variety of definitions regarding literature and popular culture, such as “culture is system of building identity”, further the popular culture developed by beliefs, faith, practices, customs, way to live, art, intelligence, language, food habits and economy etc. The popular culture gave something uniqueness to literature. According to social justice the popular culture has its large background and analysis on in literary context which implicate on humans life. The organizations of society were supported and welcome this style of literature that includes all the aspects and issues of society.

Hence there are many impacts that happen by popular culture and literature. The works of literary forms change its style of

production and its growth of Indian English literature in postcolonial periods. In pre-colonial times of India, the literature has been dedicated for only few fields of society like child marriage, widow marriage, system of Sati, Dowry, equality between genders, issues related to women and nation etc. but now in the modern era of literature it has its wide angle of the writers of literature having their own liberalization to write anything to literature and society.

### **Literature and Globalization**

From the twentieth century onwards, the world has started up with the term 'Globalization', which includes many things in it. There are many reasons of improving society and to take it for further fields it may be literary, economic, educative, etc it was wide spread subject. Especially in the Indian context after independence there are many revelations that had begun and ended with different terms like globalism, feminism, modernism, equalization, industrialization etc and all these terms directly deal with new and successful life. In the Indian levels this globalization stands for high levels in all angles because according to Indian history there was no such thing for people to live as happy or equal to one another in olden days. There are many social hierarchy that includes rich-poor and upper-lower. Even by cast and creed they are divided, but industrialization has widened the gap between all these hierarchies of society. Many Indians stands for taking *global* as one of the terms which is very essential for society and its people. There is no doubt that Indian society had adopted this globalist notion because the country is a mixture of

varied cultures and in the orthodox society no equality appears in any matter. When globalization introduces the way to change themselves everyone becomes equal in all the aspects. There is no hierarchy in societal levels among the poor and the rich class people and the globalization did its lots to be an impact in this regard.

When the new century of modernization has begun along with globalization it opened its way through many changes. It appears in the fields of science and technology by vast improvement and inventions that globalism did its landmark in the Indian history. 'Globalization means the dismantling of trade barriers between nations and integration of the nations' economies through financial flow, trade in goods and services, and corporate investments between nations'.

This is a mere prologue to newness in all matters. The recent beginning of literature in Indian sphere, the writers of all types purely implicated the popular culture and globalism in their works. The journey of globalization creates new things to society where the fast growth of technology too includes many nationalized and multinational companies to enter the scenario. These ways of globalization slowly and steadily change the living approaches of common people, especially in the Indian society. Improvement in economic condition by giving them trade or separate sectors, equality between male and female many variations like this happen in the field of literature. During the globalization process in Indian context especially in literature vast changes occur.

The writers of literature had begun their writing with commercial touch which is like modern style of writing.

Writers of literature go with current issues of society and rational ideas like 'feminism, terrorism, modernism, even some time technical changes'. They took it as weapon of their literature, for instance, there are many Indian feminists who write for women empowerment in society. The writers like Shobha De called as one of modern feminist writers in Indian English literature purely discuss the life of multicity or big city people, style of living, ups and down, success and failure in their life. Shobha De is considered as one of commercial writers because she focuses on wealth based feministic stories, which are portrayed as globalized characters in the novels they were rich, educated, very fast in living style, and they are independent. This indicates the globalization of society. Almost all the works of Shobha De stands for globalization and these are good instance of Indian society which is in the shadow of globalization. In the Indian English literature, the globalization had remark on the field where various changes are applied to writing the style of producing literature

with a complete change. Now-a day, the literature has become the instrument of society and through this the society is developing on the basis of globalization.

### **Conclusion:**

These are colorful faces of literature; it may be a popular culture and literature or else literature and globalization. In the modern era of high techniques, this naturally deals with their own matter of writings. The generation changes for every decades and invention takes place to the literary fields. The entertainment sources like film, theater activities also step into the Indian society and became shadow of these two terms. ■

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# Revolt Against Male-Dominance in *Rich Like Us*

Ram Chandra Yadav

*Rich Like Us*, the sixth of Nayantara Sahgal's novel portrays the struggle of a woman in various roles of her life- as a daughter, lover, wife and widow- with the patriarchal tradition- oriented society. It points out that it is through struggle that they develop and mature. In this novel, which Sahgal wrote in 1985 after a gap of almost seven years, she introduces, for the first time, a woman who is a foreigner and shows that the condition and the nature of the woman is the same in all the countries of the world. She presents the whole story of *Rich Like Us* through the story of two women – Sonali and Rose. These two women are Sahgal's specimens of the New women though each in a different way.

Sonali, an I.A.S. officer, is a fine example for she fulfills, "a new tradition to create our own independent worth to prove"<sup>1</sup> but unfortunately the world in which she has grown up, idealism is fostered to everyone, she thinks that the ideals which have been inculcated in her since her childhood, and, what she was taught during her training was true and she can carry them throughout her life. But she comes to know the ugly reality, only when she is hit by the cruel hands of new power and realizes that the fine tradition she was steeped in cannot be maintained is not true.

Since her childhood, Sonali had been a champion of emancipation. In order to achieve the higher pleasures that freedom brings, she worked hard and sacrificed the simple pleasures of life. Since her college days, she had been independent and at Oxford she felt a sense of new found freedom. Along with Ravi Karchu, her childhood friend, she embraced Marxism, for it seemed to her to be a promise of a new world.

If we closely analyze Sonali's character we find that in some respects, she is a continuation of Devi of *A Situation in New Delhi*. Both are lonely, free and independent, and, both are somewhat stranger than her earlier women. In the quest of her identity Sonali resigns from the post but she does not succumb to the pressure of senior officer and ministers.

Sonali is a strong willed lady for, though she has no political power like Devi, she dares to uphold her own ideals and to rebel against the accepted norms of society. Her love for freedom can be seen through her analysis about Ravi's passive attitude, He had never fought a battle for freedom, "... He had no idea what the simplest subjugation were all about." (pp. 123-124)

The condition of India after independence has been vividly portrayed through Sonali's

experiences. On the surface there appeared to be a change for the better because the Zamindari system was abolished, cultivators were given land for their own use and even the untouchables or 'Harijans', as they were called, were able to get some jobs. After the removal of the Britishers the efforts to Indianise everything were successful only till a certain extent. Even highly educated and paid officers had to suffer if they were not ready to compromise and, as we have already seen, Sonali was one of the victims. She was demoted for she refused to sanction the agency of the happyola drink. Unfortunately, the agent had connections with powerful people and, since Sonali strongly refused to compromise with her ideals, she had no choice but to resign from her job. In the words of M.H. , "As the thematic relationships unfold themselves, we find that closely aligned with theme of betrayal is the theme of sacrifice, Thus the novel offers a deep insight into Indian way of life and the impact of new circumstances of Indian woman."<sup>2</sup>

All through her life Sonali had seen women who had lived a life of subjugation. She, therefore, knows very closely the pain of loss, of the freedom, and does not compromise with her independence. Her however, struggle for her own freedom of self-determination is somewhat different from the other woman of Sahgal. However for this she faces destructive forces outside her home. Rose, another women character of Sahgal's choice, a close friend of Sonali also this problem at the home front. Through the character of Rose, the foreigner; Sahgal very aptly universalized her own understanding about women's situation. The

personality of all women Indian of Western is crushed under the crumbling burden of society and custom.

The story of *Rich Like Us* appears realistically rendered for it is observed by two women namely Sonali and Rose, who, although they belong to different classes and race, serve as Nayantara Sahgal's mouthpiece in voicing the disenchantment with post independent developments in India. In an interview with S. Varaklakshmi, the author has asserted that "Rose is Sonali's twin soul."<sup>3</sup> There are a few typical characters e.g. Bimmi who happens to be Sonali's friend, but soon the story is shifted to more serious issues e.g. sati, partition and communal riots. However, we get the impression that naynatarasahgal takes an objective stand throughout the novel.

Rose, another important character of the novel is no less bold and freedom loving than Sonali. To fulfill her inner most feelings, she leaves her family and country with Ram. But submissive forces, like her shadow, follow her and she has to content herself with a life of subjugation. Though SreeRashmiTalwar and Neena Arora, in their analysis of her character, put her on the same platform with the other submissive wives of Sahgal's fiction, but perhaps their assessments of Rose's character is not fair. She is neither like, Mona (Ram's first wife) who with her typically Indian mentality thinks that Ram is her God, nor like Gauri, who is perfectly happy with her life of luxury and has no emotional needs to satisfy. Indeed Rose is unique among Sahgal's women. Her submission is not the result of her submissive nature but the result of her strength and pride. Therefore, her

submission before Ram is not her defeat but it is her victory against those submissive forces which were against her decision.

Sonali's dilemma and introspection is alternated with Rose who is basically a housewife. The chaotic world that surrounds her people and their inner conflict demands a challenging structural device and NayantaraSahgal is able to meet the challenge. As C. Vijaysree has commented:, "NayantaraSahgal chooses a very effective device for the authentic portrayal of the contemporary social – political chaos – the double perspective – the omniscient author's stance is alternated by the participant – narrator view points."<sup>4</sup>

The double perspective technique makes the novel a bit difficult to follow since the events are not arranged chronologically. Like most of NayantaraSahgal's novels, in *Rich Like Us* the plot operates like a pendulum between the past and the present. The burden of politics is well controlled and even if minor character like Kiran and Nishi have not been given much importance, it does not lessen the merit of the novel. NayantaraSahgal's art, in this novel has been commented on by John Miltons in the following words, "NayantaraSahgal's imagination and skill do full justice to the intensity of her belief and passions for truth and freedom."<sup>5</sup>

Mona, another female character of the novel is a conventional woman. But, in spite of being the first wife of Ram, she develops the relation of sisterhood with Rose and for this quality of hers she wins the favour of Sahgal. All feminists agree that sisterhood – the strong bond of love and friendship amongst women is an important

step towards the liberation of women. In the sharing and perfect understanding of Nishi, the wife of Dev, Ram's son and Rose, and Mona and Rose NayantaraSahgal explores the possibility of fuller co-operation among women which may lead to freedom. According to Asha chaubey:, "The psychology of man in all ages and places has been similar. They have been given unlimited power and this has made them blind to the pains of their women and deaf to the call of their wounded hearts."<sup>6</sup>

Liberal individualism becomes feminist individualism when the novel addresses issues specific to Indian women, the chief one being the practice of 'Sati', of the Hindu widows, which emerges as a symbol of the oppression of Indian women in general. In this novel the illustration of 'sati' centers around Sonali's grandmother. It is only after her grandfather dies that Sonali is able to know about the life and death of her grandmother while she is sorting out her papers. She finds two horrifying accounts of 'Sati' which she had retrieved from her father's files. In the first account (1823), there is a description of a woman who is ready to throw herself on her husband's funeral pyre, but finding the pain unbearable, she manages to drag herself out and fall unconscious at the feet of the local magistrate. However, when she regains consciousness, she again decides to die with her husband:, "... so far from yielding to the magistrate's entreaties, the widow exclaimed vehemently against his interference, insisted on being allowed to go back into the fire and breaking from his hold attempted to regain her position . . . . (p. 125)" and she finally succumbs to death.



The above mentioned incidents are more or less similar but, at the same time, different as well for they prefigure the death of Sonali's great grandmother. We are given two contradictory explanations when she dies on her husband's funeral pyre, the first one being that she was forced by her relatives to do so in order to carry, out the tradition of the high-class family, and the second, that she died on her own free will with the assurance that her son would not be cheated of his parental inheritance, as Teresa Hubel has aptly commented:, "The difference her is important, for the first scenario presents her only as a victim of both Hindu tradition and her relatives' cruelty, while the second represents her as victimized and limited in her choices but courageously manipulating tradition to protect her son."<sup>7</sup>

Her son, Sonali's grandfather believes only the first possibility that she was murdered and confirms his already-expressed liberal views of Hindu wifhood:, "... all wives are good because they have little choice .... The Hindu wife is a Hindu wife and can be nothing else. And it is not until we can take the goodness of women less far granted that we shall born to value it. (p. 129)"

When later on in the novel Sonali reiterates her grandfather's reasoning, refuting the explanation of her great grandmother's relatives that she had scarified herself, which 'even a goat has too much to do' (p. 222) not only is the repudiating the agency of the second Sati, who insisted on jumping back in the fire, she is also adopting a feminist individualism which is not very different from her

grandfather's patriarchal individualism. As Teresa has aptly remarked:, "Although feminist in that it is concerned for women and dedicated to expanding their choices in life, it is also individualist in its assumption that it can know the truth. The universalization: 'even a goat has too much sense' to commit Sati."<sup>8</sup>

It is clear that Sonali, who was a successful career-woman of the 1970's would never have contemplated Sati. In this connection Teresa further says:, "But by presuming that no other women would have become Sati except though coercion, she is carrying her own personal rationale to measure and Judge the rational of female others, whose differences from her she is not in a position to know separated as she is from them by decades of history and having access to their stories only through the mouths of male observes."<sup>9</sup>

No doubt Ram in *Rich Like Us* is a representative of men who are educated and well-travelled. But, like them, he also is the very epitome of possessiveness. He believes in having his cake and eating it too. He is not only married to Mona but also the father of her son, Dev, yet he marries Rose. His marriage with Rose is, no doubt, the result of his attraction for female flesh and male possessiveness. It becomes clear at that very moment when she refuses to give him her body, he tells her icily, "... there's no reason for us to meet again". (p. 81).

Through the character of Ram in *Rich Like Us* Sahgal once again shows the characteristics of men's male possessiveness. Ram always dominates over Rose and does not treat her as an individual.

Everything turns opposite as to what /rose had thought while deserting her family and country with him. It is only when he fails in her attempt to use her that he learns to respect her as a individual for a while. He marries Rose without bothering about Mona's reaction and treats women as if they are part of his possessions and he is free to add as many members to it as he likes. Just as he had deserted Mona before marrying Rose he had behaved in the same way with deserting Rose for Marcella. He tells her in plain words that:, "He needs to think about his life and get himself together. It would be a separation and not a divorce, and she would have everything she wanted. He had to be by himself. (p. 22)"

Ram shares nothing with Rose after coming to India.. Here,she is left alone whole day and night, sometimes with Ram by her side and sometimes alone on her bed. He never feels the need to take care of her emotional requirements, He needs her only to organize parties for him and in bed, but the entry of Marcella in his life ends this last need also, and then Ramdiscards Rose like a burden. For Ramit is a convenient arrangement, asZaffer comments, "You have path to heaven all paved, for you . . . witha cocktail party upstairs and a prayer meeting downstairs." (p. 77).

Inthis novel there are more than one victim of this rotten system. Rose, Mona, Sonali and Sonali's great-grand-mother, all are the victim of this obnoxious system. Rose, though she is a foreigner, is as much a victim of this system as Mona, her Indian counterpart. In this novel Sahgal shows that the crumbling burden of society and custom crushes the personality of all women. Rose

who was quite independent and unaware of this kind of burden, is forced to compromise at every step with Ram. She, like a devoted docile wife, keeps dancing to Ram's tune only to prove that her choice was not wrong.

This male dominated world is too strong for women who are weak but still Sahgalfavours a women like Sonali. Sonali has to pay the price of being a strong woman at the cost of her resignation . In this word where male-chauvinism still persist, it is not only Sonali who is crushed by men but by her great grand mother also, when she was burnt to death need to her husband's pyre, a couple of days after his death, Though there are three generations gap between Sonali and her great grand mother yet there is not much difference in the plight of her grand motherand herself. ■

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## Chai Garam

Mohan Patnaik

Chai garam, Chai garam, Coffee, Coffee,  
 Thanda Thanda, Cool Cool, Time pass  
 Are voices seldom one misses in India  
 On a journey by train  
 These voices have an inimitable style  
 Never break and never cease  
 They go with us and go beyond us  
 The train when runs over hills and vales  
 In the silence of the midnight hours  
 These voices in our drowsy state sound  
 Like a Grasshopper's breaking the stillness  
 To a poet lost in thought by the fireside

Do we ever care to know  
 Who these voices are?  
 And where from they come?  
 When an accident occurred  
 or a few wagons derailed  
 We ring up to the Helpline to know  
 How safe are our kith and kin.  
 But do we ever ask how are the Voices?  
 Are they safe or silenced?  
 No, they are mere voices impersonal  
 Like used water bottles

Next day when we board a train  
 We hear once again the voice  
 Calling Chai Garam .....  
 The Train thunders and moves on  
 We feel satisfied with the voices  
 Little we do bother about  
 Their life images ■

My search for you is endless in  
 circuitous time-  
 draped in the jasmine body of youth  
 my enchanted spirit moves  
 in forests of half-conscious thoughts  
 thro' the vale of foggy days and nights  
 covered with flowers,  
 as the wild feet tread thro' pathless woods  
 with streaming petals and leaves,  
 nodding boughs in the breeze  
 where I love to lose the self under shower  
 of honeyed dew from mists of illusion,  
 love to chase mirages of water  
 on hot beds of sands  
 that would carry me into the fold  
 of sweet oblivion  
 inundating the jaded soul to merge into  
 the magic of an eternal flow,  
 in an ever widening hope  
 to regain the lost charm and glow.  
 Is it all in vain  
 when bubbles of a green faith  
 boom into balloons of uncertainty  
 before bursting to merge into grey clouds,  
 thunders of solid threat rip the body  
 and mind  
 promising a release  
 from this unwanted bind !  
 Am I still waiting for some old waves  
 to retire  
 to the edge of the windy shore  
 of a lonely sea  
 where a barge left me long back  
 with a promise to return with old glee  
 and to the blue space behind the sky  
 lovingly carry me ! ■

# The World with an Open Heart

**Rinzin Rinzin**

I stand on the balcony of my house  
And stare into the dark night sky  
I see only a few dull stars blinking  
And a lazy crescent moon sleeping

I listen intently  
A pack of stray dogs are howling  
As if trying hard to superimpose  
The noise of the nearby river in haste

I close my eyes and open my heart  
I peep deep into the dark night again  
I see a million twinkling stars dancing  
And a bright full moon happily smiling

I hear dogs singing beautiful songs  
Like the cuckoos in spring do  
I hear the river calmly slithering  
Through a valley of multitude flowers  
in full bloom

My heart overflows with boundless joy  
And I smile at the wisdom grand  
Of looking at the world so wide  
With one's truly pure and open heart ■

## Making of Culture

**Tejaswini Deepak Patil**

Blooming like a lotus,  
She spread her fragrance  
On the waves of winds.  
They gathered around.  
Some tried to grasp her hand.

Some preferred to gaze stand  
A tenacious hand she favoured.  
And the crowd did them leave  
To live a happy morn and eve.  
He wandered and hunted for her  
And she sowed the grains  
In the soil, till his return.  
The caves turned into walls  
Keeping her inside, locked.  
And the men in jungles flocked.  
She withered beneath the burden.  
She had her wings and her toes  
Those wanted air and the roads.  
Her secrets remained untold.  
But she carved them on the stones  
And arranged the cow-dung in cones.  
She painted the walls with flowers  
And moulded the beads in riddles.  
None can now them in meddle.  
Yes, that's we call the culture. ■

## The Schizophrenic Mind

**Sarita Sharma**

The lone man reading and rereading  
the days old newspapers  
Plastered against the straight chair  
In the verandah, is so similar  
To my father, your father.  
The patient in those rheumy eyes  
is disconcerting, frightening.  
What is it that the old look for  
in the newspapers?  
The times that they have left behind!  
The times that have left them behind!!!  
It could also be a ploy  
To hide unfulfilled desires  
unspoken aspirations  
In the dank and dark of the words.

Could it also be a charade of usefulness  
 Of gainability,  
 A réaffirmation of all things  
 Being in control, their control.  
 When grey and tired  
 I too shall mourn the passing away  
 of a beautiful life  
 Which I was too tied up in not living  
 Which I wasted in ugly bickerings  
 And frustrations and despairs  
 Which were never really my own  
 But of the myriad masks that I had put on.  
 I too shall grieve the end of time  
 And look for lost happiness  
 Assurances  
 Under the shield of the days old  
 Week old  
 Stale words  
 Of insensitive betrayals and brutal ideas.  
 I turn back from the lone man  
 On the verandah  
 I turn my back on his life  
 And its nuances.  
 I have my own stories to make  
 Of my own failures and heartaches  
 Of some smiles soaked  
 in those grainy cheeks.  
 I move away from the man  
 with the days old newspaper  
 Towards a life  
 Which is hurtling me  
 Towards a nook completely of my own  
 A nook replenished with  
 Dead stories and  
 Past dramas. ■

## A Stranger

Original in Odia: **Basudev Sunani**

Translation : Gobinda Sahoo

Who can it be  
 This stranger  
 In such late night!  
 Locked up with all care  
 Is the closed door clanging,  
 Isn't it a pilferer?  
 OK, may it be  
 What else is there  
 Kept outside,  
 All blue egos  
 In foamed soap cleansed  
 Beneath the chest  
 Rainfall measuring dream  
 In multi-coloured ploughshare  
 Is but in the garbage dump  
 And the entire miserly purity  
 In the pupils  
 Of both the eyes,  
 Which are but kept  
 In a clothesline-  
 A waist-less  
 Ruffled dirty shame.  
 Stored in the almirah are  
 Some words organized  
 To tussle with the wife  
 And some polished complaints  
 Dipped in incense smoke  
 Near the God's idol.  
 Alright  
 Is it this much  
 For which plentiful of fright,  
 Then, who the stranger  
 Might be in such late night!  
 If not being a pilferer  
 Is the God? ■



## Peace

Namita Laxmi Jagaddeb

Where the mountains revel in wilderness  
of the blue, the feathery clouds loitering  
around;  
where the ocean frolics with doons and  
castles of sand built by tiny hands;  
where the meadows aflower  
in unending beautitude;  
there, I long to dwell in a heaven of peace,  
far from this melee of madding millions;  
their violent ways of killing and being  
killed  
that left me bruised, battered, disoriented  
all along the losing battle I fought  
only to give peace a chance.  
Now I hear the call of the mountains,  
the ocean, the meadows, again and again,  
which burst out my spirit's sleep  
and I wake up to recover my forfeited  
path,  
my name, my moorings and survive  
a morning of hope, the hibiscus Sun  
promises  
to unfold in petals of peace and love  
in myriad patterns. ■

These faces would be with me  
Wearing multifarious masks.  
I know it pretty well  
I have to discover  
Amidst the throng  
A sort of mask wearing  
A pair of bluish fountain eyes  
Whose single side glances  
And a little firmness of lips  
Would hypnotize  
All kinds of probabilities.  
I was pretty fatigued  
Searching in the dim glance of dawn:  
But couldn't find the mask  
Where the time disappears  
In a hurry,  
Amidst the thronged human.  
The mask changes  
Along with the changeable time  
One pretence supersedes another  
Some could recognize.  
While other acquainted faces  
Evade away as strangers.  
I ponder  
If I would unmask myself  
Could I recognize me?  
With how many mirrors  
May be there along the wall !! ■

## The Mask

Original in Odia - **Rajesh Kumar Mund**  
Translation by : Jogendra Panigrahi

It's of no use  
Interrogating a mask  
In the faded beams of dark.  
Many acquainted faces  
Swarm round me;  
It appears as if  
In every facet of life –

## Cremation Ground

Original in Odia : **Senapati Pradyumna Keshari**  
Translation : Bhagaban Jayasingh

Why fear the burial ground?  
It's safer than home, cozier than bed  
Warmer than mother's *Saree's* edge  
Deeper than the river's hot caress.  
What's the sun? What's the rain?  
Or autumn's dew-laden cool silence?

It always murmurs a mellifluous tune.  
 While playing fire and ash  
 the rain bugs of sweet separation  
 crawl on the field of his eyes  
 her furtive glances hiding  
 the lazy and unforgettable coos  
 of a heart fraught with honey.  
 As the house that looks pretty  
 Embellished with love and devotion  
 The cremation ground looks unique  
 Adorned with dialogues  
 of solitude and silence.  
 Like a newly married young woman  
 When her husband goes abroad  
 The cremation ground  
 Feels the pinch of bereavement  
 through the rising curls of smoke.  
 The cremation ground, a place  
 that reverberates with  
 an unbroken chain of events  
 like a temple it never closes its door,  
 but remains busy in mehfils.  
 The cremation ground is a friend  
 whom everybody loves to meet  
 its familiarity no one ever detests  
 maybe it never bursts into tears  
 yet, its unshed tears are  
 more tender than a flower. ■

## Dates Change

Original in Odia : **Baikunthanath Sahoo**

Translation : Raghunath Padhi Sharma

(I)

Few days back written  
 in a poem,  
 I won't remember my date of birth  
 Whatever mother says  
 that becomes my birth history.

Born on this earth,  
 under my mother's love-sari end,  
 Passed my childhood days.  
 Mother plucked the star-flowers  
 from the sky  
 Pushes in my hand  
 all green wealth of earth  
 This region's songs, stories, plays,  
 picture draws in my mind  
 This home's, pleasure and pain,  
 smiles and tears tell stories of prosperity,  
 Writes in my heart,  
 Messages of victory and defeat  
 Nourishes me rivers and rivulets,  
 crop fields and ponds, hills and jungles  
 Ports, royal palaces, forts,  
 trenches in the kingdoms  
 Where childhood days, youth  
 And old age hand-in-hand  
 History of times continued  
 to write this me.

(II)

Remember the presumption of a blue print  
 of the future  
 Remember the village, home,  
 long stretched paddy fields, rows of mustard,  
 Alasi flowers.  
 Remember morning prayer songs,  
 face of legendary *Ta'poi*  
 Maid's prayers and offerings  
 to village Goddess  
 Days flows on, the stories remain,  
 and date after date brings madness  
 One day suddenly meets with an architecture  
 That architecture inaugurates  
 a limitless travelling path  
 That architecture lays the foundation  
 of a golden era,  
 He builds the nest of one affectionate  
 and real living.

(III)

Saptasajya, Ansupa, Chilika, Nabarangpur  
and at the end Olatapatnapur,  
Some places most beautiful lustre in others  
strange secret indications for the first time,  
Some where illusion of tinkling anklets,  
in others true action of a real drama,  
Some where sorrowful wrath life destroyed  
and merged with earth  
Some where some wasp imprisoned  
in the lotus  
in search of for its life's fragrance,  
Some where ancient texts,  
Vedas, Upanishad's  
Persons, look like Gods,  
Some where on college square  
inhuman people flooding the tears.

(IV)

River, sky, sea, garland of clouds,  
wonder lightening  
How much distance one proceed  
by holding their hands?  
They keep with them  
half-finished life history,  
With them pleasure river's chorus  
With them beauty-eyed women's  
unclosed eyes  
With them vast gold coins,  
Seven seas, fourteen worlds,  
Unspeakable illusion  
And world's rare wealth  
But where in day and night's travelling  
Holy direction for tomorrow's travelling?

(V)

Some days, leaving this village, town, region  
Goes away wife, children, dear ones  
Leave far away  
Darkness in front, tender darkness,  
distressful darkness, divine darkness,  
In pure darkness there is no light at all,  
In this sorrowful kingdom not a single

smiling person is found,  
In the rotation of days and nights,  
there hides a desire for money,  
shadow of destruction  
Who become a wealthy,  
Breaking well-wishes of ancient stones!  
Time passes out, dates being changed  
And me not able to touch  
the eternal time at all, contented.

(VI)

Don't give identity,  
in the other side of seven-mile deep waters  
standing sky creeper buildings  
Created you by Calcutta's timer smuggler,  
Created you by some proud,  
Overwhelmed district collector,  
You are created by human-demons  
Remained alive after 'Ninth-year' draught  
You are created by those laid-down  
their lives untimely,  
Of Bajiraut's families  
By introducing one-self night  
exhausts morning appears,  
Days roll on over the time's long canvas  
And me, one pathetic beauty-spread land's  
Seeing only wet-tender form.

(VII)

Here also Balimela, Motu, Poteru,  
Kolab bank's people contracted smile?  
Who is this heavenly fairy on Bonda hills?  
Here Kashipur Palace queen's  
daylight-unseen,  
Honest worldly activities?  
Here Similipal God's abode,  
Where heavenly Gods descend  
At the mid-night?  
Here Minajhula's silent,  
beautiful dances emerged  
Here Mahanadi floods created  
sudden drama of destruction?

Here Kanyakumari's horizon mixes  
With Puri's sea shore

(VIII)

Like this the dates go on changing  
Like this the seven colours become dull,  
Discussed monarchism's pride becomes dull  
Time's merchant dips in despair in the water  
I return from the pages of history,  
I return from childhood, youth, old age,  
I return from wealthy developed region,  
I return from Malkangiri,  
Leaving affectionate *Sari*-end,  
I return from *Manibhadra* project  
leaving fear...  
In one hand my insulting bad days,  
On the other dream –  
Glittering, arrogant happy days. ■

## Happiness Harvester

S. Esther Juliet Sujatha

Dawn or dusk  
pelting drops from the sky  
Tickle the heart,  
Footling drops glide on the face,  
Streaming showers  
slide on the land's surface ,  
Pouring water lashes  
overgrown weeds  
While the Earth turns  
An embryo of everything.  
In all dimension gay strikes  
with boundless bundles ,  
Beyond all, to this fickle minded girl  
Rain without thunderous sounds  
is the best under the sun,  
At such sacred moment  
thou 'r the globe's  
eternal Happiness harvester ■

## My Date with the Spring

Jayashree Roy

My dear,  
Just received your message,  
Or the unwritten letter,  
Which I don't have time to go through.  
You tell me of the changes in the nature,  
Biological, environmental and what not.  
Or the effect of the tussle  
Between the El Nino and La Nina.  
But I can only see the riots of colours,  
In the busy streets  
Of the Metropolis,  
Countless bougainvillaeas or pansy.  
Tragedy is, we now speak and think  
Only through the sms,fb and tweets,  
We are trapped in the spectrum.  
My body wants to respond  
to all the immortal ragas,  
Bhairabi, Mian ki tori or Iman Kalyan.  
My dear spring,  
Your message sounds  
As sweet as clattering of the birds. ■

## Moonlit Night

Original in Odia - Brundaban Das

Translation : Alok Kumar Ray

Meanwhile many years have elapsed  
i have not seen moonlit night  
that night which was intimate friend  
of my childhood dreams  
love of my turbulent youth  
and ecstatic years of my adolescence...  
sometimes I listen to  
jingling music of that illusory night  
many a times engrossed with moon's

luscious lips  
 and it's charmed intoxicating effect  
 having a drenched mind  
 why I am now so impatient....  
 queer nymphs of exceeding beauty  
 descend from the heaven  
 under the shadowy silvery moon  
 trees welcome them by rustling their  
 leaves and boughs  
 stars feeling ashamed  
 hide their faces under the clouds  
 my desolation existence and non existence  
 in broad day light of sick-  
 hurry and weariness  
 anticipating brighter days arrival  
 having been lost in oblivion and dilemma...  
 now nowhere is either moon or darkness  
 under the blanket of artificial moon  
 from morning to evening- night incessant  
 running, days and nights are alike  
 no time left to quest self, no respite at all  
 to search after moon  
 in the expansive sky...  
 who will bring back those days  
 my lost moonlit night  
 my existence wrapped  
 in lovely consciousness  
 like the moon peeping from the azure sky  
 my entire existence is being excited  
 on the very touch of silvan moonlight... ■

## Limitless Layers of thy Love Mist

Neetu Sharma

I started this walk, years ago  
 And met many mad moods  
 Of queer kinds with messy minds  
 I didn't get down spirited  
 Rather my eyes remained young

Willingly wild on this hunt  
 Years walked by pacing too fast  
 Now I've paused not to recall  
 bygone paths  
 But to realize meticulously and actually  
 How relishing is this Pause!  
 No taste ever matched it  
 Nor any sight –more catchy-stands near it  
 My heart is on a joy halt  
 Now this halt, riding my mind mindfully  
 Clearly I visualize – an arrested mind  
 Not at all minding heart's delicious doing  
 Committed and caught my mind yields  
 Deliberately to soft spell of sugary mist  
 Flesh and bone together enveloped  
 In this misty spell,  
 reigning my complete self  
 Submitted I too stand silent, waiting  
 Only to be swayed and swayed  
 My halt got converted cleverly  
 Into self-drawn seduction spree  
 Wonderful world wooing wildly  
 Dragging delicately this docile Dove  
 Into the deep den of dreams  
 Showering sharp showcase of shine  
 To make a newly found world  
 Where passionate powers are poured  
 To update tender tempers toy fully  
 Where walls of warmth welcome and  
 Befriend at their best  
 with a beautiful backdrop  
 Fountains of frolic feelings flow fast  
 To melt your total self into  
 A mesmerizing maze of magic  
 Had I ever decorated my eyes  
 With divine dream like this  
 Or destiny went deliciously kind  
 To register this mysterious moment  
 To my life's account that too so ordinary?  
 Now mindful and meaningful task  
 time is ahead

I am to go further and farther  
 in this dreamy den  
 Forgetting each open end, closing  
 candidly clear clues  
 I am to grow young and old here only  
 Stepping forward is catching more  
 contentment  
 Let nothing encounter my skin and site  
 That can crush this beauty bestowed  
 Remind me not of rest  
 Rather unrest my brain and intellect  
 To tread tireless on this thick misty route  
 With every move, I wish to squander  
 Breathings belittle and preciously  
 possessed expressions  
 Under the cover of exquisitely  
 enlightening mist. ■

## The Cheapest Toys !

**Gobinda Biswas**

O God, how more cruel miles will we go?  
 We are not human beings, we are females,  
 Thousands of years harrowed  
 over our bodies  
 Till today we're slaves,  
 They're our guardian angels.  
 Though we are made of flesh and blood  
 We are the woman race, neglected forever,  
 You, the males always mark us as lifeless  
 For this from childhood  
 We shiver in fear.  
 You play with actual toys in your childhood  
 The toys are made of wood, cotton or clay,  
 When you grow old, your fashion changes  
 Like a lunatic you want the female toys  
 To play.  
 Everywhere in the world  
 Developed or not  
 We are the cheapest toys,

so we're futile,  
 Sometimes so burden that  
 you get free of cost  
 Always you play with us, even if we are frail.  
 For nothing you break our hands and legs  
 You crush the heart, cruelly smash the body,  
 We are thrown away in the dumps as rubbish  
 Alas! We are toys;  
 We have no dignity, no entity. ■

## Life beyond Life

**Somya Nanda**

Life beyond life  
 Engrossing the thought everytime  
 May be an illusion  
 May be a phantom  
 Through the golden light  
 Someone is Beguiling  
 Tempting towards a new horizon  
 Heart is experiencing  
 A new emotion  
 Feeling ecstatic....  
 Life beyond life  
 fascinating and intriguing  
 Emotions are instigating  
 Someone is attracting  
 Curiosity has left me drunken  
 To explore the very moment...  
 Feeling ecstatic...  
 Life beyond life  
 May be a jerk  
 Feelings of the roller coaster  
 Sensing a titillation  
 Sometimes down sometimes up  
 Outcomes give me goosebumps  
 To explore the very moment  
 Feeling ecstatic...  
 Life beyond life  
 Eyes need to visualize



Its not just a horizon  
Neither a beginning  
Nor culmination  
Its just a realisation  
Its neither reincarnation  
Nor transformation  
Something beyond my expectations  
To explore the very moment  
Feeling ecstatic... ■

## The Wooden Toy

Original in Odia : **Narmada Nilotpala**

Translation : Bhagaban Jayasingh

Every time I express my desire  
to move a step forward  
A huge tiger stands in my way  
and prevents me  
from moving ahead.  
My green forest gets scared  
All richly embellished dreams  
stand naked  
The life of tuberose loses its fragrance.  
It's because I didn't know  
how to swim  
I had the fear of getting lost  
in the river's bottomless depth.  
After I learnt swimming  
there is not a pail of water  
in the flooded river.  
The transient joy  
that spreads across miles  
swallows up  
bundless of innocent river's flesh.  
Therefore  
we cannot see the moon's  
sparkling face  
on the body of the river.  
Just now I have come back  
from a grand war

after a dialogue about the river  
The colour of the fresh blood  
has not faded yet from the heart  
the mind had not forgotten  
the bitterness of experience  
the sting of excruciating pain.  
If at all I could have woken up  
from sleep at night  
I could have certainly known  
how the waves surged  
across the river.  
Then the river would have never  
swept away the wooden toys  
of my childhood  
in its maddening stream. ■

## Friend's Departure

**Sahaj Sabharwal**

Time has come now,  
For an ending, wow.  
Your friendship will be no more,  
Your absence will make things bore.  
Gossips with feiends,  
Learning new trends.  
Talks with us, you did,  
Forever, you are alive  
in our mind.  
It's time to say you goodbye,  
Hope you neither weep nor cry.  
The time we spent together,  
In pleasant and harsh weather.  
I remember those days,  
Enjoyable past with your's craze.  
Hope would fill our friendship's gap,  
In the presence of the wonder whatsapp.  
In our presence no one notices  
how we spent this year,  
Wish you prosperous, happy journey  
My dear. ■

## Contributors of this issue

Dr. Basudeb Chakraborti, Prof of English (Retd.) Kalyani University, W.B.

Dr. Uttam B. Parekar, Dept. of English, Yeshwant Mahavidyalaya, Wardha, Maharastra.

G. Sulochana, Research Scholar, Karpagam Academy of Higher Education, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu.

Dr. S. Selvalakshmi, Asst. Prof & Head I/C, Dept of English, Karpagam Academy of Higher Education, Coimbatore, Tamilnadu,

Bismitamanjari Biswal, Research Scholar, Lives in Saheednagar, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, email.bismitamanjari@gmail.com.

S.Gopi, Research Scholar, Dept of English, Govt. Arts College, Salem, Tamil Nadu

Dr. J.Jayakumar, Asst. Professor Dept of English, Govt. Arts College, Salem, Tamil Nadu.

Vedha Saradha, Research Scholar, Dept. of English, Salem Sowdeswari College, Salem, Tamil Nadu.

Dr. R. Jothipaul, Associate Professor of English, Salem Sowdeswari College, Salem, Tamil Nadu.

S. Suganya, Research Scholar, Dept. of English, Salem Sowdeswari College, Salem, Tamil Nadu.

P. Nithiyakalyani, Asst. Professor of English, Govt. Arts College, Salem, Tamil Nadu.

Dr. K. Jayapal, Associate Professor (Retd.), Dept. of English, Govt. Arts College, Salem, Tamil Nadu.

V. Jothimani, Asst. Prof. of English, A.P.A. College for Women, Palani, Dindukkal, Tamil Nadu.

K. Gomathi, Asst. Prof. of English, Govt. Arts College, Salem, Tamil Nadu.

Karunakara B., Research Scholar. Add-Hosanagara, Shivamogga, Karnataka, email.karunkaraxx@gmail.com.

Jachindra Kumar Rout, Associate Prof. of English, B.B. College, Chandikhole, Dist. Jajpur, Odisha.

R. Shanthi, Research Scholar, Dept of English, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu.

Dr. T. Chandrasekharan, HoD (English), Zunheboto Govt. College, Nagaland.

Dr. Susanta Kumar Sahu, Dept. of English, Narayani Science College, Dist. Ganjam, Odisha.

M. Suganthiya, Research Scholar, Dept. of English, Annamalai University, Chidambaram, Tamil Nadu.

T. Ezhilarasi, Research Scholar, Dept. of English, Govt. Arts College, Salem, Tamil Nadu.

C. Krishnamoorthy, Research Scholar, Dept. of English, Periyar University (extn. centre), Dharmapuri, Tamil Nadu.

Dr. P. Kiruthika, Asst. Prof. of English, Periyar University (extn. centre), Dharmapuri, Tamil Nadu.

R. Gopiram, Research Scholar, Dept. of English, Govt. Arts College, Salem, Tamil Nadu.

Sheela Ramagiri, Research Scholar,  
Kuvempu University, Shankaraghatta,  
Shimoga, Karnataka.

Dr. Rama Chandra Yadav, Dept. of English,  
Dr. K.P. JIC, Allahabad Prayagraj, U.P.

Dr. Sarita Sharma, Poet & translator, Lives  
in Tezpur, Assam.

Gobinda Biswas, Poet. Lives at Hatishala  
Village in Nadia Dist., W.B.

Soumya Nanda, Poet.  
email.soumyananda@yahoo.co.in

Dr. Mohan Patnaik, Poet.  
email.mohanpatnaik1947@gmail.com

Dr. Basudev Sunani, Poet. Lives in New  
Delhi.

Dr. Namita Laxmi Jagaddeb, Dept. of  
English, Mahima Degree College, Dist.  
Jharsuguda, Odisha.

Rajesh Kumar Mund, Poet. Lives in  
Dharmagarh, Dist. Kalahandi, Odisha.

Jayashri Roy, Poet. Lives in Kolkata, WB.

Sahaj Sabharwal, Poet. Lives in Jammu,  
J&K.

Narmada Nilotpala, Poet. Lives in Cuttack,  
Odisha.

Dr. Saroj Padhi, Associate Prof. in English,  
S.B. Women's College, Cuttack, Odisha.

Brundaban Das, Poet. Dept. of Political  
Science, Derabish College, Dist.  
Kandrapara, Odisha,

Neetu Sharma, Poet. Lives in Jalandhar,  
Punjab.

Dr. Tejaswini Patil Dange, Asst. Prof. in  
English, K.R.P. Kanya Mahavidyalaya,  
Islampur, Maharastra.

Dr. Rinzin Rinzin, Poet & Scholar. Lives in  
Thimphu, Bhutan.

Mr. Baikunthanatha Sahoo, Poet & Editor,  
Plot No.1440, Acharya Vihar, Bhubaneswar,  
Odisha.

Dr. Senapati Pradyumna Keshari, Associate  
Prof. of Odia, Salipur College, Dist. Cuttack,  
Odisha.

S. Esther Juliet Sujatha, Dept. of English,  
Sri Sarada College for Women, Salem, Tamil  
Nadu.

S. Poongothai, Poet. Lives in Madurai,  
Tamil Nadu.

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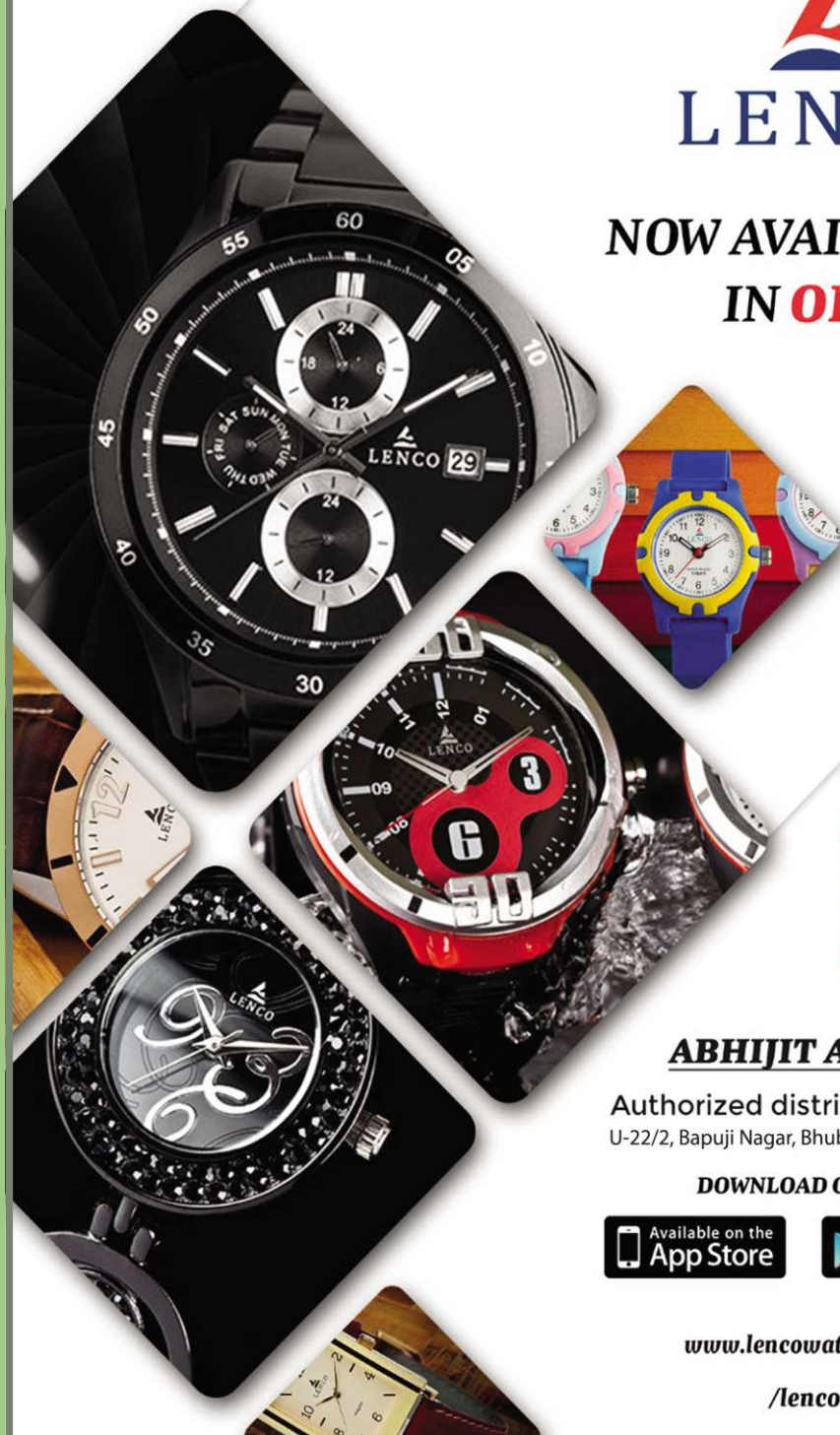
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## **Peer-reviewed Journals are at par with UGC Approved Journals**

In a bid to make it easier for university and college teachers to earn points to enhance their research score for recruitment and promotion, the University Grants Commission has decided to treat all peer-reviewed journals at par with its own list of approved journals.

The recently-notified UGC minimum qualifications regulations make the point amply clear. The methodology for calculating academic/research score offers points for "research papers in peer reviewed or UGC listed journals". For each paper in languages, humanities, arts, social sciences, library, education, physical education, commerce, management and other related disciplines, teacher will earn 10 points.

The regulations say: "Assessment must be based on evidence produced by the teacher such as copy of publications..." This step has been taken to make recruitment and career growth easier for college and university teachers.