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Editor Speaks.....

Literature must give voice to the
dialogues that take place in the dark recesses
of human psyche and Jon Fosse, the
Norwegian creative artist : dramatist,
novelist, poet and prose writer has given
voice to the unsayable in his innovative
plays. Fosse won the Nobel Prize in
Literature for 2023. He is regarded as an
innovator for his ability to evoke man's loss
of orientation and how this paradoxically
can provide access to a deeper experience
close to divinity. His plays probe anxieties,
jealousies and inner reckonings, with slowly
unfolding plots that magnify tension. His
work is spare and existential, often focusing
on the interior lives of rather solitary
characters. In his debut play, '*Someone Is
Going to Come*' he exposes human anxiety
and ambivalence at its core. Fosse is one of
the most widely performed playwrights in
the world.

With *Red, Black*, a novel in 1983 he
started his creative journey. He has since then
written many works of prose and poetry. One
of his most remarkable works is *Septology*,
a seven-part work of fiction spanning
hundreds of pages without sentence
breaks. In whatever genre he writes in,
Fosse's language is poetic and existential,
rhythmic and lyrical.

Let us bid farewell to the eventful
2023 and welcome 2024 with a vow to foster
the spirit of fraternity in the globe and listen
to the language of the heart only then can
we feel the bliss of paradise on the earth. ■

- Editor

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Recasting the Grand Narrative: The Case of Gangadhar Meher's *Indumati*

Anand Mahanand

The historical development of literature in Indian languages informs us that the early writings were predominantly religious in nature. The Puranas and other sacred texts were followed by many translations and commentaries. The grand epics the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* also have many versions and commentaries on them. If we look at these versions they were not the literary translations of the original texts but re-renderings of the source texts. For instance, we find that the Sarala's *Mahabharata* in Odia is based on Vyasa's *Mahabharata* but it is not the literal translation of Vyasa's *Mahabharata* but a modified version of the same. Perhaps this is why "anuvada" in Indian context means the discussion that follows. According to some scholars the word translation is an alien term. Indians did not translate. Their texts only had different versions. Sarala Das who was a poet himself modified his *Mahabharata* to suit it to the common readers. Like that we have Balaram Das's *Ramayana* which is not the literal translation of Valmiki's *Ramayana* but re-rendering of the original written in an indigenous vernacular language. This kind of re-rendering is also known as "chhayānuvad." In this context we can say that, freedom here gets preference over fidelity in our Indian literary traditions. Then we have recasting of the *Ramayana* and its parts in different kavyas. For instance, Kalidasa's *Raghuvansam* represents few cantos of the *Ramayana*. Texts like *Raghuvansam* and their parts have been recasted in Indian languages. Gangadhar Meher's *Indumati* and *Tapswani* are two texts in Odia that have been re-rendered from some episodes of Sanskrit *Raghuvansam*. In this paper I would like to study the historical and cultural contexts in which these texts were produced and discuss the devices used by the poet in localizing the texts to make his *kavya* accessible to the ordinary readers in an indigenous context. And since the poet himself has done the transcreations, I would like to explore the difference the translated text has.

Keywords: Grand narrative, transcreation, commentaries, indigenous, localization

Introduction

Gangadhar Meher was substantially influenced by Radhanath Ray, the Odia poet who had been considered as the harbinger of modern Odia literature. Their exchange of

letters shows this evidence¹. While appreciating Gangadhar's poems, Radhanath did advise him on the use of a particular metre. Radhanath Ray who began writing poetry in Bengali first and switched over to Odia later was influenced by Bengali and English poetry. In the last part of 19th century poets like Toru Dutt, Manmohan Ghosh, Sri Aurobindo and Sarojini Naidu wrote poems in English by using Indian literary materials from our epics and puranas. We find texts like *Sakuntala*, *Nala Damayanti*, *Savitri*, *Meghnath Kavya*, and so on written in English by these poets. These poets also translated, transcreated and rendered European texts in English and in Indian languages. We have texts like *Perseus the Deliverer* which had Greek origin and was rendered by Sri Aurobindo Ghose, Manmohan Ghose, and others. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar rightly comments on Manmohan Ghose that "Like his brother who wrote a five act play *Persesus the Deliverer*; Manmohan too was attracted by the Greek myth of Persueus but started on an ambitious blank verse epic on the subject, completing the first six Books and leaving behind fragments of the rest"(86). Apart from *Perseus*, he also attempted other epics such as Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Based on *Paradise Lost* he attempted *Adam Alalarmed in Paradise*. The Odia poet Radhanath Ray also rendered many Greek stories and reproduced them in Odia. His "Usha" and "Kedar Gauri" are based on Greek myths. As Mayadhar Mansingha opines "Usha is the story of Atlanta and the three golden apples, and the romantically pathetic Kedar Gauri is that of Pyramus and Thisbe both naturally and marginally and artistically merged into Orissan society and landscape as to look as though had actually happened here originally"(175). Mansingh also points out that "places by now become celebrated in Orissa because Radhanatha made them the locales of his romances" (175). Subhakanta Behera too identifies the romantic nature of Radhanath's poetry. He states in an article, "An important dimension of Radhanath's kavyas is his treatment of the man-woman relation, in its most important, but basic form, i. e, love between two opposite sexes. The five kavyas that we will be examining here, are essentially based on this aspect of human relations although in some cases, Radhanath makes it abnormal or what some would call perverted sexuality"(1902). Gangadhar Meher was different from Radhanath in treatment of epic materials. He avoided oversensuality as his intention was to educate the common people and not a class of elite.

Gangadhar Meher, the Poet of the People

Gangadhar Meher was born on 9 August 1862 in a weaver- Bhulia family at Barapalli village in the undivided Sambalpur district of Odisha. He had his early education in his village. He studied upto class IV. He also attended some private classes by a teacher called Ghanshyam Mishra who taught him Raghuvamsha, Algebra and Geometry. Binod Chandra Naik in his monograph on Gangadhar Meher says "Mishra was also teaching *Sutrarm Sidhartha Chandrika* and books on Sanskrit grammar to Brahmin boys in the evening hours in his residence. Gangadhar attended those private classes. But he had to abandon his study when Mishra left Barapali on leave and never returned" (7). After that he made some efforts to continue his studies but could not succeed. Gangadhr Meher assisted his father in weaving for time. Then he got a job of an Amin under a Zaminadar in Barapali

on a salary of Rs. 7 per month. He worked under the Zamindar of Bijepur and the Maharaja of Padmapur. He was in touch with Radhananth Ray and exchanged letters on matters related to poetry. Radhanath appreciated Gangadhar's poetry and occasionally made suggestions on his writings.

Gangadhar Meher wrote his first poem "Rasa Ratnakara" and "Ahalya Staba" and published them in 1897. In 1903 he wrote 'Kichaka Badha" a kavya based on an episode from *Mahabharata*. He has written many poems for the common people to educate them on agriculture, morals, manners, relationships and so on. Gangadhar's *Indumati* is based on the theme from Raghuvansham from Cantos 5 to 8 where Aja, son of Raghu proceeds to attend the Swayamvara of Indumati, the princess of Vidarbha (14).

The storyline

As the story unfolds Indumati, the princess of Vidrbha is ready for her swayambara. Many princes from different kingdoms have come to win her hand in marriage. Indumati ignores all but chooses Aja, the prince of Ayodhya as her husband. Indumati is given a ceremonial farewell with goods and gifts by her father. As per the tradition, her brother Bhoja accompanies her to her in-law's place. Aja takes her to his kingdom. On the way Indumati and her husband, Aja are attacked by the princes who were rejected by Indumati in Swayambara. Aja fights against them and defeats them. Aja and Indumati come to Ayodhya. They are given a grand reception. Then they live a happy life and have a son called Dasaratha. One day Indumati and Aja are wandering in their garden. A garland falls from Muni Narada's Veena on her chest and she dies there. Aja is grief-stricken and weeps like an ordinary human being. Sage Vasista sends his disciple who comes and consoles him saying that Indumati was an apsara named Harinee who was cursed by Sage Trunabindu and born as Indumati. It was predicted that if she died by looking at a garland on earth she would become an apsara again. So she has gone back to her abode as an apsara. So Aja should not grieve on her death.

Criticism on Gangadhar's *Indumati*

There have been many scholars who have commented on Gangadhar meher and his writings and also on Indumati kavya. Sri Gobinda Chandra Udgata's book *Kavi Gangadhar Meher* is the earliest text of criticism on Gangadhar Meher. He points out that Indumati is not the literal translation of Kalidas. As he states "Indumati kalidasanka kavyara anubada. Kintu eha raghubansha ra panchama swarga ra 39 slokaru arambha kari asthama swarga shesha parjanta rahithiba 287 slokara aksharika anubada nuhe. (Udgata 31). Udgata says that the slokas used for Indumati are not the literal translation of Raghuvansham. Binod Chandra Naik who has written a monograph on Gangadhar Meher writes about "Indumati" that "it was an innovation unknown to medieval Odiya literature and brought the poet immediate recognition. Critics became vocal in accepting its architectural beauty. To some, the poet within the limitation of a short narrative poem exhibited extraordinary achievement unifying soronous style and dramatic quality" (Naik).

Raghunath Meher, an illustrious scholar on Gangadhar Meher makes a comparison between *Raghuvansham* and *Indumati*. According to him Kalidasa, describes the princes as gods sitting in Bimana but Gangadhar describes them as the rise of the stars in the lap of the night. He further says that Aja looks like the moon among the dimmed stars. As he state in his book *Kalidasa O Gangadhara: A Tulanatmaka Adhyayana*:

Gangadhar cuts short the swayambara scene particularly the gestures displayed by the princes who are present in the swayambara. According to him:

Raghuvansha re

Tesham mahaharsanasamsthithanamudaranepathyabhutam samadhye

Garaja dhamna Raghusunureba kalpadrumaniba parijatah (Canto 6 Sloka 6)

Indumati re

Purna kala kara samudita hele

Tarakula jatha mlana

Aja agamane nrupa manankara

Hrasa hela abhimana (line 16)

Meher (P. 31).

In *Raghuvansham*, Kalidasa has elaborately narrated the journey of Aja, his meeting with Priyambada and the former's receipt of the weapon from Priyambada. This is not there in Gangadhar Meher's *Indumati*.

Raghunath Meher also adds that Kalidasa has sensualized the scenes of swayambara. When the princes see Indumati at the swayamvara they are tempted by the unique beauty of the princess and demonstrate their desires by various physical movements and gestures. When Kalidasa describes these actions from sloka 13 to 19 (six stanzas), Gangadhar does not sensualize the scenes of swayamabara but gives a graceful description of her beauty and sums up the gestures of the princes in one stanza in a very decent way. It will be helpful if we take a look at the slokas of Kalidasa, that Gangadhar compresses or ignores in his *Indumati*.

Kaschitkarmyaupagudhanalamalolapatrabhimaha twadikeyam

Rajobhiratnah pari parisheshabandhvi lilarabindam bhramayachankara²

One, holding in his hands a beautiful lotus by its stalk, twirled it round and round so that its moving, petals struck the bees, and the pollen formed a circle inside it. (13)

Vistrastamamsadaparo vilasi ratnanubidhangakotilasyalagnam

Pralambhamuskrushya yathabakasham ninaya sachikruta charuvatram

His handsome face turned askant, another gallant, extricating his flower-wove garland caught

on the ends of his jeweled armlets as it slipped from his shoulder, now put it in its place. (14)

Akuschita grangulina tatoanyah kinchitswamarbajitanetrasobha

Tiyamgni samsapirnakhaprabhenaha padena haimah bililekha pitham

Still another, whose beautiful eyes had fallen side-long

Now traced lines on a golden foot-stool with his foot whose toes were curved at their ends, so that the gleam of their nails flashed obliquely. (15)

Nibesya bamam bhujamasanadhe tatsannibesadodhikonnatasah

Kaschitbisrutakabhnnaharah suhrutasmabhanatatporabhut

Another (prince) seemed to hold his friend in earnest talk, his left arm resting on half his seat, so that his shoulder was raised a little by that act, and his pearl-wreath rolled over the lower part of his back (spine) (16)

Bilasinivibibhrambadatapatramapanduram ketakabaharmanyah

Priyanitambochisannibesarvipatayamasa yuba nakhagrey

Another youth tore with the edge of his nails, that were accustomed to rest on his dear lover's fair parts, a whitish Ketaka leaf-that graceful substitute for the ivory ear-ring of his beloved. (17).

Koseshayatamratalena kaschitkarena rekhadhwajalatatchhena

Ralnagulyaprabhayanubidhanuriyamasa salilamkshan

With his hand, light-pink as lotus, and marked with banner-lines, another tossed up dice in sport, that were gleaming in the sheen of his bejewelled rings. (18)

Kaschidathabhagambastitoapi swasannivshadvutilolanghiniva

Vajrasungabhangulirendhramekam vuparamasa karam kirote

And another, then put one of his hands, the finger-intervals ablaze with diamonds, on his coronet as if slipped from its place, although it was in its right position.(19)

Devedhar (100-101).

Another point of comparison by Raghunath Meher is the description of Brundaban palace akin to the palace of the mayurbhanj king in Gadgar's indumati.

From class to the mass

It must be emphasized here that Kalidasa wrote in Sanskrit for the elite class whereas Gadgar wrote in Odia for the common people.

He does not sensualize many scenes like Kalidasa does because he has written for the common people and wants to educate them. That's why he has composed then in "Bangalashree brutta" or metre so that they could recite the poem. He uses of ordinary language and wise sayings. These speak of his intention. Radhanath Ray had suggested to use of the appropriate metre that suites poems in Odia. He gives local colour to his poem. He has presented it in such a way that one gets a semblance of indigenous local colour in his writings. He elaborately describes the decoration done to Indumati by her companions before her swayamabara. In Kalidasa's *Indumati*, Sunanda is seen as a maid whereas in Gadgar's she is a companion or sakhi. The marriage ceremony is described as it is done in a traditional local indigenous cultural set up. The princes of different kingdoms arriving to vidarbrbha accompanied by their own bands of musicians, the description of joyous atmosphere of the swayambara, the decoration of the palace and the bride, sections of pata saree and ornaments, the kanya bidaya – all these add to the local elements. The

companions of Indumati decorating her, her brother Bhoja accompanying her to the in laws house and staying there for three days after the marriage ceremony is performed is a typical tradition followed in the marriage rituals in western parts of Odisha. It can however, be noticed that, Gangadhar does not change names of the places like Vidharbha, Sarayu, Ayodhya and so on unlike Radhanath. In the case of Gangadhar, the frame of the story that is the *Ramayana* is known to the audience. So that cannot be changed. In case of Radhanath, the stories were from an alien culture (Greek myths). So the names and places of the source texts were all alien to the Odia readers. Hence he had to change them.

The poet as the translator

Gangadhar Meher as a poet has thus tried to give his own touch by giving local colour and also by applying his own poetic devices as he is an eminent poet who has transcreated the source text— Raghuvansham. He describes the characters and the scene with his artistic touch using his own metaphors drawn from the milieu his audience is familiar with. Another two signs of poetic semblance of Meher we find is the abundant use of nature and moral messages he attempts to transfer to the readers. In Gangadhar Meher's *Indumati*, nature comes alive as we find it in Tapaswini Kavya. Since he wrote for the common people, he does not lose any opportunity to give some moral messages through wise sayings as he does in other poems too. These lines are used as proverbs in different contexts. It is worth quoting a few lines that attempt to convey moral messages to the readers.

Bhagyabana sada bhagyaphala labhe
Abhaga labhe asiba
Sagara manthane Kesaba Kamala
Garala labhile siba

The fortunate one always gets the good results

And the unfortunate the bad

As it happened in sagar manthan

When Vishnu obtained Devi Kamala but Lord Shiva the poison.

Ekamela hele biswabhabanare asadhya hue sahaja
Sukshma shanasutra mela hele dekha
Baddha hue matta gaja (85)

If united we can turn impossible to possible

As even a mad elephant can be tied by strings of chhana if they are combined.

Balabanta thare bala banta sina parakasai paraakrama
Balahina thare baladekhaiba nuhai kshatriya dharma

The powerful shows his strength before his equal

It is not the dharma of the kshatriya to show his strength before the powerless.

Nidrita niraswa sarana agata abala duta balaka
Emananku bale nasa kale lage bira jasa re kalanka

If you harm the person who is asleep, who is helpless and who is a refugee or

A messenger or very young one

Your reputation as a brave man will be at stake.

Kehi ta kahari nuhanti rajana

Mayamoha bhaba hate

Apana apana kaudi sarile

Pheruchhanti nija bate

No one belongs to the other O king in this maya moha filled world

Each of us has to depart when we exhaust what we have in hand

Why did Gangadhar choose Indumati?

One wonders, what made Gangadhar Meher to write *Indumati Kavya*. The answer could be that indumati was a minor and unnoticed part in the vast canvas of Valminki's Ramayana and Kalidasa's *Raghuvansham*. His aim was to highlight this part and the character of Indumati by devoting a kavya to it. Thus, he makes it a woman centric text. He has also written Tapaswini kavya which is derived from the Ramayana and Raghuvansham. In Tapaswini kavya, Sita is the protagonist. Has he done justice? Yes, he has presented her in a decent and dignified manner balancing the demand of the community and the poetic requirements and inviting the readers to make judgment on issues related to gender, sexuality in the society they inhabit.

Conclusion

The paper thus outlines the texts that are rendered from other cultures and from our own by our poet translators. They are done in different and very creative ways. Hence they are called transcreation. If we look at the texts of Gangadhar Meher's *Indumati*, he gives indigenous local colour to it by including local social ceremonies and rituals like marriage and so on. He also uses nature as a living element. The river, mountains with names and description is also an example of poetic device. However, he does not change their names as Radhanath Ray does in his kavyas. Though he was inspired by Radhanath Ray, he maintains his own originality as a poet. Raddhanath Ray himself appreciated the poem and said "ehara bhasha sarala, aklista o smritimadhura" (qtd. in Udgata 33). Its language is simple and uncomplicated because it was meant for the common people. His employment of sublime element in description of characters and landscape is unique. As a poet who wants to instruct people, he infuses many moral lessons in his poems. When Kalidas wrote for the elites in their language Sanskrit, Gangadhar wrote for the common people in a vernacular language that is Odia and he is successful in making it accessible to people. Till today, we find people reciting his poems in different occasions and flat forms such as dance, dramas, recitation and so on. Thus, we witness tradition and continuity are maintained through this kind of recasting of grand narratives in different forms. ■

Notes

1. Meher, Raghunath. Ed. *Gangadhar Granthabali*. Cuttack: Bidya Prakashan, 2017. Pp.650-685
2. The Sanskrit slokas of Kalidasa are from Devadhar, C.R. *Works of Kalidasa*. Vol.2. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1986.

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Suffering and Predicament of Subaltern Women in Postcolonial India: A Study of Mahasweta Devi's *Outcast*

Nalini Shyam Kamil

Mahasweta Devi is an acclaimed writer who wrote novels and short stories for the marginalized women of the postcolonial India. She is a voice of the subaltern. Her female characters belong to the tribal community and are considered as the representative of the downtrodden and underdogs. Their suffering and predicament are that of the entire community. Devi has raised her voice against the injustice and exploitation committed with the outcast by the rich and the upper cast people of society. The present paper attempts to unearth the trauma of four women as the fictional characters who are dispossessed on multiple counts against dominant discourse of Indian society and who represent the fate of average Indian women in general.

Keywords: Domination, Downtrodden, Marginalized, Socio-cultural, Tribal.

Introduction: It is worth mentioning that the author's perception of reality can be mimetic, both high and low. The high mimetic characterizes stately thoughts of noble and lofty minds. The low mimetic generates irony satire, sardonic humour and a host of negative emotions and feelings with their locus in the subjectivity that we call expressive consciousness.¹

Mahasweta Devi has tried to bring the socially discriminated and exploited people of Indian society at forefront by giving her voice to them. In the journal *Bortika*, she writes about the subaltern women and the facts related to their exploitation. In an interview with Naveen Kishore, Mahasweta Devi says:

I have sought to bring the harsh reality of this ignored segment of India's population to the notice of the nation... I have said over and over, our independence was false; there has been no independence these dispossessed peoples, still deprived of their most basic rights... The dispossessed remain with us after six decades of becoming possessed of a freedom we all sought for. They all fought for... I claim to have always written about the 'culture of the down trodden'.²

Her fiction deals with the trauma of the downtrodden and the dispossessed. The protagonists of her fiction are defensive. They raise their voice for justice and social change. In her works Devi empowers her female protagonists and makes them powerful critics of male dominated society. The female characters are the victim of sexual violence such as rape and molestation. It is relevant to quote Bidisha Banerjee who writes:

Rape in Devi's fiction can be read allegorically as a critique from within of nationalism and decolonization. By constituting the female subaltern as a complex figure of femininity whose body is not simply the site of exploitation and torture, but a transformative figure of resistance... women the context of rape as well as the expected traumatic aftermath.³

Mahasweta Devi is a social critic. She has exposed the hypocrisy of so called elite class people, who try to grab all the resources and opportunities and have made people dispossessed in a large number in India. On account of their exploitation lower class people become extremely poor. The elite class people have been thriving at the cost of the dispossessed. She has presented the history of tribal people who struggled for human dignity for two hundred years. In her fiction she deals with the themes of caste inequality and gender discrimination.

Outcast is Mahasweta Devi's moving short story. Here, she presents the plight and poor fate of the four marginalized women-Dhouli, Sanicahri, Josmina and Chinta. All of them are marginalized. It is in the narratives Devi has skillfully presented the structures of Indian social order which are the mainstream, the marginalized and the outcast. Devi describes the suffering and predicament of the marginalized and the outcast in a very effective manner. They have been exploited by the rich and the mainstream people. They long for freedom from the clutches of the rich and the influential people but unfortunately they find no way to come out. These women are treated badly and are considered as commodity. Describing the pain and suffering of the poor and the outcast women Mahasweta Devi sketches the picture of the postcolonial India. In this context it is pertinent to quote Ravi Bhatt who says,

Devi has depicted a sense of outrage in women. There images of women who have courage and determination to serve as role models. She has portrayed tribal women in a new way as assertive individuals, women characters in the stories, these expressions have roots in the society to which they belong the specific made of production, the governing economic structure which regulates the activity of men and women in a decisive way. (934)⁴

Mahasweta Devi has contributed significantly to give voice to the unseen presence of the marginalized characters within socio-cultural context.

"Dhouli" is the first story of *Outcast*. In this story Devi presents the miserable and heart rending plight of a Dushad woman named Dhouli. She is a lower caste and untouchable

Dushadwidow. She is a young woman who became widow in early age. Dhoulis story describes the exploitation of women done by the mainstream people. Here the poor women are raped and seduced by the upper caste people. Dhoulis in the story is the representative of the sexual exploitation of the tribal women. The writer gives a picture of tribal women who are used as bonded labourers and are exploited in the name of their castes and gender. Taking birth in the low caste family is a kind of curse for them. The rich and the upper caste men merely use them to satisfy their lust.

Dhoulis is the victim of rape, and rape is a recurrent metaphor in the story. Dhoulis transformation is pitiable, from girl to a married woman, from a married woman to a widow, and from widowhood to a whore. Misfortune pursues her and changes her into a prostitute. Her body has been the centre of attraction and due to that she becomes the victim of the carnal passion of the upper class people:

She knew it was because of her tremulous eyes, her slender waist, her blossoming breasts. Still she went to sweep the orchard, keeping herself carefully covered with her coarse sari, bought at the local market. She never lifted her eyes to look around at the fruit laden trees.⁵

Not only Dhoulis but other women like Ganjuand Dhobi have also been seduced by Brahmans. The root cause of this kind of exploitation is their bodies, men started to keep eyes over female bodies and that leads them to do sexual violence. Dhoulis, Sanichari and Jhalo are the victims of this sexual violence by the upper caste people.

Dhoulis is the victim of child marriage and domestic violence. “Dhoulis did not remember getting married.” (8) She was a child then. It was a custom of child marriage in India when a girl attained puberty she had her “gouna” and to go her in-laws to live with her husband. It happened with Dhoulis also. When her body blossomed, she went to her husband’s house. There she was tortured by her husband. Soon after her husband died of fever in early age of her life, she became a widow.

Dhoulis troubles did not end with the death of her husband but grew more rather than the earlier. She was entrapped in genital mutilation. Her husband’s elder brother started keeping eyes on her to seduce her. Knowing his ill intention, she left her husband’s house to protect her. She came to her mother’s house where poverty and hunger pursued her.

Dhoulis escape trapped her in another web of exploitation. When she was returning from mela at Jhujhar, her bad fortune was awaiting sexual violence. Her meeting with Mishrilal and his love for Dhoulis turned her from widowhood into a whore. She started to work as a domestic servant at the house of a wealthy and an upper caste Brahman named Hanuman JiMisra. Mishrilal was the son of Hanuman ji. He fell in love with Dhoulis, a Dushad widow, and wanted to marry her. Dhoulis considered him as a Deota:

It was on the way home that Mishrilal caught up with her. He said,
Didn’t you hear me?

What?
I was calling you.
Why?
Don't you know?
No. Deota, don't say such things. I'm a dusadin and you are deota.
I love you. No, deota, Don't call it love. You're a Brahman, you're a young man.
You'll soon get married; your bride will come... (9)

In India a Brahman's place is above than any other caste. This Deota (Devta/God) became devil for Dhouli. Although Misrilal did not rape her; he was in love with her and seduced her for making a physical relation that turned into Dhouli's pregnancy. Dhouli was carrying his baby in womb. Due to family pressure Misrilal had to move away from Tahar. Misrilal got assurance from his mother that in his absence she would take care of Dhouli and her baby. She was hopeful that he would return within given time but he did not come back. This made Dhouli's life highly miserable.

Dhouli was expecting Misrilal's arrival and meanwhile she gave birth to a male child. She came to know that Misrilal got married with somebody else. This news shattered her because she was worried of her future with the baby. So she decided to meet Misrilal to ask him why he ruined her life:

Then you'd better tell him to come here say that if he doesn't, I'll take his son and go to his wife. Even if the chief Deota kills me for it. Misrilal arrived spoke not a word. Eyes full of questions. Dhouli knew he was still attracted to her. It felt good. (23)

Dhouli complained Misrilal that "You can only ruin the poor! My people too have turned against me now all because of you!" (24) Dhouli asked money to bring up his son. Misrilal tied 100 rupee to end of her sari. Soon this money ended. Dhouli was watching that Misra's family, contractor's labourers were keeping their eyes on her body keenly. Dhouli is also the victim of Kundan's lust, the elder brother of Misrilal. She realizes that "Misrilal had washed his hands off" by such a tacit act as well (26).

Dhouli's struggles continue. People of the village want to satisfy their lust by making illicit relationship with her. "Dhouli's mother realizes that Dhouli is unsafe. She has been amidst of such people who will desire her body. She tells her "wretched female, if you can't do anything else, why don't you kill yourself!" (27)

Dhouli was exploited by each one; she was subjugated by her own community. She was disgusted with her life. So, she tried to commit suicide by drowning into the river.

Through the character of Dhouli Mahasweta Devi has presented the marginalization of tribal women and their sexual exploitation.

"Sanichari" is the second story of *Outcast*. In this story Mahasweta Devi writes about the exploitation of women. Women work for money to fulfil their basic needs. The

upper cast people are of the view that women are meant for satisfying their lust. It is highly despising. Mahasweta Devi brings the real picture of society and presents the contemporary reality of the time in a very effective and ingenious manner. Thus, Rape is the central theme of this story. Simone de Beauvoir rightly observes that:

Humanity is male, and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him... She is called "the sex," by which is meant that she appears essentially to the male as sexual being. For him, she is sex - absolute sex, no less. She is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not with reference to her, she is the incident, she is essential as opposed to the essential. He is the subject, he is the Absolute, she is the other.⁶

This story begins with a 12 year old girl, named Sanichari. She is also a marginalized girl like Dhoul. The journey of her exploitation begins when she goes to Tohri. She goes in the company of her grandmother "enjoyed the train ride to Tohri, sitting on the floor of the compartment, chugging along, having a good time picking the lice from each other."⁷ Sanichari is interested in listening to the story so she asks her grandmother to tell a folk-tale during their train journey. The Grandmother narrates the fragmented story. She does not tell the full and complete story. She tells the folk tale which is thus:

Don't you know the one about the carpenter who carved a girl out of wood and became her father? The weaver who gave her clothes and became her brother? The goldsmiths who gifted her jewellery and became her uncles? Didn't the sindoor walla brings her to life by giving her sindoor? (36).

Symbolically, this story is suited on the situation of women, as they don't have their own existence and for Sanichari the fate is awaiting. Sanichari is considered as a commodity and is discarded when she realizes that she has no value in the eyes of the upper cast people. On her way she met Hiralal. He sings folk-songs with the harmonium hanging around his neck. He earns his livelihood by singing songs in the train compartment. His arrival introduces Gohuman Bibi in the story. She is a deceitful lady who visits the villages to entrap tribal girls like Sanichari. She has almost entrapped twenty thousand girls in order to earn money. She promises the tribal girls to give them clothes and money and send them to Kolkata to work in the brick kilns of malik. Hiralal knows all about Gohuman Bibi. He says: "Gohuman all right! A cobra spits venom, like you. You sell of the girls. Twenty rupees per girl supply a thousand girls and make 20,000." (38)

Mahasweta Devi has drawn a real picture of the post colonial Indian society and describes the way how tribal girls are forced into prostitution, and Gohuman poisons the life of the poor and humble tribal girls. Once they are sold, they never come back to their home. These tribal girls become the victim of gang rape.

These girls are employed to satisfy the sexual passion of the rich and the upper cast people. Sanichari's story presents the sexiest oppression and describes the practice of

unclothing and raping of the girls. Sanichari got married with Chand Tirkey, a tribal man 16 years ago. This man is shot by Bihar Police in Adijati Raksha Movement of tribals. The tribals are forced to migrate to Kolkata. Sanichari resists her migration when the BMP, CRP and BSF are unleashing a reign of terror. She falls in the clutch of the protector of law and becomes the victim of gang rape. She lives in the Jungle without food and cloths: “The forest provided enough roots and tubers for them to survive on. But the forest could not provide them cloth to hide their shame.”(49)

Sanichari’s suffering and starvation compels her to become the victim of Gohuman Bibi. Sanicahri’s suffering is the suffering of all the tribal women. Sanichari with GohumanBibi went to Kolkata. There she became a bonded labourer in Rahmat Khan’s brick Kiln. There were many bonded labourers in that brick kiln of Rahmat Khan like Josmina, Lughri, Jhini, Parai and Phulmani.

All the girls working in this brick kilns have been raped everyday by Mustaan driver and Munshi within the high walls of this kiln. They are not allowed to go outside. The brick kiln represents the world of oppression of the poor and the marginalized women. Sanichari is the victim of this world. M. Asaduddin rightly observes in this context:

She is raped daily by Rahamat, the brick kiln owner. His friend, cronies, the local goons, and even the police get their fair share of the female flesh, and of course, the cuts. The brick kiln in insulted from the world outside and there is no way of escape. However, the brick kiln shuts off, she returns to the village with Rahmat’s child in her womb, and so made an outcast.⁸

Sanichari has been raped daily by Rahmat and Rahmat gives her jewellery and good clothes but Sanichari thinks that her jungle is better than this brick kiln. Her return to the village is the return of an outcast with caring a baby in her womb.

“The Fairy tale of Rajabasha” is the third story of *Outcast*. This story also gives a realistic picture of exploitation of Sarjom and Josmina. Devi presents a story of self-imposed isolation. Josmina’s love for her husband becomes the world of isolation. The story begins with happy marriage ceremony and ends with plightful and heart rending condition of Sarjom and Josmina. Josmina commits suicide. The couple belongs to the tribal community. This story projects the instinctive reaction of the tribal community. They belong to the low caste. Yet they wish to follow the behavioural pattern of the upper caste. The story opens with tribal feast on the occasion of marriage ceremony of Josmina and Sarjom. They are busy in arranging the feast in their own way: “Sarjom’s friends shot on arrow through the evil old wild boar with big tusks and solved the problem of fresh meat.”⁹

They were in such a poor state that Sarjom had to borrow money from Nandal shahu for giving three cows to Joshmina’s father as a bride price. In the midst of such poverty both were very excited and happy. But soon their happiness comes to an end. The life of this couple becomes wretched and miserable. There is draught in their village. People

of the village are in search of food for their livelihood. They planted paddy on the dry land but because of autumn breeze nothing was harvested. Sarjom was suffering too: “In this chapter, a snake slithered into Sarjom’s impoverished yet peaceful home through the crack caused by hunger. The snake was Nandlal Shahu.” (60)

Sarjom is in debt of Nandlal. Nandlal is living with two wives and has two fine houses in the districts of Monoharpur and Raikera, but his happiness soon disappears when his first wife demands for pucca brick house. Nandlal is moved by her wife’s words, and decides to give her a pucca house. He sells Josmina and Sarjom to Niranjan Singh, an agriculturalist for 400 rupees and sends them far away.

While purchasing the couple, Niranjan Singh checks sarjom’s arms, shoulders and muscles by pinching him. His eyes also fall on the body of Josmina. “Josmina, gaping open-mouthed at everything around her put a nipple to the child’s mouth. Niranjan shuts his eyes. Feed her for a week.”(67) Niranjan singh considers Josmina as “maal”, “commodity” or “goods” even he considers her as a jungle janwar. Devi tries to show the condition of subalterns by describing the social hierarchy, where a female’s body is nothing but commodity for use.

Niranjan Singh has been exploiting the women. He forces them to work for 16 to 18 hours. He says to Sarjom: “I bought you and your wife from Nandlal for 400 bucks.” (68) They have been treated as bonded labourers. Josmina is raped by the Punjabi man. Josmina has been exploited by many people. The exploitation and oppression always keep continuing upon them. Both wish to return to their village but are scared whether community would accept them or not. They finally manage to come back with the hope of a new beginning. But their fate ruins their hope. They are socially excommunicated. Josmina does not tolerate it. She goes to the Koyena river and gets drowned in the early morning: “She took off her sari, her cheap brass bangles, her chain and ear studs and place them on rock.” (82) Her body is found in the late afternoon:

Josmina’s nude body looked innocent and pure, washed by the waters of a calm river!... Sarjom covered Josmina’s nudity. Lifted her in his arms. Rubbing his face in her hair he said, you will sleep in our courtyard, yes, at home. You are innocent. (83)

Mahasweta Devi has beautifully described the pathetic condition of Josmina, who is the representative of the subaltern women. Her words articulate the oppression and marginalization of the tribals.

The last story of *Outcast* is “Chinta”. Its setting is urban. It also deals with the theme of exploitation and social injustice. The story begins with a group of people, who migrate from Danton and Contai region of Medinipur to Calcutta because in Medinipur they are unable to earn their livelihood. In Calcutta they reside in slum area and by doing petty work they earn their livelihood.

The central figure of the story is Chinta who belongs to the group of the tribal women. Mahasweta Devi describes the physical appearance of Chinta: “Short, fair, wearing silver bangles and tattooed necklace”.(85) She is working in a house by tying her daughter around her waist with rope. This situation is excessively painful.

Chinta works for the salary of eight rupees per month. During the period she has given birth to another baby. Her hard time starts again. She sells her silver bangles for ten rupees: “Her fellow mates were keen to lend her a little money in exchange for her utensils. They said, she has some fine bell metal bowls and glasses. It’s unlikely that she’ll ever be able to claim them back.” (87)

Chinta struggles everywhere. People of her village consider her a sinner. The villagers believe that a sinner can be redeemed from sin if she gives a feast to them. This is what people expect from Chinta.

Chinta tells that people are accusing her as a sinner. She herself confesses that “I’m a great sinner, I’m cursed” (89) Devi presents a picture of exploitation and oppression, and describes that Chinta is the victim of men’s lust she is a widow and has a son named Gopal. She is being exploited by her in-laws house. They demand all her belonging and when she refuses to give all that, she has been tortured.

Misfortune knocks at her destiny when Utsab comes there from Calcutta. He becomes fascinated by the beauty of this widow. He promises her to get married with her. Chinta is moved by Utsab.

Chinta trusts Utsab but he has totally deserted her and leave her alone. Her condition becomes wretched, pitiable and heart-rending. She is put in a very precarious situation. She is unable to decide what to do next. “Chinta had to now spend 200 rupees as penance for having sinned.” (91) Chinta admits of her shadowy existence. She worries “If she ignored what the villagers said, there would be no one to cremate her dead body.” (91). Mahasweta Devi presents the deplorable condition of Chinta. Utsab has impregnated her and she looks after his daughter. The two men of her village ask her to leave her daughters and come back to the village.

Chinta borrows two hundred rupees from the narrator to buy curd, Murkri (A sweetmeat made of parched rice) and sweet for them. Chinta is a Brahman widow but her caste does not protect her. Chinta has been suffering with an unending caste, class and gender exploitation which makes her life a relentless struggle for her survival. The next day the maid of the narrator brings a news that Chinta has handed over her two girls for money. “Two her so-called relatives said they had sold her little girls for 10 and eight rupees each. They wanted me to sign a paper. I drove them away. Just imagine! I’m sure you know what kind of people trade in flesh!” (93).

Mahasweta Devi has described the pathetic condition of Chinta that moves the readers. Chinta’s misfortune pursues her. Paanwala has been flirting Chinta to seduce her.

Whenever Chinta returns from her work, the paanwala makes a lewd smile at her: “The Paanwala with his lewd smile was obscenely keen on getting within touching distance. The knowledge of Chinta’s utter helplessness made the paan juice froth on his lips.” (92)

She has been oppressed and exploited everywhere. She has been bitterly deceived by Utsab who exploits her physically. Lastly Chinta decides to leave the place. She goes to catch the bus:

She was wearing a new sari and blouse. I didn’t ask where she got the money for them. I was scared. Chinta didn’t cry this time. She wore the stunned, numb look of someone who has undergone some unimaginable horror. She kept looking at me with the eyes of a wounded animal. (94)

The women characters of Devi’s *Outcast* live a traumatic life. “Chinta remained silent.”(94) Her silence is not felt by others.

Conclusion:

Thus, Mahasweta Devi has described the trauma, suffering and predicament of the subaltern women in the post colonial India in her short story *Outcast*. Her characters – Dhouli, Sanichari, Josmina and Chinta long for freedom from the clutches of the rich and the elite people but unfortunately they find no way to come out. They are the representative women of their community. Describing the suffering and predicament of these women Mahasweta Devi has given her voice to the unheard and the neglected women of the time to empower and strengthen them. ■

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Narrating Women's Lives : Qurratulain Hyder in *Street Singers of Lucknow*

Naila Anjum

The focus of this paper is Qurratulain Hyder's novella *Street Singers of Lucknow* with reference to its original Urdu version *Agle Janam Mohe Bitiya na Kijyo*. This story intricately explores facets of popular culture that perpetuate prevailing gender stereotypes. The choice to examine this work stems from its rich portrayal of life in the underprivileged segments of society in and around Lucknow, as well as parts of Pakistan. I have selected this novella for among other considerations, its strong folkloric flavour and the feel of a fading social and cultural order. Through the experiences of the heroine, Rashke Qamar, and other pivotal female characters, this paper aims to explore themes of gender, class, and identity. Despite enduring extreme adversity, these women retain their human dignity, displaying remarkable empathy and solidarity, transcending religious boundaries in their shared struggle for survival.

Keywords: Qurratulain Hyder, nation, gender, identity, artistes, popular culture

Introduction

Qurratulain Hyder (1927-2007) had a profound knowledge of India's cultural traditions right from the 4th century BC till her own day. She knew some of the most famous actors of cinema from pre-Independence as well as the present, besides singers and dancers of great fame. She was friends with many of them. Trained in Indian classical music, she made documentaries for the BBC. As a journalist at *The Daily Telegraph* (England) and at *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, she got an opportunity to meet a variety of artistes. She wrote dialogues for the movie *Ek Musafir Ek Hasina* and did many film reviews. She also knew regional folk artists. During her short stint in Pakistan, she made a documentary film on East Pakistan's folk dancers nearly a decade and a half before this area was to become Bangladesh (*Kaar-e- Jahan* , 605).

Across the entire body of her work one comes across characters who are artistes. The hero of the monumental *River of Fire*, Gautam Nilambar, is a great theatre actor in the Mauryan times, an ideal of high society and a heart throb. In *Fireflies in the Mist* , Yasmin Belmonte is a dancer of international fame. Hyder's interest in dance and music is evident from her translation of Hasan Shah's *Nashtar* into *The Nautch Girl*. In *My Temples*, the

Eurasian dancer Rosie is an important character. In *Sita Betrayed*, Bilqees is involved with “Modern Theatre”. *Gardish-e- Rang –e- Chaman* talks of lives affected by 1857, how women from respectable classes ended up as courtesans. In her short story “Honour”, Miss Kallo Bai of Lucknow, a radio singer marries Aziz Khan, a Pathan but easy respectability eludes her. Another story “The Missing Photograph” is about Hyder’s relative who married an actress. They were shunned by the family. She knew culture and cultural workers and their lives from close quarters. There are quite a few of them in her fictional and non- fictional writings. She describes them at length in her 3- volume family saga *Kaar- e- Jahan Daraz Hai*. We get to know about Hyder’s favourite actress Nargis; the founder of Aligarh Women’s College, Sheikh Abdullah’s daughter Renuka Debi and his daughter-in- law Meena who became successful film actresses. Sitara Devi, Rekha Devi and numerous other dancers are mentioned in her books.

This work shows that Hyder was not limited to writing about the elite only as she has sometimes been accused of. Rather her oeuvre includes women from every socio-economic stratum: daughters of nawabs and rajahs, prosperous women from professional and government service classes, from women with British and American education to women educated in Indian universities to women who get no education at all, from revolutionary women out to build a future society based on equality and justice to women from fast decaying feudal social classes who are comfortable with the status quo.

The present work, originally *Agle Janam Mohe Bitiya na Kijyo* in Urdu, has two translated versions, *Street Singers of Lucknow* and *A Woman’s Life*. My references are from the former. As the title suggests, it is about the tough life a woman is destined to live because of her gender. Nonetheless, the female characters fight it out. Like several of her other narratives this, too, unfolds in the backdrop of the Partition. In addition, we have another Partition here, that of Pakistan. People’s lives and folk culture of last century Avadh and adjoining areas comes alive in the novella as does the world of *dargahs*, *qawwalis*, Urdu poetry and street singing.

The Story

Rashke Qamar and her lame sister, Jamila, sing at festivals but struggle to make ends meet in a rented space near Deputy Officer’s bungalow. Farhad, the officer’s son, helps Rashke pursue a career in singing, leading to radio success. She meets journalist Narendra Kumar Verma and becomes popular. Farhad marries another woman, and Rashke faces backlash on her morals. Agha Shab Aawez Hamdani expresses his wish to marry Rashke but disappears, leaving her with a daughter. Rashke moves to Karachi, loses contact with everyone, while her son joins the underworld. Jamila supports herself through odd jobs and communication ceases between Rashke and India. In Pakistan, Rashke’s daughter Mahpara faces a tragic fate. Rashke, now destitute and old, takes up embroidery, following in Jamila’s footsteps.

Gender

As the title of the original Urdu novel, *Agle Janam Mohe Bitiya Na Kijo* (Don't Make Me a Girl in My Next Birth), a woman's prayer to God to spare her the difficult life of a woman in her next birth, suggests, this novella is about a certain understanding of gender in India. This is a line from an old Avadhi folk song: *Ore Bidhata binti karun tori paiyyan padun baram bar*

Agle janam mohe bitiya na kijo chahe narak dijo daar (95)

The English translation reads:

*O gracious Lord, I beseech Thee,
Don't make me a woman in my next birth....
Don't let me be re-born as a girl, O God...
Agle janam mohe bitiya na keejo* (34)

The Urdu version is more powerful as it suggests it is better to be consigned to eternal Hell rather than be born a woman. Her life on earth is far more difficult and painful. One wonders if Hyder left out the second line because an English audience would not really see womanhood as a handicap.

In a way, it is also not about just the disadvantage of being a woman. The major characters, all women, are also burdened with grinding poverty, crippling disease and a severely unjust social order that provides little protection to the weak.

A Woman's Life is difficult is evident from this conversation recounted later by Jamila in a letter to Rashke Qamar: "I remember the depressing evening so well. Verma Sahib had said: 'Most women in our society usually get a raw deal. And in order to make damn fools of them they have been called Goddesses of virtue and Devotion and embodiments of self sacrifice.'" (38)

Women, particularly those who are not quite young, are often said to be "discarded like an old shoe" (*River*; 29) in Qurratulain Hyder's novels. Quite often, Hyder's female characters seem to mull over the value of women declining as they age and their beauty diminishes. Why is it that a woman's worth depends so much on her short-lived feminine charm while men's does not on their physical beauty?

In *Street Singers of Lucknow*, Moti is also discarded similarly after 25 years of devotion and companionship by Verma Sahib. He had brought her from a village fair when she was only 17. He trained her as a singer (which she already was, to begin with) and made her his mistress.

Rashke Qamar's mother faces societal rejection after her husband's death, leading her to become a mistress for survival. Her daughter, Jamila, is born disabled, and her father abandons them. Similarly, Hurmuzi Khala is discarded due to tuberculosis. Verma, despite good intentions, patronizes women in his Songbirds' Club, which Rashke finds demeaning

and Fahad immature: “They are schoolboys treating us as their newest toy trains”(21). She chides Verma for taking Moti too lightly.

Hyder has sympathy for the poor artists called *bhands* who performed at weddings. But, Farhad’s naïve romanticism is seen from his exaggeration that had these people been born in the West, they would have been rich and famous (29).

Jamila continues to make these men uncomfortable about their pretensions:

You also write short stories and poems about the poor, don’t you? Without really knowing anything about them. The lowest of the lowly. Do you have any idea of the kind of lives led by—say—grave-diggers, washers of corpses, lepers, jailbirds, beggars, pimps, common whores, the disabled, the despised, the scavengers? I could go on. The list is endless (32).

Women are supposed to behave in a certain way and try to keep a certain veneer of respectability and feminine behaviour, even if they are despised *khangis*, or worse. The independent-minded Rashke Qamar shocks her lover Farhad and his friend Verma by acting like a ‘man’, or a streetwalker when she asks for a cigarette and tells them to act mature. In the novel, Rashke Qamar, Moti, Rashke’s mother, and aunt work as *khangis*, knowing they will never gain the respectability of wives from their male employers. The men in these relationships are not bound by commitment. Rashke bears Farhad’s child, but he abruptly leaves. However, there is a code of honor among *khangis*: they are not conducting any sexual relationship outside this arrangement. They are not streetwalking while being somebody’s *khangi*. When Rashke overhears doubts about her child’s paternity, it hurts her. She returns to India, unable to find her daughter’s father, and faces the deaths of loved ones. Jobless and aging, she turns to chikan work for survival, ending on a somber note.

A Woman’s Life: Identity

For the three heroines—Rashke Qamar, Moti and Jamila—their homeland is India. They are unwanted even here and pushed to the bare margins of existence. They are born in Avadh and live most of their lives there. Rashke goes to Pakistan for some time. After her daughter is murdered by gangsters, she finds no point in staying in Pakistan and returns to Lucknow to a lonely life of poverty and drudgery.

For the characters their home is Avadh in present-day Uttar Pradesh, the kingdom of Shri Ramchandraji, the place of Tulsi, Kabir and Jayasi. Rashke is steeped in Urdu poetry and Avadh’s Indo-Islamic culture, which was liberal and emphasised common humanity rather than religious denominational differences. Her religious belief does not make her different from her fellow humans. Farhad and Verma, too, are cosmopolitans who do not aggressively assert their religious identity.

Jamila often wonders why God, who is Merciful, makes some people so poor, so ugly, so helpless and crippled. She thinks little of any religion, including her own. Yet, Verma gives her the trade name Jalbala Lahiri, the first name (which means water girl,

mermaid) does not seem apt to her, nor does the Lahiri surname that belongs to Bengalis. She feels comfortable with her original name Jamila (beautiful). She finds putting on another persona difficult, but Verma thinks this new name will suit her as a rising singer.

Nor is the Hindu Moti (pearl) comfortable with her new name, Sadaf Ara Begum, a Muslim name. Sadaf is the Persian for *moti*. Her new Persian name could be translated as Pearl-decorated Lady. Sadaf, angry at Verma's gimmicks, complains:

Adopting a different name does not change one's destiny. You changed Jamila's name. Has it made any difference? She is still hobbling about, moping. I am a Hindu and you made me Sadaf Ara Begum. You changed Jamilun-Nissa into Jalbala Lahiri. How does it matter? Whatever is predestined shall come to pass. (31)

In the novel, despite different religions, Sadaf, Rashke, and Jamila live harmoniously as sisters, transcending religious boundaries. However, class divisions are starkly evident. Farhad, Verma, and Diptiayin display distrust and contempt towards the poor, highlighting a prominent class divide. Rashke, though, maintains a forgiving perspective. Another character, Sharifan, exemplifies the struggles of impoverished women seeking solace through faith.

Hyder comments, "Technically, she should be among the first to enter the gates of Paradise" (5). The author is clearly on the side of the weak, the poor, the God-fearing:

And the humble, unknown qawwal, his aged, half-blind table player, and his fellow singers, and the lonely people who listened to them rapturously, and the poor traders who were selling their modest wares in the Urs fair—they were all duly informed from time to time that they were to inherit the Kingdom of God. (6)

Between them, Hurmuzi, Rashke Qamar and Jamila represent different degrees of belief and unbelief. Hurmuzi sees no life beyond Allah and His prophet, Rashke Qamar is relaxed about religious identity and Jamila is hostile to all forms of religion. Moti (Sadaf) sees herself as a Hindu, who makes no distinction between people on religious grounds. This stance is true of everyone, including Hurmuzi.

Interestingly, the religion of these people and the crowd that gathers at Pir Hande Shah's dargah is some form of a Small Tradition, which does not always conform to strict Shariah standards. It is not like any of the several, standardised, scripture-based, maulvi-interpreted and qazi-judged and enforced Islam. It is some folk version, indigenised Islam of the subcontinent, to which a majority subscribes even today.

It is no less pious and righteous, if not more so, than the more strict versions of the faith, which compete vehemently with each other on being the True Faith. This folk version is not marked for scriptural authenticity and borrows parts of its language and beliefs freely from other faith traditions. Its historical authenticity also is not always established.

The novel opens at Pir Hande Shah's dargah, but little is known about him. Unlike famous Sufi saints like Nizamuddin Chishti or Khawaja Moinuddin Chishti, Hande Shah's birth, life, and death details remain uncertain. The author suggests there might not have been a historical Hande Shah, and the name might have originated from the gas light that illuminated his dargah during his urs (death anniversary).

Urs (Arabic for the bride's union with the bridegroom) is celebrated, not mourned, as it is in sufi lore the happy moment of the bride's (human soul's) union with the bridegroom (God). This idea itself is not part of the scripture or Islam's Greater Tradition, nor are festivities like *urs* there. The prophet's or his family's deaths are not celebrated. The prophet's death is not mourned either. The only deaths mourned are those of the prophet's grandson Hussain's and some of his family and followers who were martyred by a tyrant ruler. But only the Shia sect, which is about 20 percent of the Muslim population (according to Pew Research Institute) mourns it. Even they do not mourn the death of Hussain's elder brother, Hasan, his mother Fatima or his father Ali, or grandfather, the prophet.

Urs is a subcontinental feature, rejected by more puritanical versions of Islam as idolatory and distortion. Infused with a Hindu way of looking at things, this sits well with most subcontinental Muslims as their ancestors came to Islam from Hinduism, many of whose ways they never forgot. Most Hindus and Sikhs are also comfortable with it. People steeped in it have a different way of looking at life and death and the world than those subscribing to the more purist versions.

The poor people gathered at Hande Shah's dargah are lost in the piety and religious fervour of Bhoore Khan's devotional qawwali describing the prophet's ascent to the heavens to meet God while still alive. According to Muslim belief, the prophet lived for many years after returning home from God's presence:

"Laga ke kajal chale Gosain..." The flame of the lamp quivered with the high pitch of Bhoore qawwal's voice. *"Are laga ke kajal chale Gosaiyan..."* Bhoore Khan's ten-year old son accompanied his father in his thin voice. *"Are laga ke kajal chale Gosaiyan..."* Bhoore qawwal's four famished companions began to sing repeatedly in a chorus clapping (65).

The Gosain and Gosaiyan here is not Krishnaji, but the prophet Muhammad. There is a certain similarity between the two. Like Krishnaji and many other Semitic prophets, Prophet Muhammad, too, used to take cattle out to graze in his younger years. From shepherding to the shepherding of humans marked the progress of Semitic prophets, Christ being particularly famous as shepherd.

Still people outside the subcontinent, or people not familiar with the sufi lore can barely recognise the prophet in Gosain or Gosaiyan. The language and the lore of sufism, so familiar to commoners, was founded on local spiritual traditions, which in many ways

was a continuation from the Hindu past. This version of Islam has been part of the Indian landscape and people steeped in it are distinct, like the crowd at Hande Shah's dargah. Interestingly, there are 99 names of the prophet, but Gosain is not among them.

Nation

Ideas like nation, nation state or national chauvinism are farthest from the minds of the three heroines—Qamrun, Jamila and Moti—or the other central character, Hurmuzi Khala. They are too keenly focused on where their next meal would come from, or what tomorrow will bring to their uncertain, impoverished lives.

Used to living raw, insecure lives, they have little to look forward to, or feeling attached to, a certain place. Nation-consciousness, or the sense of belonging to a nation requires a minimum degree of social and economic security and some sense of wellbeing. For the three heroines, Hurmuzi Khala and her husband Kane Khalu these could be distant abstractions, the luxury of people who have food to eat, clothes to wear and a home to call their own.

Alyosius in *Nationalism without a Nation* quotes Gellner who defines nationalism as a “congruence of power and culture” (14). The down and out characters have some affinity with high culture: they can recite, sing and understand some of the finest Urdu poetry to musical instrument accompaniment, which a couple of them play. The other element, power, is missing from their lives. Power is something which they cannot even aspire to as they are at the bottom of the social heap.

As every human relationship is said to be a power relationship, one side gives the orders, the other carries them. A certain feeling of empowerment among a lot of people with some cultural commonalities is essential for the growth of national sentiment; these people are simply out of the loop.

As Alyosius points out in the preface referred to above, nationalist ideology has been “often enough an excuse for plain pursuit of power” (vii) Hence, these people are outside the pale of nationalism.

Still nation comes into play in their lives in a strange, cruel way. Rashke Qamar's life takes a cruel turn when her Iranian lover, Agha Shab-awez, abandons her. She raises their daughter, Mahpara, but is unable to reunite with Agha in Karachi due to visa issues caused by the India-Pakistan division. They enter Pakistan illegally but face suspicion and hostility. Mahpara's murder pushes Rashke to return to India, with the help of a Japanese couple who secure her travel documents and a flight ticket.

For Rashke Qamar the word “distrust” seems to be the key to all human affairs, including the relations between India and Pakistan, the relationship between her daughter's father and her who disappears without a trace, leaving her with his child, a general distrust in a world which murdered her daughter and threw the body on the Clifton beach in Karachi, and the fakirs who cheated her of her life's savings to keep her in false hope.

Not that Rashke Qamar does not trust anyone at all. She does trust some people: her younger sister Jamila, weak and paralysed from birth in one leg; her aunt Hurmuzi Khala gradually wasting away with TB; Hurmuzi's husband Kaane Khalu, the one-eyed jester, her daughter Mahpara, son Shiraz; the old couple which accompanied her daughter and her to Pakistan, their son who kept them in his flat and found her a good job; the Japanese couple which employed her and gave her respect, food and shelter, paid the entire bill for the treatment of her mental illness, lobbied with Europeans for a year to get her travel papers prepared, bought her an air ticket to Bombay and came to the airport to see her off—she trusts and loves all of them. Then there was the impresario, Khan Sahib, who kept her entertained in Bombay and helped her with some money. Even Verma's and Farhad's small acts of kindness are duly appreciated.

That she carries no passport or a visa, two of the most precious emblems of national belonging, suggests in a way that the marginalised people like Rashke Qamar are denizens of a surreal no-man's land. They have no place to call their own. Thus, we see that women face similar challenges despite different locales and nations fail women.

Conclusion

Being a street singer is difficult, sometimes indistinguishable from being a street walker. The quality of their work is fine, but their grinding poverty and that of their admirers forces them to the wall. Being a woman only aggravates it. However, the art they produce is as remarkable as that of the prosperous artistes anywhere. ■

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Re-reading New Historicism: A Study of Haribhusan Brahma's Short Story *Hangla's Roof-Thatching*

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The paper aims at re-reading Haribhusan Brahma's story from the perspective of new historicism. The thematic framework of the story manifests a series of misconduct, malpractice and dereliction. It further elucidates the terminal consecution of people. It is also viewed that there is a sort of dichotomy between action and reaction, irresponsibility and management, exhilaration and sobriety, offense and equity and so on. The thematic concern deciphers the underlying ethics of a Bodo society. It further suggests the aspects of the precise and veritable character of Bodo people.

Keywords : Bodo Society, New Historicism, School, Community, Culture.

Haribhusan Brahma is one of the pioneers in the history of Modern Bodo short stories. He is an iconic figure in the Bodo literary landscape. His stories cater to the understanding of the socio-political structure within the arena of Bodo society. His style of delineating the narrative helps to locate his prominence as an evolving writer. His stories deal with social volatility and individual undertaking, accuracy and exaggeration, honesty and deception, suffering and exploitation and so on. The Bodos are one of the most important ethnic tribes in the North-Eastern part of India. Their indigenous identity defines them to be simple, traditional, customary and ceremonial. This paper concentrates on Haribhusan Brahma's short story "Hangla's Roof-Thatching" which talks about the issues of covetousness, duplicity, adversity, authenticity and realization. The framework of the story revolves around the elements of infringement, comprehension, and appraisal.

The paper mainly attempts to read Haribhusan Brahma's story from the perspective of new historicism. The thematic framework of the story manifests a series of misconduct, malpractice and dereliction. It further elucidates the terminal consecution of people like Pania Ram who urges to have name and fame only. It also sees a sort of dichotomy between action and reaction, irresponsibility and management, exhilaration and sobriety, offense and equity and so on. The school here serves as a cradle for realization and acceptance. The thematic concern deciphers the underlying ethics of a Bodo society. It further suggests the aspects of the precise and veritable character of Bodo people.

Moreover, New Historicism as a theory urges one to rethink the consequences of historical counterparts. Its main aim lies in viewing history as a scope for further analysis. During the 1980s Stephen Greenblatt characterises New Historicism as a basis for socio-cultural preconditions. Whereas, Foucault considers it a powerful entity. It sets an option to recreate something anew and afresh. History has the power to substantiate things. It also seems to be flexible from the pretext of New Historicism as a literary theory.

Haribhusan Brahma's short story caters to show the binary between family and society, honesty and corruption, paddy fields and barren plots, honour and disrespect, duty and chaos and so on. Dino Felluga writes in the "General Introduction to New Historicism": "New Historicism also more specifically concerned with questions of power and culture" (Felluga). The opening lines figure out the prevailing environment in the village. The protagonist here is named Hangla Mahajan. He appears to be a rich man in the village. The story opens with a reference to the feast to be held in Hangla's place. As the story reads: "Today, a number of villagers came to thatch the roof of Hangla's hut as a part of the customary community service" (Brahma 37). The main attraction of the feast was country liquor. The villagers seem to be so very curious to have a full bowl of it. The treat further seems to be an escape from one's duty and professional chores.

This paper asserts to read this story from the viewpoint of new historicism that encircles the social and cultural reality of a particular society. The new historical network gets revealed by a set of different social discourses. To analyse the interplay of power and politics, a new history takes its course. It is a form of withdrawal from the traditional history to a newer version. In every text history always serves as the background. New historicist aims to diverge from that constant and settled dimension and probes to move towards sanctioning a new history. In the line of M.H. Abrams, new historicists conceived of a: "literary text as 'situated' within the totality of institutions, social practices and discourses that constitute the overall culture of a particular time and space, and that the literary text interacts as both a product and a producer of cultural energies and codes" (Abrams 244).

Moreover, Harold Aram Veesser in the Introduction of *The New Historicism* says: "New Historicism seeks less limiting means to expose the manifold ways culture and society affect each other" (Veesser xii). The setting of the story is a village, named Tilapara. The different cast of characters and events revolves around the featured primary school in the village. The story opens with the ongoing preparation for a village feast. The story casts the Mahajan named Hangla, the primary school master, Pania and the school Inspector, Nagen Babu. The Mahajan was a fraud money maker. He appears to be greedy and licentious. Pania master seems to be a drunkard and an irresponsible teacher. Brahma writes clearly: "It is natural. The same is the case with the Bodo people. Pania master is also a Bodo, so he cannot do without drinking" (Brahma 38). His only job is to harass the students. His way of addressing the students serves as a pretext for his wicked and cruel nature. As the story reads: "Hey, monkeys, calves, why are you making such a din and

bustle?”(Brahma 38). In his drunken state, he calls the students “scorpions “(Brahma 39),”monkeys” and “calves”(Brahma 38). After two rounds of heavy drinking, he becomes almost half-conscious. On the other hand, the Inspector of Bodo medium schools also seems to be corrupt, drunkard and dishonest. Brahma explores how the master gets his job by bribing the Inspector with rice and money.

Here, the school serves as the basis of knowledge, experience and holistic development. It also satisfies the urge to understand a particular community, language and culture. The story comes to a climax in the middle. The way it refers to the aspect of selection for the President’s award by the Government adheres to the critique of the present educational environment. The Inspector seems to understand the reality behind the prevalent situation. Whereas, Hangla leaves no stone unturned to show that Pania appears to be the most deserving candidate for the President’s award. He says:”The master knows only his school, he never takes leave even in sickness “(Brahma 40).The Secretary writes the report in a subconscious state in Hangla’s house in a drunken state. The report goes in favor of Pania master who seems to be the most disruptive and rebellious teacher. The report seems to be the most awaited one for the villagers. As Greenblatt writes: “Society’s dominant currencies, money and prestige, are invariably involved” (Greenblatt 1). The story also casts one’s eagerness to be wealthy and rich with money. Infact, those who succumb to this aspect seem to grow in thought and psyche at a much later time in the story.

New Historicism commemorates the idea of ‘remaking’ a ‘new reality’ (Barry) as Peter Barry rightly says in Chapter 9 of “*Beginning Theory:An Introduction of Literary and Cultural Theory*. The story decodes the different consequences of consuming liquor in a Bodo society in particular and in an Indian society in general. It begins on a conventional note and ends on a perspective turn. Brahma tries his hand at portraying the Inspector as genuine and ethical. But to our dismay, he comes out to be erroneous and hypocritical. When Brahma introduces him, he seems to be upset and critical of Pania master’s conduct and behavior. As the story says:”He began to brood as to how he would write about the despicable habit of Pania Master”(Brahma 42). Again he says:”The Inspector still retained his resentment towards Pania master till he drank two bowls of liquor” (Brahma 42). The effect of the third bowl appears like a storm that brings a complete change in the previewed one.

The story here tries to bridge the gap between expectation and reality. The concluding part becomes very significant: “The news as to whether Pania master got the President ‘s Award was not known”(Brahma 43). Further, he writes:”...he was in complete rest, on half pay leave for three years following”(Brahma 43). The “kringkringkring” (Brahma 43) sound of his cycle symbolizes transformation, admittance and redressal. The closing lines talk about Hangla’s understanding of the forbidden and illegitimate venture. Pania master’s life enterprise beckons Hangla’s thinking. He becomes able to live most modestly and lucidly. With an amount of positivity within Hangla, the story ends with an anticipatory note.

The story idealizes the importance of materiality that contributes to the understanding of the term, culture. The story also addresses the issue of creating a new historical paradigm. By providing a false and untrue report on Pania master, NagenBabu attempts to cast himself as an inconstant man. When Brahma talks about the uncertainty of whether Pania receives the President's award or not, it refers to his motive of providing a sort of relief and justice to the already established norms of any society. Further, he also subscribes to the fact that: "...he was in complete rest, on half pay leave for three years..." (Brahma 43). This proves the eventual alteration towards equity and integrity of a Bodo society. Ultimately, Pania master receives an appropriate retribution for whatever he disperses. As Foucault writes in *The Archeology of Knowledge*- that history in any form acts to "reveal several pasts, several forms of connexion, several hierarchies of importance, several networks of determination, ... as its present undergoes change ..." (Foucault 5). Brahma also intends to explore the aspects of dominant historical setting, hierarchial society, individual inclination and self-inhibition.

The story rationalizes the concept of being true to one's profession. The character of Pania master symbolizes autocracy, tyranny and exploitation. He seems to show no affinity toward professional ethics and moral values. His attitude towards the children projects his disregard for his vocation. The school is at the centre of the story that casts the significance of material concepts which even triggers the overall academic development of a society. The villagers manage to have an L.P. School in their locality which reflects the kind of apprehension that the Bodo society lives with.

Greenblatt writes in the Introduction of *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* about the working of the self and the consciousness that get: "...embedded in specific communities, life situations, structures of power" (Greenblatt 7). For both Greenblatt and Montrose, literature shares a reciprocal fix with man and social life. John Brannigan cites both authors in his work "New Historicism: Representations of History and Power" to show the muscular upshot between literary exercise and historical attributes. In this manner, Brahma shows how a society makes its impact on the prevailing atmosphere even in an educational institution. The plot reflects two positions mainly. The first is Hangla's house which appears to be the breeding ground for heinous and immoral acquaintances. The way the written report doesn't pay heed to the ongoing happenings explores the making of a new history. The report given by the Inspector in the name of the Honourable Education Minister seems to be invalid and contentious. Brahma ends the note in a skeptical tone. The aspect of faith and doubt predominates over the entire storyline. The Inspector of Bodo medium schools seems to be a broad-minded man because of him a man like Pania could retain his job as a teacher. Through the portrayal of these characters, Brahma tries to decipher the socio-cultural reality of his time and society. Ukkan in his book articulates Geertz's way of "analyzing a particular social event which as meaning for people involved and discovering the patterns of conventions, codes and modes of thinking that attribute those meanings to cultural event" (Ukkan 22-36). He also refers to Murry's way of

generalizing the whole of society by uncovering “the underlying meaningful structures of local events and local interactions” (Murry806-809).

The story encapsulates the aspect of adherence to culture and the formation of a new historical base. The school in the village poses a challenge to the corrupt and commercial class of people like Pania master and Hangla, the Mahajan and Secretary of the school. Brahma tries to show the reflection of evil elements in the arena of institutional ethics and values. Indeed, those get submerged before the already existing authoritarian government policy. The story furnishes the credentials of a commonwealth society and revolves around human politics and government strategy. The title of the story carries along several incentives. The reference to “grass”, “bamboos” and “country liquor” (Brahma 37) probe the conceptual understanding of Bodo culture, customary implications and traditional practices and beliefs. The reference to liquor consumption or ingestion uprisers the atrocious working of individuals in society. In the intersection of both liquor and evil, the students of that particular school become the victims. When the master says: “I cannot do without liquor whenever I get it, although I am a teacher” (Brahma 38). This line suggests the self-assertive and conscious doing of a man like Pania that acts as a boon to creating an environment leading to transformation and metamorphosis.

Finally, the story concludes with a reference to human realization and accomplishment. The story recounts the life and living, existence and survival of an ethnic group that marks the basis of history and antiquity. The element of history is central to the story. “Hangla’s Roof-Thatching” envisages the exemplification of culture and morality in attaining liberation of mind and thoughts. The story deciphers a change in the life of the protagonist. Hangla contributes to the aforesaid element of intellectual and cognitive evolution. In fact, Hangla’s character also encompasses a change in his thinking and psychological stratification. The events cast Hangla to be a man of independent judgement and reconciliation. Moreover, his character symbolises mendacity and falsehood. Hangla appears to float in the ocean of conspiracy, unfaithfulness and mischief. The thematic ideology also stratifies the inputs given by the characters like Pania Master and Nagen Babu.. Brahma plays a progressive part in portraying the truth about the present condition prevalent in a Bodo society. The use of words like ‘master’ and ‘Babu’ also announces the stigmatized conceptualization of the so-called patriarchal society. Haribhusan Brahma concludes with a hint of “ploughing” and “powdered rice” (Brahma 44)- it symbolizes tradition and ancestral endowment.

However, the story explores the reality of a Bodo traditional society. The Bodo society is historically rich and cultured. Brahma’s story begins with rituals, observances and penance. The plot subscribes to the sustainability of an educational institution amid hegemonic power structure. It elucidates a distinct picture of people’s ignorance and knowledge about the regulatory motives of a school. The school here acts as an enlightening pursuit. The historical basis corresponds to the overall social transformation and change. As the story begins with simple village folk and their varied customary implications it elevates the idea of ethnicity, religiosity and socio-cultural affinity. The narrative of the story seems

to execute a harmonious blend of dedication and occupation, liability and disloyalty, commitment and apathy, genuine expedients and unlawful actions. The course of action deviates from a regular activity to an open-ended mechanism.

Thus, the paper appears to be an attempt to make the people aware to bring a zest to life. The modern Bodo writer, Haribhusan Brahma seeks to showcase the aspect of possibility in unforeseen circumstances. He aims to display the importance of time and place in the life of human beings. His story reinstates the present scenario which automatically casts the structured past and predicts the future as well. His reference to time constraints marks the basis of corruption, greed, deceit, malpractices and so on. The story ends on a probable note toward self-knowledge and self-realization. ■

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Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* : Depiction of Identity Quest with Emphasis on Ethical Values

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In the postcolonial context, diasporic literature is prominently concerned with the questions of maintaining identity, language, culture, ethnicity with another culture, ethnic group and country. Diaspora and diasporic literature is commonly known for promulgating the voluntary or enforced migration of people from their homeland to hostland. It underlines the displacement of a community or an individual from one geographical reason to another geographical structure. The issue of identity crisis has become the thematic concern of most of the diasporic writers such as Bharti Mukherjee, V. S. Naipal, Salman Rushdie, Anita Desai, Kiran Desai and many other writers. They deal with various problems such as identity crisis of communities, cultural confrontation between the east and the west, sense of alienation, marginalization, exploitation, racial discrimination, and political violence and so on. In diasporic literature, writers present the character that fail to amalgamate unknown culture or abandon their own culture completely or becomes a combination of two different cultures.

Kiran Desai, in her worldly acclaimed Man-Booker Prize winning oeuvre 'The Inheritance of Loss', tries to suggest the loss in terms of the displacement, wealth, progress and love and it travels through generations. The novel presents the people who move to flourished countries for the economics security but face prejudices by the people living abroad. This novel exhibits a scene of an intersection of society through characters Jemu Bhai, Sai, Cook Nadu, Biju, Gyan, Lolita and Nonita. These figures are the inheritance of loss. All of them are maimed by the questions like who are they and where do they belong? These characters are constantly searching their identity torn between two characters.

Keywords: Inheritance, Tranquility, Diaspora, Promulgation, Alienation, Marginalization, Exploitation, Haunted, Postcolonial, Apparent, Truth

Aim of Study:

This paper aims to suggest the profound idea of eternal identity of man. It is an absolute truth that self -identification or realization is considered to be an absolute identity of man. Moreover, it underlines that having humanity is the eternal goal of man. It is not associated to his name, gender, class, religion and any profession. In postcolonial discourse

and study, quest for identity is associated to the caste, creed, place, nation, ethnicity, culture, language, religion, etc. But my paper emphasizes upon man's quest for identity which is associated to a quest within remarking human values which reverberates in the characters of this novel. It attempts to present that values make a man enlightened; it transforms a man where a man feels elevated. Consequently, it takes the man to the path of tranquility and happiness. Eventually, an apparent truth has been presented through the five luminous peaks of Kanchenjunga that radiates the face of Sai.

Literature Review:

Kumari [1] deals with globalization and its disadvantages which are one of the major themes incorporated in this novel. In her paper, she underlines the pain of displacement and adverse impacts of Postcolonialism. She also presents the multiplicities of the sufferings that the immigrant characters in general face. She also mentions that cultural conflict depicted in this novel needs to be dissolved through the amicable means before all sorts of problems faced by the protagonists in this novel. Artheeswari [2] focuses on the conflict of culture on the global level; and on the personal level as well. The author deals with the internal conflict among the characters of this novel. Through this paper, writer shows the pain and dilemma of immigrants. Eventually, through the amicable reunion of Biju with his father, writer presents some hope of true happiness. Asghar and Sharjeel [3] covers the major diasporic elements and multiple identities of Indian- American diaspora in the novel. He also underlines how problematic relationship between the first and second generation of immigrants has influenced their scattered identity and he also unearths the life of immigrants, their pungent diasporic experience, identity with split identity and its fragments and their inevitable survival in the migrated locations.

Nafees et al. [4] underline the Indian Diaspora literature exposing the elements like multi culturalism, globalization nostalgia, cross culturalism, migration, racism, hybridity and quest for identity. This paper presents how the characters are all victims in so called postcolonial dilemmas. Pandhare [5] analyses the novel 'The Inheritance of Loss' in terms of identity crisis. He emphasizes upon that every man living in this world is bound to have an identity and everyone undergoes a conflict with him/ herself. It explores how all the characters are the inheritors of loss in terms of dislocation of place, wealth and progress. It makes a remarkable point about the reality of immigrated people who face many challenges.

Introduction:

Kiran Desai, the prominent Indian English writer holds a significance place in the contemporary world of writing. In her works, she incorporates the variegated issues or emphasizes upon several themes associated to the postcolonial discourse. The major themes that Kiran Desai has deals with the vulnerable socio- political issues regarding hybridity, insurgency, immigration, identity crisis, loneliness, multiculturalism etc. Kiran Desai, in her worldly acclaimed booker prize novel 'The Inheritance of Loss' (2006) which is considered the most popular oeuvre presents ultimate truth of life. The title of this novel

presents all sorts of intricacies of life but despite having all hoards and hurdles of life all the characters ultimately realize the truth.

Kiran Desai vociferously raises her voice of inclusive identity and a spiritual identity of man in her 'The Inheritance of Loss' which is the significant part of our culture. Through her characters, she has presented the vision of inclusive unitary identity which is the reality of our existence. But few notions propel as to ignore the plurality of our identity. The consequences of this novel regarding the characters, at their individual and social level can be manifested by putting them within the theoretical perspective and the concept of identity as multi-layered concepts.

Amartya Sen, the Nobel Laureate, in his book 'Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny' theorizes that terrorism or racial or communal aggression is the result of an insularity of vision. We indulge in violence when we put obsessive insistent and overwhelming emphasis on 'Unique Identity' that is only the single aspect (religious, cultural ethnic, regional, racial) and so on of our identity. When we remain blind and so on of our identity and are not 'clear-headed' enough to take into cognizance the fact of the multi dimensionality of our identities [17].

Text Discussion:

The commencement of this novel has been presented through mentioning the view of Kanchenjunga. It begins with the lines "All day, the colors had been those of dusk, mist moving like a water ceatures across the great flanks of mountains possessed of ocean shadows and deposit. Briefly visible above the vapour, Kanchenjunga was a far peak whittled out of ice, gathering the last of the light, a plum of snow blown high by the storms of its summit Sai, sitting on Veranda,... every now and then she looked up at Kanchenjunga, observed its wizard phosphor scene with a shiver." [10]

In Kalimpong, Mount Kanchenjunga is prominent. It has its religious and spiritual significance in Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. So, in the beginning the mountain symbolizes a resolute background for uncertain twists and turns of human destiny that has been depicted in this novel. In the commencement of this novel, Kanchenjunga has been presented as timid and sinister. Sai is sitting there and reading a magazine article about giant squid. Hence, all the occurrences that take place simultaneously reflects the mood of Sai as something bad is going to happen in her life. Here, we can observe and analyse it through the theory of objective correlative where the novelist tries to describe the changing situation and incidents that will take place in the life of characters. Here, through the presentation of the ominous and sinister scene of Kanchenjunga novelist feels and hopes to evoke the reader towards the situation.

The occurrences of 'The Inheritance of Loss' take place in the perspective of postcolonial study. The setting of this novel is connected to Kalimpong. The story moves from this place to Russia to America and then Indian state West Bengal. The plot presents

the 1980s ethnic movement led by Nepali citizens for their separate state of Gorkhaland which engulfed the people of that place. Nepalis of this place put on their brutally deprived ethnic identity, as they raise their vociferous voice “Gorkhaland for Gorkhas” and in the argument with which they legitimate their demand they evoke that they are laborers, on the tea plantations, coolies dragging heavy loads, soldiers as they have their separate or specific regiment known as Gorkha Regiment. So, they consider it their own country, they fight for it. But they are treated like a slave here.

Indeed, all Nepalis or Gorkhas don't feel to go against the Indian government for their separate state but it is their dignity to have identity associated with this land. Gyan, one of the most prominent characters of this novel has primarily been presented as a tutor of Sai and later on loves to her. Gyan basically belongs to the Nepali community and joins the GNLF(Gorkha National Liberation front) and gets separated from Sai because despite being an educated youth, he does not get respect and not identified as an educated person. He, therefore does not signify his identity as a tutor or lover. He gives priority to his ethnic identity that propels him to revolt against his identity associated to Sai as a lover.

Gyan becomes so vociferous to the people adhering western culture including Sai as she was entirely associated to the western identity. He discards Sai that being Hindu, she doesn't celebrate Durga Puja, Dussehra and other Indian festivals. So, he addresses entire westernized community as slaves and fool running after the western culture.

Another character Biju, the son of cook Pannalal moves to America to seek a better job but there he was tortured and humiliated by his boss. He couldn't get better life, satisfaction and peace over there. So, character like Biju is doubly marginalised. Prominent postcolonial critic Gayatri Spivack who propounded Subaltern Theory underlines it as doubly marginalized as being poor, deprived and being slaves as much that happened to Biju in America. So, interestingly the title of this novel can be explained from author's perspectives. The word 'inheritance' which is accomplished with positiveness has been presented affluent over the word 'loss' which suggests the negative meaning. It is emphasized on 'inheritance' to associate with the situation of Biju. Then, his life can be manifested that the loss of prosperity for which America is known. Indeed, Biju in lieu of the loss of job in America gets back his dignity and freedom after returning back to his country. Biju's victory is undeniable when he comes back to India with a sense of gain in terms of his relation and love.

Biju's father, Pannalal who is beaten by judge, after his confession as he ate the same meal in the same plate and as he didn't pay his duty accordingly. He eventually states “... I am a bad man I watched out for nobody and nothing but myself... beat me” [11]. So, it is remarkable that his realization and confession over his mistakes gives the glimpse of his identity as human being. As Gyan was a victim of temporary misjudgment. His betrayal of Sai and her grandfather is situational. But, when he feels guilty over his action as he is not a bad person, he becomes wise as the word Gyan (wisdom) suggests. After realizing his

follies, instead of giving priority to his identity as a political activist, he regards human relations above all. Ultimately, he sincerely longs for reunion with Sai, and even takes initiative to effect his reconciliation with her.

Inevitably, Sai uses indecent words for Gyan and his entire family members with their dire consequences but she takes this step when Gyan tarnishes her human values. She finally appreciates Gyan for emphasizing upon his ethnic identity with identity as a human being. Through sufferings she has a great realization of forgiving Gyan manifesting as the zenith of human values. Sai, ultimately realizes “There was a grace in forgetting and giving up.” [12] and when judge brutally beats the father and the wife of the drunken man, Sai shows her genuine human nature for these victims and enquires if the cook has given them anything. Even, during her phase of emotional despair, she retains her sensibility and psycho-spiritual capacity to feel grateful “... for the greatness of mountains, valley and entire and landscape ...” [13]. Her sympathy for cook Pannalal, consoling him and making tea for him shows her great transformation and helps her to realize at the end of the novel.

She gets enlightened of the profound message of life and she utters “... truth of life was apparent. All of you needed to do was to reach out and pluck it.” [14] The truth that Sai realizes is that the process of civilizations have gone through with its rise and fall and by the action and destruction of men, but no one can disapprove the intensity of human values and instincts even if understand the word ‘apparent’ in the framework of the deconstructive philosophy of relativity of the meaning of ‘signifiers’. Then also we can legitimately argue that Sai’s realization applies equally well to the message the novel promulgates what Sai perceives to the simple truth, that no truth in the life is absolute and that therefore all truths are only “apparent”, that hatred is as much true as love, suffering is as much real as the inculcation of fortitude and endurance is essential, violence and barbaric atrocity are as much part of the human race as sanctity and civilized behaviour, gain is as much inheriting as even loss. This truth of life is presented by most of the characters of this novel from educated Gyan to exploited Biju to westernized Sai to ultimately illiterate Pannalal. He states “It will be all right, everything goes through a bad time, the world goes in a cycle, bad things happen, pass, and things are once again good, ...” [15]

Rabindranath Tagore in his worldly acclaimed novel ‘Gora’ emphasizes upon the ultimate identity of a man. Gora, the protagonist of this novel, eventually prioritizes his identity as a human being who was at home in India and was not disturbed by the questions of religion, region, caste, class and complexion.

Conclusion:

In this way, through the characters Sai, Gyan, Biju and Pannalal the novel ends with certain message that brutality and inhuman activities have been the inextricable part of every phase of human civilization, but it has always been constructed and enriched by man’s capacity of endurance from suffering and extending himself to a superhuman limit through love, pity, and forgiveness.

This is a concept which comprehends human values as identity of self and which is identified by a self as its ultimate value. So, the realization of truth of the major characters of this novel is actually a revelation of truth. So, it is the quest of self as a human being which is the ultimate identity of a man.

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Digital Detox; Challenges and Solutions for Generation Z

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This paper has been divided into 3 parts. The first part explores the goal of a digital diet to improve a person's overall mental health, reduce stress, and help becoming more conscious.

The second part deals with various challenges involved in Digital Detox. To do this, one has to stop using technology and electronic gadgets. One can reach this goal in a lot of different ways, from turning off one's phone for a few hours to staying away from all electronics for a long time. Several studies have found that taking part in a Digital Detox may be good for a person's mental health as well as their overall well-being.

The last part focuses on Digital Detox and how these problems are to set goals that can be reached. It also talks about the steps to come up with a plan to reach those goals such as, finding good replacement tasks and set a timer to keep oneself accountable are both things that could be helpful.

It concludes with suggesting that Detoxing from digital technology is not a one-time thing, but an ongoing process that takes time, energy, and commitment. In general, taking part in a Digital Detox can help us find a better balance between our online and offline lives. It can also help us use technology with more understanding and purpose.

Keywords: Digital Detox, Digital diet, mental health, FOMO: Fear of missing out

Introduction

Digital Detox refers to the act of taking a break from technology and electronic bias similar as smartphones, computers, and tablets. This break is intended to reduce stress, increase awareness, and ameliorate overall internal health. Spending a lot of time in front of defenses has come a common issue in ultramodern times, and numerous people witness negative goods similar as eyestrain, sleep dislocation, and increased anxiety. A Digital Detox can help to reduce the negative impact of technology and allow people to connect with the physical world around them.

A Digital Detox can be done in a variety of ways, from simply turning off your phone for a many hours each day to taking a complete break from all electronics for an extended period. During a Digital Detox, people can engage in conditioning similar as reading books, spending time in nature, exercising, planning, or fraternizing with musketeers and family in person. Although Digital Detox isn't a scientific term, exploration has suggested that taking a break from technology can have a positive impact on internal health and well-being.

Why Digital Detox?

Digital Detox is important because too much use of things like smartphones, computers, tablets, and social media can hurt our physical and mental health. Here are some reasons why it is important to take a break from technology:

Better health in general: Too much time in front of a screen can lead to eye strain, headaches, neck and back pain, bad posture, and broken sleep cycles, among other health problems. Eliminating time spent in front of a screen can help lessen these symptoms and lead to better physical health. Studies show that too much use of social media can lead to anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues. Taking a break from social media and other Digital devices can help you feel less stressed and improve your mental health in general.

Gains in productivity: Constant alerts and distractions from electronic devices can lower productivity and make it hard to pay attention. A Digital Detox can help you be more focused and better handle your time. Improved relationships: Overuse of Digital devices can lead to a sense of disconnection from others, even when we are physically present with them. A Digital Detox can help us to be more present in our relationships and improve communication with loved ones.

Overall, a Digital Detox can help to promote a healthier balance between our online and offline lives, and allow us to be more mindful and intentional in our use of technology.

Challenges in Digital Detox

A Digital Detox can be challenging for numerous people due to colorful reasons, including Dependence on technology, numerous people have come dependent on technology to carry out their diurnal conditioning. It can be delicate for them to reduce their operation of Digital bias.

Social pressure Social media platforms have come an integral part of our social lives. People may feel pressured to stay connected to their peers and may find it delicate to stay down from social media for an extended period.

FOMO: Fear of missing out (FOMO) is a common miracle where people feel anxious and stressed when they miss out on updates or information on social media. This can make it challenging for them to take a break from social media.

Work pressure: Numerous people use Digital bias for work-related tasks, and it may be challenging for them to dissociate from work entirely.

Pullout symptoms: When people reduce their Digital operation, they may witness pull-out symptoms similar to anxiety, restlessness, and perversity. This can make it challenging for them to stick to their Digital Detox plan.

Ways to Detox

Set realistic goals:

Setting realistic goals is a smart way to approach Digital Detox. Start by identifying what areas of one's Digital life you want to address. This could be reducing screen time, limiting social media use, or decoupling work emails outside of business hours. Once one has linked pretensions, one needs to make sure that it is specific, measurable, attainable, applicable, and time-bound (SMART).

Next, one needs to create a plan to achieve goals. This might involve setting aside designated times for screen-free activities, using apps to track one's screen time, or disabling notifications on the devices. Be sure to track your progress regularly and adjust the plan as needed.

One also needs to remember that Digital Detox is a process, not a one-time event. It is advised to be patient and kind to oneself and goals. One needs to celebrate the successes and use any setbacks as learning opportunities to help one get refined your approach. With patience, persistence, and a SMART plan, you can successfully achieve one's Digital Detox goals.

Using a timer

Using a timekeeper can be a smart way to apply a Digital Detox. One can set a specific quantum of time, similar to 30 twinkles, and devote that time to being fully unplugged. During this time, turn off all electronics and concentrate on other conditioning, similar as reading a book or taking a walk outdoors. The timekeeper will help you stay responsible and help the temptation to check your phone or computer. As you come more comfortable with this routine, gradationally increase the quantum of time for your Digital Detox sessions. Setting a timekeeper is a simple yet effective way to incorporate regular Digital Detoxing into one's routine and promote a healthier relationship with technology.

Turning off notifications

Turning off notifications can be an effective way to facilitate Digital Detox. Notifications are designed to grab our attention and keep us engaged with our devices, which can make it difficult to detach from them. By turning off notifications, we can reduce the temptation to constantly check our devices and instead focus on other activities.

When one is constantly interrupted by notifications, it can also be harder to focus on important tasks or enjoy our leisure time without distractions. Turning off notifications can help one establish healthier boundaries with our devices and create space for more meaningful activities and connections.

However, it is important to note that turning off notifications may not be feasible or desirable in all situations, such as when important messages or calls need to be received. It is up to each individual to determine what works best for them and their unique circumstances.

Conclusion

In the end, it could be advised that a Digital break is a time when a person does not use any Digital products or platforms. Since technology has crept into every part of ultramodern life, it is important to take regular breaks from it to keep our studies and bodies healthy.

The research intends to suggest a few strategies, taking a break from technology can be good in numerous ways. Firstly, it is possible that the constant sluice of caution and updates adds to worry and anxiety. Second, it can help to get a better night's sleep by making it less likely that the blue light from electronics will throw off our circadian measures. Third, it can help us be further done by cutting down on the time we waste on social media and other Digital distractions.

It further advocated to use digital media less to develop awareness practices, like giving full attention to their immediate surroundings and tasks. Giving our favored bones our full attention can help us get to know them better and ameliorate our bonds with them. A Digital Detox could be veritably good for both our internal and physical health. Because of this, we are better suitable to put our focus where it should be on our connections, the health of those ties, and our own growth, rather of on the constant stimulation that technology gives us. ■

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Female Characters in Anuradha Sharma Pujari's *Gilbertson's Feet* and *Waiting for a Belated Spring*

Gayatri Goswami

Anuradha Sharma Pujari, a renowned writer of Assam articulates varied layers of human relationship including female space in a 'man-made society' with deep psychological insight creating a host of female characters throughout her novels and short stories. This paper attempts to bring forth how the expression and articulation of female subjectivity in a patriarchal modern Assamese society has to face obstruction of creative space or a world of her own denying the free spirit in a patriarchal societal set up whereby paralyzing her existence and identity in the true sense of the term. This paper also tries to argue and explore the female characters from a stance where in the process of analysis it is found that though not fully liberated yet they can assert their standpoint leading towards a positive note struggling to negotiate and harmonize male-female relationship as a human being. Thus, this paper is an attempt to highlight how the female characters with powerful mindset contrive message of protest to the society exploring two short stories entitled 'Gilbertson's Feet' (Gilbertsonor Bhorì), 'Waiting for a Belated Spring' (Eta Belated Basantar Opekhyà) from narratological point of view as well as from feminist perspective. Both the stories have been extracted from the short story collection -*No Man's Land* of this literary stalwart. However, this paper also incorporates various aspects of human situation of modern society in a life-like manner.

Keywords: Short Story, Narratological, Feminist Perspective, Female Character.

Introduction

Anuradha Sharma Pujari is a prolific Asamese writer renowned for her unique contribution in the field of novel, short story and autobiographical writings. Her unique creations like *Hridoi Ek Bigyapon*, 1998; *Ejon Ishwaror Sandhanot*, 1998 earned her reputation world-wide. Her other novels like *Kanchan*, 2001; *Sahebpuror Borosun*, 2003; *Boragi Nodir Ghat*, 2004; *Nahoror Niribili Cha*, 2005; *Mareng*, 2010; *Jalachabi*, 2015; *Soon Harinor Chenkur*, 2017; *Iyat Ekhon Aranya Asil*, 2019 also express her strong hold over creative activity. The flourishing existence and originality of this writer can be further perceived in her autobiographical writings like *Kolikotar Sithi*, 1999; *Diary*, 2001 and

Autograph, 2005. The energetic creative life of this artist is strikingly discernible in her short stories collected in *Basantar Gan*, 1999; *Ejon Osamajik Kobir Biography*, 2001; *Ketherinar Soite Eta Nirjon Duporia*, 2005; *No Men's Land*, 2008 Etc. The uniqueness of Anuradha Sharma Pujari lies in her ability to depict and capture 'moments' of psychological insight of character in life-like accuracy. In Anuradha Sharma Pujari's writings the reflections of contemporary society is strongly felt because no writer can produce his/her creation in an isolated way as literature exists in society and it also springs from the society. Though as a unique expression of society and contemporary issues all the published writings of Anuradha Sharma Pujari are outstanding, yet for the sake of convenience and limitations of space and time two short stories of the writer are taken into consideration in this paper. The two short stories taken for the analysis are *Gilbertson's Feet– Gilbertson or Bhoi*, *Waiting For A Belated Spring– Eta Belated Basantar Opekhyia*. Both the stories are taken from the collection -*No Man's Land*.

This paper aims to shed light on the space of women with a sense of psychic attribute of barrenness and futility beyond all material prosperity hankering after a desired life of creativity and originality "killing the Angel in the house" (Woolf, 36) which can in turn be a powerful instrument for the betterment of society. Thus, this paper would encompass how within the short span of a short story, the writer reflects the protagonist's relentless thirst for a space of her own and yearning for the past moments living in a world of absolute monotony of present society. This paper focuses on how in spite of material prosperity, the sense of absolute futility, dissatisfaction, yearning for something more, ambivalence enshrine modern society and it is analysed in the two short stories represented through the female characters of contemporary Assamese society.

This research paper would work on the hypothetical statement that women always have an urge to go beyond all material pleasures of life in order to create a space of her own leading to an identity with her distinctiveness and individuality as a "rational human being" (Wollstonecraft, 23) in a patriarchal society. The hypothesis of the paper also seeks to highlight various expressions of the female characters in the narrative with its manifestations of a host of significant aspects of a female's life.

It is observed that the present moment is dipped in deep disarray and chaos with strong patriarchal hold paralyzing and silencing the spirit of the female 'self' using them simply as 'alluring object' and 'goods' (Irigaray, 45). Though male and female are the two aspects of society, women are always discriminated in a patriarchal society. And also, these stories are the reflection of contemporary society with materialistic attitude, exploitation of female leading to a devastated imbalance and crisis in modern society. The fundamental impulse behind this paper is how amidst a crisis-stricken today's society, people may get a room for thinking about women's space. Hence, it is significant and substantial to explore a topic like female protagonists in the short stories of Anuradha Sharma Pujari contextualizing two representative and relevant short stories of the said author and here lies the relevance of the study.

This paper is an attempt to achieve a critical understanding of Anuradha Sarmah Pujari's short stories with special reference to the aforesaid two from narratological perspective. As narrative is a mode of representation and narratology studies the nature, form and functioning of narrative" (Prince, 64), it entails an engagement in a close study of the individual short stories examining how the monotony of contemporary busy and mechanical life create a sense of barrenness and futility in individual's consciousness. This paper would encompass how within the short span of a short story, the writer reflects the protagonist's thirst for the past moments living in a world of absolute monotony of present society. Thus, this paper focuses on how in spite of material prosperity, the sense of absolute futility, dissatisfaction, yearning for something more, ambivalence enshrine modern society and it is analysed in the two short stories represented through the female characters of contemporary Assamese society. This paper tries to analyse these issues of society considering narrator's perspective, time scheme which is discernible in frequent reference to past moment in the present and also some other elements of narratological analysis such as plot, beginning and ending etc. As these issues are more poignant and particularly expressed in these short stories of concern, the study is concentrated to interpret the sense of futility of female protagonists as an obvious outcome of present society from narratological perspective. However, as female characters are the prime concern and also taken within the purview of the discussion and analysis, certain recourse is taken to the feminist stance while analysing the characters.

In *Gilbertson's Feet*, the consciousness of the character of Bhaswati is the focal point through whom the sense of boredom and barrenness is conveyed in the narrative. Thus, Bhaswati is the female protagonist in the story, who in the act of satisfying her husband has to engross herself in a mechanical world forgetting her own self. Though she is accustomed to it, yet she feels that she has her own desire which remains unsatisfied. Thus, in spite of all material prosperity she always craves for a space of her own where she can open up her absolutely own world -the liberated spirit and her creative self for which she has been longing for. The other story *Waiting for A Belated Spring* also carries the same sense of boredom and ambivalence in a world of prosperity through a female character through first person narrator 'I'. Here in this story the writer vividly depicts the absolutely busy life style of contemporary society snatching away the spontaneity of human behaviour. In the narrative it is also expressed how mechanical life style of contemporary social set up replaces spontaneous feelings of love making people compulsively calculative in every aspect of life. Thus, both the short stories convey and highlight the sense of yearning in an absolutely prosperous world which is depicted through the female protagonists reflecting a very true to life situation in contemporary Assamese society.

In any narrative beginnings and endings have considerable importance:

Since the nature of language is linear, one word following another, literary texts must inescapably have beginnings and endings. In an obvious sense, however, no story ever begins or ends: it is always possible to think of

something that happened before the beginning and something that may happen after the end. As a result the decisions that novelists make as to where to start and conclude their narratives are often of considerable interest,...(Page,30)

The beginning of the story *Gilbertson's Feet* introduces the character of the female protagonist of unique nature-who lives in her own world in her own way. Her frank disposition shows that she has a personality with her individualistic way of thinking. At the very outset of the story, Syamanta, the prospective husband comes to meet Bhaswati for the first time. Here from the very beginning she is portrayed in a different way with her independent way of thought process though not emancipated fully and suffocated not asserting herself sometimes within a typical so-called happy family situation but paralysed in the pattern of pervasive patriarchal notion dominating the contemporary societal set up. Her response towards the person meeting for the first time who would be her husband is totally different from a traditional woman. Instead of shyness and hesitation in front of her prospective husband in their first meet, her behaviour towards Syamanta is quite casual and free and frank:

On arriving to meet with a prospective bride, Syamanta was left amazed by what he saw. The girl his parents had chosen for him was sitting on verandah floor, combing a cat's fur as she lectured him.

"Hang on, now. Stay down! Or that man coming over here will snatch you away!" The girl announced, pointing at Syamanta.

Syamanta could tell it was the same girl, the one whose photographs he had been shown.

"Do sit." She told him, giving him a familiar smile, "I'll change and come back."

Again in the opening of the story from the conversation of Bhaswati and Syamanta it is perceived the continuation of the frank disposition and independent way of thinking:

"...You know why I am here, don't you?"

"I do. You serve in the sky, and you have come here to see if I am fit to be your future wife. I do love the sky. I really do!"

"Serve in the sky? Oh, The Indian Air Force! I am afraid my job is on the ground, though. If you do like those who serve in the sky, I can find a nice pilot for you..."

"I don't want a pilot"

"No? Why?"

"I want to see the sky from the earth. So, do you like what you see? If you ask me, I don't quite like your nose. And ears. The rest is good,

however. You talk well too!”

Thus, though the beginning of the plot indicates individuality of the female protagonist as the plot moves forward, she gradually has been enveloped and submerged in life's monotony along with her prosperous husband Syamanta. In course of the story, it is expressed that she is mechanically habituated to the life of physical pleasure in order to please and satisfy her husband. Thus, the plot of the short story progresses with a usual lifeless life of Bhaswati with Syamanta. The dull monotony of everyday life of contemporary society is excellently presented through the consciousness of Bhaswati's character indulging herself mechanically in sensual pleasure to balance her apparently happy family life satisfying her husband:

“I was told you sang. How come I have never heard you singing?”

Bhaswati laughed. She rolled over in bed, undoing the buttons on the front of her nightgown. A routine affair. Syamanta's hand crept in through it, kindling arousal.

Her life so becomes horribly insipid and perfunctory that she is surrounded by gloom of inert artistic sensibility and creativity. She has to sacrifice her own sense of pleasure in the act of pleasing her husband. Thus, the story presents the transition of the female protagonist from her free spirit to her crippled existence as a result of modern mechanistic life. Though, she gets all material pleasure, yet she has lost her own liberated self- the life of spontaneity and free spirit. Her inner self is crushed by lifeless mechanical schedule of each moment and her heart becomes shrivelled, devoid of true spirit and sensibility:

“Huh. What did you say? Songs? There are songs in my heart. They just can't seem to come out of there, somehow.”

Her sentimental assertion is followed by Syamanta's superficial and shallow response which obviously shows his interest in physical pleasure:

“Here? There is a song here? Let me see. Where is it?”

The narrator's perspective further intensifies the dissatisfaction of the female character in satisfying others mechanically:

Syamanta began running his keen fingers over her bare breasts. Bhaswati knew which parts of her body they would travel to next, and what would follow.

The story narrativizes one of the acute problems of society in which women have to satisfy everyone and, in the process, women have to sacrifice her own pleasure. But as the story moves forward, we perceive her spirit in her assertion and convey a sense of affirmation.

“I love Gilbertson Changma's feet.” Bhaswati blurted out.

Thus, Bhaswati represents the dissatisfied self of contemporary society behind her apparent and outward happy and prosperous family life:

Bhaswati's chest held a night's stillness within it too. Like the cuckoo's sudden cry, a few sounds, at times, unexpectedly made their escape, managing to pierce the void inside her.

She takes shelter in her own world through the image of Gilbertson Changma's spirit, entrusting her hopes and aspirations in the idealized vision of Gilbertson Changma. Here, Gilbertson's feet serve as a powerful metaphor to represent Bhaswati's desired and unclipped spirit. Thus, the narrative of the story geared towards future revelation with the interplay of satisfaction and dissatisfaction of male and female self.

“Ah! Enough about Gilbertson. Now is not the time.
Chiku...Chiku...tell me how much you love me. Tell me...”

But Bhaswati's unhappy self is expressed through the narrator:

When would dawn break? She wondered. When would she see the sky and those feet she kept dreaming of? Those unstoppable feet! An image flashed before her drowsy eyes. Bhaswati saw a pair of feet-joyous and free-along with a football, rising up from the earth to soar high in the sky.

Bhaswati's dissatisfaction is further expressed in an imagery of 'primary colour' without any novelty. But her “shrivelled heart recovered greenness” while she meets the painter Sameer as it ends absolute monotony and she once again rejuvenated. Her rejuvenated soul embarks on a flight and in such a moment she expresses:

“Syamanta, when I am humming away as I clean the bathroom, make the bed, arrange flowers in the living room vases and cook your favourite chili paneer, why don't you ever say, 'leave all that. Sit beside me and sing a song. Doesn't matter if it's off-key. Does not matter if you forget the lines.'?”

She is revitalized by the appearance of Sameer going beyond the dull monotony of her mechanical life and her rejuvenated self is mediated through the interest and enthusiasm shown by the Artist who is supposed to gift her Gilbertson's feet-the desired and most precious object of Bhaswati's life. The ending of the story overtly declares the victory of her own spirit:

“I have fallen in love with myself, Syamanta. Can you hear me? Can you? For the first time in my life, I have started loving myself. Leave me on my own! Just me and those magical feet...”

The other short story *Waiting for A Belated Spring* reflects a quest for bygone days through a female character in her hopeless yearning for her zestful life which is no more to be found in her present. She always looks back in the hope of living a life and eagerly desires for the days of the past full of vigour and vitality. Thus, in the short story, past appears in a recurrent fashion intensifying the momentum of her yearning. Though the story begins with utter boredom and ambivalence of modern society, yet it ends in an optimistic note- continuation

of hope and creativity. Thus, the story written in the first-person narrative captures a moment of ‘yearning’ of a modern female reflecting the sterility and mechanistic life style of contemporary modern Assamese society. In the beginning of the story, it is perceived a sense of boredom and disillusionment:

“Something does not feel right these days. I asked, what is it? Days or nights?

Throughout the story, the writer creates true to life moments of contemporary society in a very vivid way. In today’s society people are absolutely busy and the writer represents realistically this kind of life through the character of her son and daughter. Even her husband and she herself have to lead a life of extremely busy schedule and it makes their lives mechanical where there is no space for human feelings, emotions, sentimental issues. So, the story represents her yearning for such moment of rare pleasure. Her desperate craving for bygone days is expressed in the narrative:

“Why don’t you bring back our bygone days during this life time...”

The story ends in an optimistic note in her appeal to her husband:

“Bring back your old self, Let’s herald an advent of a spring together—at the right moment.”

The end of the story with the powerful metaphor of spring signifies that there is a ‘life’ though momentarily dead, even after the monotony of each busy moment.

Thus, both the stories of Anuradha Sharma Pujari capture the moment of unhappiness, dissatisfaction through the female protagonists created out of their want of space absolutely ‘own’ as a result of extremely busy and mechanical life-style of modern patriarchal society. Both the stories reflect a human situation of contemporary Assamese society. But the creator portrays both the characters regaining their spirit at the end of the story. The author does not leave them to be disillusioned but optimistically resolves the issue. So, it can be said that beyond the rat race of today’s competitive and materialistic and restless society, there is a life of creativity which will remain in the society as an undying continuum. This paper argues this basic statement contextualizing female protagonists chiefly through two representative short stories of Anuradha Sharma Pujari in the backdrop of contemporary modern Assamese society. From the above discussion it may be contended that the female characters though not fully liberated yet can assert their standpoint leading towards a positive note trying to negotiate and harmonize male-female relationship as a human being. ■

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Exploring the Rise and Impact of Indian Hindi Web Series: Unveiling the Power of Storytelling in the Digital Age

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The digital revolution has paved the way for the emergence of Indian web series as a powerful medium of storytelling, challenging traditional narratives in the entertainment industry. This research article delves into the world of Indian web series, analyzing their growth, impact, and cultural significance in contemporary Indian society. Drawing on a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors driving the success of Indian web series, as well as highlighting the various themes and genres that have gained popularity among audiences. The findings shed light on the evolution of storytelling techniques, changes in audience preferences, and the role of digital platforms in shaping the landscape of Indian web series. Additionally, this research explores the cultural implications of these series, examining their portrayal of social issues, representation of diverse communities, and potential influence on social discourse. The article also discusses the opportunities and challenges faced by content creators, producers, and actors in this burgeoning industry. Ultimately, this research aims to contribute to the academic understanding of Indian web series while recognizing their growing significance as a form of entertainment and cultural expression.

Keywords: Indian web series, storytelling, digital revolution, audience preferences, cultural implications, content creation

Introduction

Indian web series have emerged as a powerful medium in the entertainment industry, redefining the way stories are told and consumed. With their diverse narratives, rich character development, and high production values, these series have garnered both critical acclaim and a massive fan following worldwide. This article delves into the evolution of Indian web series, highlighting their impact on the global entertainment landscape.

This research article aims to contribute to the understanding of Indian web series as a unique and influential medium of storytelling. It explores the rise of Indian web series

and its impact on the entertainment industry. It analyzes the reasons behind the popularity of web series, the shift in audience preferences, and the challenges faced by traditional television and cinema. The article also discusses the cultural significance of Indian web series, highlighting their ability to address social issues, challenge societal norms, and provide a platform for diverse narratives. Through a comprehensive analysis of various arguments, quotes, and references, this article sheds light on the growing influence of Indian web series in shaping contemporary entertainment consumption patterns. The entertainment industry in India has witnessed a transformative shift with the advent of digital platforms and the subsequent rise of Indian web series. With increasing internet penetration and access to smartphones, web series have gained prominence as a unique and accessible form of storytelling. This article seeks to explore the factors driving the growth and popularity of Indian web series, as well as their impact on Indian society and culture. Through a comprehensive analysis of various web series, this research aims to provide insights into the evolving landscape of content creation, changes in audience preferences, and the social implications of these series. It sheds light on the cultural significance of these series and their potential impact on Indian society. By identifying the opportunities and challenges faced by industry stakeholders, this study seeks to facilitate further research and discussions on the future of Indian web series in the digital age.

Indian web series have gained immense popularity in recent years, with a diverse range of content and high production values. From gripping crime dramas to heartwarming comedies, Indian web series have captivated audiences both within the country and internationally. One of the most acclaimed Indian web series is “Sacred Games,” which is based on Vikram Chandra’s novel of the same name. The series has been praised for its gritty storytelling and stellar performances, with actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui’s portrayal of gangster Ganesh Gaitonde receiving particular acclaim. In an interview with The Indian Express, Siddiqui stated, “I am proud to be a part of ‘Sacred Games’ as it has set a benchmark for Indian web series on a global scale.” Another popular Indian web series is “*Mirzapur*,” a crime thriller set in the lawless hinterlands of Uttar Pradesh. The series has been lauded for its intense action sequences and complex characters. Actor Pankaj Tripathi, who plays the ruthless crime lord Kaleen Bhaiya in the series, remarked in an interview with Hindustan Times, “The success of ‘*Mirzapur*’ has shown that Indian audiences are hungry for edgier and more realistic content.” In addition to crime dramas, Indian web series also encompass a wide array of genres, including romantic comedies, supernatural thrillers, and historical epics. The diversity of content has contributed to the growing popularity of Indian web series among viewers of all ages and backgrounds. The success of Indian web series has also attracted the attention of international streaming platforms such as Netflix and Amazon Prime, leading to collaborations between Indian filmmakers and global production houses. This has further elevated the quality and visibility of Indian web series on a global scale. In conclusion, Indian web series have emerged as a powerful medium for storytelling, showcasing the talent and creativity of Indian filmmakers and actors. With their compelling

narratives and high production values, Indian web series are poised to continue captivating audiences worldwide.

Previous studies have investigated the rise of web series globally, however, the Indian context remains underexplored. This literature review will examine existing research on web series, storytelling techniques, and the impact of digital platforms on the entertainment industry. Additionally, it will delve into cultural representations in Indian web series and their potential influence on social discourse.

This research article employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative data from interviews with content creators and industry experts, as well as quantitative analysis of audience preferences through surveys and online data collection. The study samples will be selected based on popular Indian web series across different genres and platforms. The collected data will be analyzed using thematic analysis and statistical measures to identify patterns and themes.

Web series have gained immense popularity in recent years, and Indian web series have emerged as a force to be reckoned with in the global entertainment industry. With their compelling storytelling, diverse themes, and innovative approach, Indian web series have revolutionized the way we consume content. In this article, we will explore the rise of Indian web series and discuss the arguments that make them a significant part of the entertainment landscape.

1. Creative Freedom

One of the key advantages of web series is the creative freedom it offers to storytellers. Unlike traditional television shows or films, web series are not bound by the constraints of censorship or commercial considerations. The creators have the freedom to explore bold and unconventional themes, tackle social issues, and experiment with storytelling techniques. This creative freedom has resulted in the emergence of unique and thought-provoking content in Indian web series.

2. Diverse Content

Indian web series have broken the mold of traditional storytelling by exploring a wide range of subjects and themes. They delve into various genres such as crime, romance, drama, comedy, and supernatural, catering to the diverse tastes of the audience. Moreover, web series have also given a platform to underrepresented voices and stories that were previously overlooked by mainstream media. This diversity in content has made Indian web series more inclusive and representative of the society we live in.

3. Quality Production Values

Gone are the days when web series were considered low-budget productions. Indian web series have raised the bar in terms of production values and technical finesse. With advancements in technology and availability of online streaming platforms, web series are

now produced with high production standards, captivating visuals, and top-notch performances. This has resulted in a more immersive viewing experience for the audience.

4. Global Recognition

Indian web series have not only captivated the domestic audience but have also garnered international acclaim. With the availability of online streaming platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Disney+ Hotstar, Indian web series have reached a global audience. Shows like “Sacred Games,” “Mirzapur,” and “*Delhi Crime*” have gained critical acclaim and have put Indian web series on the global map. This recognition has opened up new opportunities for Indian content creators and has expanded the reach of Indian storytelling.

Findings and Discussion:

This section will present the findings of the study, highlighting the factors contributing to the success of Indian web series, the diverse themes and genres explored, and the cultural implications they carry. It will also discuss the challenges faced by content creators in this evolving industry. The rise of Hindi web series has been a game-changer in the Indian entertainment industry. With the advent of digital platforms, the audience has been exposed to a plethora of content that caters to their diverse tastes and preferences. From comedy to drama, romance to crime, and everything in between, Hindi web series have something for everyone. However, there are still some who argue that Hindi web series lack the depth and quality of their international counterparts. Let's explore this argument and see if it holds any weight. Firstly, it is important to acknowledge that the quality of Hindi web series has improved significantly over the years. The production values, storytelling, and performances have all been elevated to a level that can compete with international standards. Shows like *Sacred Games*, *Mirzapur*, and *Paatal Lok* have received critical acclaim not just in India but also globally. These shows have broken the stereotype that Hindi content is only meant for a certain demographic and have appealed to a wider audience. However, some argue that Hindi web series still lack the nuance and subtlety of their international counterparts. They claim that the themes and issues explored in these shows are often superficial and lack depth. They also argue that Hindi web series rely too heavily on shock value and explicit content to keep the audience engaged. To counter this argument, it is important to note that Hindi web series are a reflection of our society and culture. They explore themes and issues that are relevant to us and provide a platform for dialogue and discussion. Shows like *Delhi Crime*, which explores the aftermath of the Nirbhaya case, or *Made in Heaven*, which delves into the complexities of Indian weddings, are prime examples of how Hindi web series can be both entertaining and thought-provoking. Moreover, the use of explicit content in Hindi web series is not gratuitous but rather serves a purpose in the narrative. It is a reflection of the reality of our society and provides a raw and unfiltered look at the world we live in. It is also important to note that the use of explicit content is not unique to Hindi web series but is prevalent in international shows as well.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, while there may be some who argue that Hindi web series lack the depth and quality of their international counterparts, it is important to acknowledge the progress that has been made in the Indian entertainment industry. Hindi web series have come a long way and have the potential to compete with international standards. They provide a platform for diverse voices and perspectives and are a reflection of our society and culture. As actor Manoj Bajpayee rightly said, “The world is watching us now. We have to show them what we are capable of.”

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Queer Concept of Upendra Bhanja's Re-told *Ramayan* – *Baideisha Bilasa* : A Critical Study

Subhadarshini Mallick

Kamal Kumar Raul

Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja is a unique and unchallenged classical poet in Odia literature whose rhythm and rhyme and ornate poetic style can be ever remembered for all times to come. His poetic output: *Koti Brahmand Sundari*, *Prema Sudhanidhi*, *Rasika Harabali*, *Bajar Boli*, above all, *Baideisha Bilasa* (in 4 volumes) is milestones on the highway of classical Odia literature. Specifically his *Baideisha Bilasa* may be a gemstone among them which is refigured from the original *Ramayan*, written by Valmiki and renamed as 'Queer Ramayana' or Re-told Ramayana. *Baideisha Bilasa* is significantly and symbolically rich and rhymed with LGBTQ+ or Queer Concept. Its most of the episodes seem to be fabulously carpeted genderisation, homosexuality and binary gender opposition so far. This article, "Queer Concept of Upendra Bhanja's Re-told Ramayana – *Baideisha Bilasa*: A Critical Study" is intended to find out it's queerness deeply saturated in *Baideisha Bilasa* and to explicable genderisation carved in the ornate verses. Basically, initiating from its significance of title up to its origin and centre of Sita's inflammable anxiety for Rama, are seen to be spread with queer concept with high order allusive and allegorical manner. In four volumes the entire *Ramayana* of Valmiki is refigured by the poet's own style; alliterative, allusive and allegorical. The poet's description and narrative skill of Sita's desire from beginning till last may be very well maintained with his poetic craftsmanship with love, longing, loss and romance having footprints of queerness so far.

Keywords - queerness, LGBTQI, genderisation, baideisha, bilasa, arddhanarishwar, homosexuality, binary, heterosexuality, leela, rasa-leela.

Introduction

Refiguring any great work with much more poetic dexterity of artistic craftsmanship may be a gift of God and Bhanja's work, *Baideisha Bilasa* goes beyond his majestic attempt.

The 'Queer Ramayana' is composed by the King poet Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja embodying the title *Baideisha Bilasa*. It is written in the most ornate courtly fashion with

fascinating description of romance, love, longing and loss of Sita. The story not basically tells about the inflammable desire and anxiety of Sita for Rama but with various queer twists in most of the episodes. Before pointing out the depiction of 'queerness', projected in the Baideisha Bilasa, one has to be familiar with the definition of queerness and its projection in the Indian Mythology.

The very word 'Queer' bears itself "queerness" embodying three parts of speech – noun, adjective and verb. It means strange or unusual having an offensive way of describing a homosexual especially a man having sex relations with another man. It is possibly to think and re-think everything about sexuality pertaining lesbian, gay, trans-, bi-genders. It has a vast meaning with its extensive field to analyze and synthesize. The term 'queer' is derogatory depending upon their race, class, personal experience of caste and creed.

'Queer Theory' is a framework of ideas that suggest different inclination of sex emotion either heterosexually or homosexually or the ways of binary masculine and feminine genders. It is a long discourse which destabilizes the assumptions and privileges of security of sex study. It is originally crystallized from the roots of women studies, feminist theory, gay and lesbian studies. It is really sublimated in the post-modern and post-structuralist theory.

As it is said:

..." In 1991, Teresa De Laureates used the words "Queer Theory "to describe a way of thinking that did not use heterosexuality or binary gender constructs as it's starting point, but instead argued for a more fluid concept of identity..."

In this context it is better to quote or to know more about the term "Queer".

"... the term "Queer" was, at best, slang for homosexual, at worst a term of homophobic abuse. In recent years "queer" has come to be used differently, sometimes as an umbrella term for a coalition of culturally marginal sexual self-identifications and at other times to describe a nascent theoretical model which has developed out of more traditional lesbian and gay studies. What is clear, even from this brief and partial account of its contemporary deployment, is that queer is very much a category in the process of formulation..."

The Hindu views of homosexuality and LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender). Most of the Hindu mythological texts have portrayed homosexual experience as natural and joyful Kamasutra and recognizes same sex relations. There are several Hindu temples where art of Kamasutra have been carved that depict men and women engaging in homosexual arts. Vedas do not restrict homosexuality shown to be gender fluid falling into LGBT that represented in ritual law books, religious or narrative mythologies art, text books and cultures.

The Arthashastra carries the homosexual intercourse as an offence. It encourages chastity that applies to heterosexual intercourse. Dharma Shastra recognizes existence of

homosexuality religiously immoral. Manusmriti regards homosexual activity as an oxcart as a ritual pollution. It should be given the immersion as Brahmin males.

“... In 2009, the Delhi High Court legalized homosexuality in India, but the Supreme Court of India subsequently overturned the High Court’s decision. The Supreme Court of India, in a later ruling in 2018, reversed it’s previous verdict and decriminalized homosexual intercourse and relationships. Some Hindu priests have performed same sex marriages in temples...”.

One has to study for exploring and examining the ‘queer’ element or LGBTQI in Indian Mythology and their indirect communion with life an overview of gender fluidity. The religious study of Indian Mythology has very flexible queerness and somewhere it is also openly discussed in various sacred texts. These references can be traced out in Vedas, Puranas, Dharma Shastra, Kama -Shastra, Natya Shastra and so on. The flexibility of religion concerning the fluidity of gender and sexualities turned into immoral or adharmic. Somewhere it is also considered as unethical, somewhere ethical and somewhere found to be prejudiced or gender discrimination. The panoramic understanding of human nature the “Prakriti” that values queerness along with male ‘Purusha’ and female ‘Stri’ maybe crystallized. This mythological or LGBTQI study can pave the way for subsequent researchers. It is said in the key words:

“... The void of homelessness is real. The metaphor of home encapsulates the essence of life, without it one just breathes. The desire of having the soul attached to the soil is natural and human. The queerness has a home in nature...”

From the days of Copernicus and Galileo to the age of Moon mission Chandrayan -III and Sun Mission (trial) countless evolutionary interpretation on LGBT have been done. Each and every study must ignite another to have new concept and terminative intellect. Scientific and social studies have significantly evolved and advocated for queerness of human’s sexual orientation. As it is told:

“... the proofs of contemporary advanced understandings of different layers of genders and sexualities can be found in mythological ones and also in the scientifically written texts or the Shastras...”

Specially refiguring of the king poet’s ‘Dandakaranya Episodes’ (the exile of Rama and Sita) the absolute queerness is refigured so far. During the period of exile both Rama and Sita were wondering through the lanes and dens of the forest where a group of sages glanced at them. The sages most anxiously look at Rama; not exactly at Sita which gives the concept of heterosexuality. They were jealous of Sita for her absolute inclination to her husband. It is told in the mythology that all the sages plead to God to make them women and to place earthen pots on their chest to make mimic beasts imagining their dreadlocks to be breasts. This reminds the monkeys and bears in ‘The Ramayana’ who fought for Rama against Ravana

the devil have long standing desire to be Rama's own. They have been transformed into sixteen thousand Gopi's who were in love of Krishna in the Dwapara Yuga. This concept is absolutely described and recasted by Upendra Bhanja in the 'Dandakaranya Episode.'

As it is said:

"...watching this form from a far, Rama becomes upset and leaves the company of Sita and Lakshmana. He confers upon the dead sages the boon of being united with him as his lovers in raslila in his next life as Krishna. This is not merely an act of kindness. The fact that Rama never castigates the sages alludes to his recognition and acceptance of homosexual desires..."

Ramayana text is narrated in the episode 'Rama and Sita wedding night'. Rama is described as woman a 'nayika' waiting for her love.

"... Vasakasajja nayika or a lover who prepares the bed, eagerly awaiting sexual union. However, Sita takes so much time to arrive that Rama becomes distressed and acts like an Utkanthita nayika, or one distressed by separation and eventually his emotions make him a Khandita nayika, one who is enraged with the lover..."

Sita's desire is independent of her husband retelling as an obedient wife. Baideisha Bilasa of Upendra Bhanja profusely narrates in the feminist location. Upendra Bhanja's 'Queer Ramayana' is richly described the 'Queer Theory'.

Queerness is magnificently found in the Indian literature as homosexuality, transgenderism and gender fluidity from ancient epics, scriptures, mediaeval prose, poetry, art and architecture. Sita's erotic desire is expressed in Baideisha Bilasa by Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja. As the poet says:

"... Basare jatane ghodei chol kabach dei

Basangi smara bhayaru rati sebame snehi || (3:41) ..."

This maybe the freedom of speech law in the India with two words – 'smara' and 'bhaya'. *Smara* means 'to remember' and *bhaya* means 'to fear' which express cupid desire. Rati means love in the context of Sita's life to Rama. Sita's desire is independent of her husband. This is known to be a feministic desire of a obedient wife. This is a radical move to post-modern and pre-modern retellings. The text demonstrates that patriarchal preconditions and room for feminism, homoerotic desire and gender fluidity.

The very title Baideisha Bilasa can explicate the concept of queerness. Baideisha Bilasa is consisted of two words. *Baideisha* and *Bilasa*. *Baidehi* means B+ deihi (means bodiless). Body less body is supposed to be binary that means body without body, shape without shape, form without form. Again the daughter of the king of Bideha known as Baidehi or the daughter of Janaka, Janaki. *Bilasa* means pleasure out of desire or *akankhya*. Above all, pleasure of Sita out of anxiety of Rama. The sage Janaka was transformed into non-corporeal frame through his sincere austerity. This reminds also the concept of binary

what would have been taken into mind of Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja before writing his ‘Queer Ramayana’ Baideisha Bilasa. The husband of Baideishi is Isha (means Sita’s husband). *Bilasa* means ‘leela’. The Leela of Purushottam is nucleus of Baideisha Bilasa. Symbolically it signifies also composite gender(Rama+ Sita) as it is said as ‘Ardhanarishwar’ to Shiva and Parvati in Shiva Puran.

The poet Upendra Bhanja means to say that a female motive is to describe the ‘marjyada Purushottam’ and imagines his God as a woman. This tastes to the fact that blending gender binaries and accepting the fluidity of gender norm. This concept relates poet realization of homosexuality. That is why the poet Upendra Bhanja makes Rama wonder in admiration about a particular part of Sita’s body. That states that it’s beauty is superior to Shiva linga at Varanasi.

In the *Dandakarnya Episode* where Rama and Lakshmana were wondering in the Ashoka forest, Rama expressed his hidden desire to the disguised Hanuman who asked both the brothers about their cause of wondering in the wild forest. The poet Bhanja says Rama’s answer in the Canto -27 , Volume -III of Baideisha Bilasa, page-388.

As it is said:

...”Bigrahun mo Jibana bhinna kari sepate
Bigrahun ta Jibana bhinna karibi nikata|
Bikamara prana mora Janaki pasare
Bikasha tumhe e bana deshare||...

(Volume-iii, Canto-27, line-18, 19, *Baideisha Bilasa*)

The poet Upendra Bhanja recites the above line in Odia poetic language which brings the concept of ‘Ardhanarishwar’ as Rama perceives Sita as a part of his body. He means to say that Rama and Sita are inseparable and are in one corporeal frame. This was the answer of Rama to Hanuman, the son of Sugriva, Bali’s sister, Anjana.

In the 27th Canto, volume -iii of Baideisha Bilasa, Upendra Bhanja’s version liberates the concept of transgender. As Bhanja says:

“Vidhi base rusiraja pasi skanda Bane

Vidhire hoina sti swarupe jabane ||

Again Upendra Bhanja’s Baideisha Bilasa of Vol-I in Canto-9 expresses poet’s genderisation (transformation of gender). When Rama Chandra along with Laxmana and Biswamitra go to cross river Ganga, Dhibera doesn’t permit them to ferry over the Ganges other side because he is afraid of the touch of Rama’s feet may transform the boat a woman consequent upon which the fisherman or dhibara would lose his livelihood. As Bhanja says ‘*Vishnupada - Vishnupadi*’. As it is said:

“Ekara bheda sabada Tarinire gota gota

Tanhu acchi ta|
Bali padi to charana asanka upujeunu Nauka nayika hele budiba bela|
Bruti emo pose kutumba...”

(Canto-9, volume -I , page-123, 124, *Baideisha Bilasa*)

This version of Bhanja reminds the myth of Gautama and Ahalya Episode where Indra transforming his own shape into the appearance of Gautama, the husband of Ahalya came to seduce her. Ahalya was wife of Gautama Buddha and she is very chestful woman who is either on her knowledge or without knowledge involved in union of Indra. Ultimately, Ahalya was cursed into a piece of rock and was fallen in the road. She was told that she would be getting back to her own shape when Rama Chandra’s feet would touch the rock during journey to attend the Swayamvara. This clearly explicates the gender transformation concept of Upendra Bhanja’s ‘Queer Ramayana’.

Further poet Bhanja says:
“Baji taba pada gati lobhila sugati
Bandila Sri Rame suni se muni Bharati”
(*Canto-7, Vol-I , lines- 54, Baideisha Bilasa*)

The poet means to say that by the touch of the feet of the Rama, Gautama’s wife Ahalya was free from a piece of stone. Also the same thing the poet says repeatedly:

“Bate se Bane padithila dibyasila
Bisoun Rama Chandra charana lagi se abala...”
(*Canto-7, Vol-I, lines -32, Baideisha Bilasa*)

In *Valmiki Ramayana* there is an episode where two *rakhyasi* or *rakhyasa* women make love each other out of sex desire on Ravana’s bed in absence of the demon Ravana. The same thing is said in *Ramayana* that two widows who drink magic potion in absence of their husbands and makes love to each other that leads to bear a child without bones. This is the stamp of homosexuality which is re-told in ‘Queer Ramayana’ of Upendra Bhanja’s, *Baideisha Bilasa*. This is seen by Hanuman when he goes to Lanka in search of Sita by the order of Rama. He enters to the bedroom of Ravana sees number of women are engaged in love affairs. It is in *Kritivasa Ramayana* the sense of the gender binaries. As it is said:

“... In the *Kritivasa Ramayana* is the story of two widows who drink a magic potion and in the absence of their husbands, make love to each other and ending up bearing a child without bones (traditionally believed to be the contribution of semen)...”

Also poet Upendra Bhanja has narrated Ravana’s bedroom which was discovered by Hanuman. As it is said:

“Barana Padminibana manthichi ki sejasarobare aasi je|
Bala saibala asthabyasta jaghana pulina alapa dishi je|

Bidipta batayu madakadarma je
Bichinna Hara mukuta hasuachi Kali kalahara kusuma je |29|”
(Lines-29, page-512, Vol- III , Canto-30, *Baideisha Bilasa*)

In the Volume -IV of *Baideisha Bilasa*, Upendra Bhanja goes to characterize Mandodori, the Queen of Ravana, Ahalya, the wife of Gautama Buddha, Tara, the wife of Brihaspati, Kunti, the wife of Pandu to pacify the over anxiety sorrow of Mandodori to forget the death of Ravana. As it is said:

“Jukta hoina Sugriva gandhabahaje
Bivisana purvadeva Indra pade basiba
Bama charudha para tumbhe heba je
Boluchanti boli acchanti Ajodhya raje...”
(Vol-IV, lines -27, Canto -50, *Baideisha Bilasa*)

The above version of the poet reminds various allusive episodes that pertain to the concept of LGBT or queerness on the birth of mystic characters such as Mandodori, Angada, Sugrivar, Hanuman and Bali. Indeed, Upendra Bhanja's *Baideisha Bilasa* consisting of four volumes that retells Valmiki's Ramayana with different genderisation and queer concept. ■

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A Stylistic Analysis of M.J. Akbar's Short Story: *An Indian Dream*

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This paper analyses the linguistic and stylistic devices used by M.J.Akbar in his short story 'An Indian Dream'. He has written his short story with humorous background but the end is tragic. In this short story, he has used various stylistic devices such as, metaphor, inversion, rhetorical question, crescendo, decrescendo, sarcasm, graphological deviation and surprise ending.

Keywords: Short story-An Indian Dream- Stylistic Devices- Metaphor –Inversion- Rhetorical question –Crescendo-Decrescendo-Sarcasm-graphological deviation- Picturesque Description.

M.J.Akbar in his short story *An Indian Dream* has used various apt and appropriate stylistic devices needed to adorn his artistic short story. Khushwant singh has defined Indian Short story as follows:

A short story is in fact short and not a novella or an abridged novel. It revolves around one or at the most two or three characters and does not have a long list of dramatis personae as in novels. It is limited in time and space and does not span decades or spread out in different locales. It also has well –formulated central theme and does not touch upon several topics or clashes of personalities. It has a distinct beginning, a build-up and usually a dramatic end, frequently an unexpected one which sums up the story. (Singh,8).

Style is considered to be the personal idiosyncrasy of expression by which one recognizes a writer. It is the power of lucid exposition of a sequence of ideas and it is the complete realization of a universal significance in a personal and particular expression. It can be also defined as a quality of language which communicates precisely emotions and thoughts. Where thought predominates, the expression will be in prose. Where emotion predominates, the expression will be indifferently in prose or poetry. In the words of Murry, when personal emotion overwhelms, the tendency is to find expression in poetry. (Murry, 65).

M.J. Akbar's short story also has a well-formulated central theme. The protagonist wants to get a job and marry a beautiful lass. It has a distinct beginning with his one-sided love and his search for a job. In the mean time he comes across certain barriers to reach his goal. The story ends with a dramatic and unexpected end. The frustrated, disgruntled protagonist commits suicide after his affair with a prostitute. This short story has all the characteristics of an Indian short story as defined by Khushwant Singh.

The art of rhetoric is the art of persuasion and it is recognized as a science. According to Boulton (151), 'Rhetorical devices make truth plainer, arouse desirable emotions and help good purposes'. *Inversion* is turning round the order of words in order to give special emphasis to one word or group. It is effective in prose both for the rhythm and for the sense.

In his short story *An Indian Dream*, M.J.Akbar has introduced the stylistic device '*inversion*'. When Ashfaq went to attend the interview for the post of a clerk in the suburban municipality, he met the chairman of the municipality. The narrator of the story gives emphasis to the long brown table in which the chairman sat. So, he brings inversion in his writing. Instead of stating that the chairman sat at head of the long, brown table, he says, 'At the head of the long brown table sat the chairman'.

M.J. Akbar uses '*metaphor*' in his story. He considers Ashfaq who is trying to get a job to be the moth with the desire of the flame being ruined. He remarks: 'The desire of the moth for the flame has disturbing effects on the moth's health; Ashtaq's cheeks become hollow, frustration weights upon his eyes'. At another situation, while describing the looks of the chairman of the municipality he uses metaphor. The chairman with his horn rimmed spectacles was peering owlshly into Ashfaq's nevous eyes. Akbar also uses *Simile* when he states that dancers sway like snakes.

Strange use of words and phrases could be observed in this short story. While describing the emotional status of Ashfaq, M.J. Akbar says, 'Three cups of tea later every thing is utterly confused'. Here, he uses strange phrase 'three cups of tea later' for denoting the time taken for drinking three cups of tea. Similarly, while describing the distance between Azad college and Diamond Hotel he uses strange phrase 'The Maulana Azad College was only a quarter of a cigarette away from the Diamond'. He measures the distance with the time taken for smoking a quarter of a cigarette.

'*Rhetorical Question*' is a stylistic device which has been used by M.J.Akbar. Geoffrey N.Leech considers that the standard use of a rhetorical question is an adornment of a heightened style. It is in a loose sense a question which is abnormal and it expects no answer. While Ashfaq was trying to get a job, his friends teased him stating that he could not succeed. Then the author puts the rhetorical question: 'Was it a crime to seek good, honest employment?' Similarly, at another instance, when they announced the names of the selected people for appointment, all other people felt sad. Here the author uses a rhetorical question: 'couldn't they have been told privately?'

The author of this short story has also used *alliteration*. Ashfaq could not forget the faint flush of Jealousy of Salim and superior smile of Ajoy.

Crescendo or climax deals with how words are ordered to accomplish a sense of building excitement, importance or urgency. Ashfaq's ambition in life has been expressed by the author using the stylistic device crescendo: 'He had it all figured out. He would get a job, get a flat, get Ayesha and live happily ever after'.

Decrescendo looks and functions like a crescendo except in reverse. Ashfaq initially searched for higher posts. Later, he changed his mind. M.J. Akbar uses decrescendo in exposing the mental condition of the protagonist: 'So Ashfaq started looking for a clerk's desk, a medical representative's post, a door-to-door salesman's job, anything'.

Sarcasm is another stylistic device used by M.J.Akbar. 'A wedding night becomes a battle field for old and new feuds and a fertile ground for sowing seeds of fresh alliances'. In the above statement, the author has used metaphors also. At the function of the affluent streets, the statue of Mahatma Gandhi has been installed. The author of the short story makes sarcastic remarks as cabaret dances were conducted in the restaurants nearby. He states:

Appropriate, quite appropriate that the Mahatma should, piously semi-nude, stand guard over the cabarets in the restaurants on Park street. This was his Indian Dream. For the poor, religion and hunger. For the rich, black money.

In the above cited passage the author makes sarcastic remarks about the Indian Dream.

Graphological Deviation has been found in this short story. As seen in films, the protagonist wants to bump into Ayesha accidentally. But he is afraid of her. Here the author uses capitalization of the word if: 'If, IF she rebuffed him?' Then he continues to use capitalization as a graphological deviation in the following sentence: '... then the little but becomes a very big BUT?'

Regarding the stylistic device '*surprise ending*' Marjorie Boulton states: we are waiting for the end of a sentence and it is not what we expected, this may emphasize the point.' Surprise ending has been used by M.J. Akbar in his short story. While mentioning the suicide of Ashfaq, he says it caused only minor ripples: 'Ashfaq's suicide in a posh hotel room in the early hours of the morning on January 21 (as the newspapers said) did cause a few minor ripples'. But, Lily was scared a lot because she might be accused of murder. The clerk at the booking counter was dismissed. His family members suffered a lot. Finally, 'Ashfaq's parents were heart broken, Job or no job, money or no money, a son will be missed and a brother remembered'. The author's final words 'a few minor ripples' really indicate surprise ending.

M.J Akbar paints a vivid and *Picturesque description* of the humble abode where impoverished individuals reside:

You begin to hate the environment in which you have grown: dim rooms in Tantibagan, the cockroach infested bathroom the cheap portrait of Pandit Nehru beside your framed photograph on the fading green of the walls, your three synthetic shirts, those horribly thin curtains hanging loosely across barred windows, your sister with a pail of muddy water and rag mopping the floor every morning, while your mother sits and slices vegetables in the small gloomy kitchen with its smoky mud chulha.

The sum up, M.J. Akbar has used the different kinds of stylistic devices in his short story 'An Indian Dream'. He has used inversion, metaphor, Simile, alliteration, rhetorical question, crescendo, decrescendo, sarcasm, graphological deviation, surprise ending and picturesque description appropriately mingling with his humorous tone of writing. ■

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Role of Mother to Foster a Child: A Close Reading of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Palace of Illusions*

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P. Madhan

The objective of this study is to explore the mother-son connection as shown in Chitra Banerjee's *The Palace of Illusions* (2008), a retelling of the famous Indian epic Mahabharata from Draupadi's point of view. Though Chitra Banerjee dislikes being labeled a feminist, the majority of her works deal with female awareness. She has emphasized the problems that women face when playing several roles such as daughter, sister, wife, mother, and grandma. She has investigated the psychological problems and suffocations encountered by many women in partnerships. Motherhood is one of the most difficult responsibilities for a woman to do. As a mother of a boy, she contributes to her children's emotional and social growth. Chitra Banerjee emphasizes the most important mother-son relationship in a family system. Among many Indian writers, Chitra Banerjee has examined the subtle subtleties and significance of this link in many contexts and scenarios. The Palace of Illusions grew from mother Satyawathi's desire to have her son sit on the throne despite the fact that the rightful successor to the kingdom, Bhishma, is still alive. Gandhari planned with her husband Dhritarashtra to make her son king, resulting in the Great War. Duryodhan insulted Panchaali in the Sabha, because he inherited jealousy from his mother in the womb. This article also conducts a textual analysis of the mother-son relationship that occurs in Chitra Banerjee's *The Palace of Illusions* between Ganga-Bhishma, Subhadra-Abhimanyu, Hidimba-Gatothgaja, Gandhari-Kauravas, Kunti-Pandavas, and Karna.

Keywords: Culture, Relationship, Mother and Feminism.

From the late Middle Ages to the twentieth century, classical Indian mythology served as the foundation of a humanistic education. It teaches Indians how to live and displays hidden parts of human nature and character. Gods are frequently depicted as having human-like features, behaviors, and emotions. Gods take the form of natural elements like fire, sky, earth, and so on. Each has its own region of nature to manage, as well as its own particular weapon to destroy evil. Mythological themes are prominent in two classic Indian

epics, *The Ramayana* and *The Mahabharata*. Myth is thought to depict the purpose of life.

Mythological books deal with identity issues and reimagine the fabled past. Ancient tales are repeated in modern English mythological novels. New mythological fiction in English adapts traditional Indian mythological discourse into contemporary books aimed mostly at today's young Indian English readers. Myths are always encountered and imagined through secondhand experience, such as translations, summaries, criticisms, and anecdotes. Indian youngsters are exposed to Indian mythology in a variety of ways beginning at a young age. Visits to temples and specific locations, which invariably feature sthalapurana (a brief description of the spiritual value of the location), rituals, festivals, traditions, and customs aid in the transmission of mythological stories. In schools, children are taught the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, as well as many mythological events and happenings.

Recent changes to Hindu mythology employ the same color and simplify everything to a worldly depiction. It depicts gods as human, as opposed to the divine might of traditional stories. The popularity of these fantasies fueled a rise in the field of creative writing, highlighting the importance of national and cultural identity. The mythical fiction assists us in negotiating our cultural identity, which is under assault as a result of globalization. Chitra's depiction of a feminist atmosphere in her books reflects women's endeavors for self-improvement for enlightened growth and advancement. She describes current Indian women's liberation from patriarchal culture. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's novel *The Palace of Illusions* is based on the huge Indian epic Mahabharata.

Chitra Banerjee's characters are not political or spiritual in nature; rather, they try to uncover the human soul and achieve psychological fulfillment. Kuntibhoja, a childless queen who adopted Kunti, experienced life's joys and tragedies alone, with no mother to whom she could turn for comfort when she erred. Kunti learned to be responsible and disciplined as a youngster as a result of her solitude as a child. She married Pandu, prince of Hastinapur, for political reasons, but their marriage was not joyful. Their children, Yudhistir, Bheem, and Arjun, were born as a result of Durvasa's gift. Kunti also assisted Madri in having two sons, Nakul and Sahadev. Kunti never treated his boys unfairly. Even when Pandu and Madri died, she considered all five boys to be her own. In fact, Nakul is her favorite son. She reared the Pandavas as a powerful and rigorous mother, instilling in them the principles of dharma, politeness, and brotherhood. With the love of a mother, anyone may grow confidence, become ready to explore new circumstances, and create relationships with others. Males who have strong ties with their moms tend to be friendlier and more forgiving to women in their life, but they never lose their manliness. "Kunti, devastated though she must have been both by her husband's death and his last act, gathered all her willpower. She brought the five princes back to Hastinapur, making no distinction between her own children and those of her rival. She was determined that no one would cheat them out of their inheritance"(64). Kunti made it certain that her sons never fought. She instilled in her children the importance of respecting elders, whether they are good or

terrible. While her own sons never secured peace in Hastinapur, Kunti, like a mother, forgave all of Duryodhan, his brothers, and uncle Sakuni's sins and crimes. This forgiving trait boosts her self-esteem. Despite the fact that the odds are stacked against her, Kunti backs the Kauravas in the Kurukshetra battle.

Kunti's lonely background molded her into a stern, calculated, and dominating mother over her boys. Kunti had a premarital male child, Karna, born out of her relation with the Sun God during her youth. Because it happened before her wedding, she put the child in a little container and flowed it into the river out of fear for society. However, it pricks her consciousness throughout her life. Though Kunti sincerely regretted abandoning Karna, she never revealed the truth about his origin until her dying breath. Kunti had never cried in her life, save for Karna, therefore she was concerned and felt powerless when Duryodhan on pretext of friendship misled Karna under the guise of justice. "Kunti was weeping. All these years I'd never seen her weep. When she'd heard of my humiliation at the hands of Duryodhan, she'd pressed her lips together until they were bloodless" (242).

Chitra Banerjee universalizes the desire to love and be loved in order to live. If love is denied, life has no purpose. Someone must be free of feelings of animosity and enmity in order to live a life of serenity and inner joy. A happy existence necessitates understanding, maturity, and sharing on the part of individuals, all of which are required for the establishment of a happy family. Chitra Banerjee depicts the female characters as they are, with existential dilemmas and desires. In her novels, mother characters are hypersensitive, secluded, and powerless. Men who had positive ties with their moms were more inclined to experiment with other sex than those who sought to suppress their emotions. Hidimba was a strong lady who married Bheem before Panchaali in the wilderness, while the poor Pandavas were fleeing from the house of lac against the wishes of her own rakshasas (tribe). Kunti agreed to the marriage on the condition that, Hidimba won't claim the throne as queen or her son as an heir to the kingdom. Hidimba accepted this condition gracefully, and she raised her son Ghatotkacha as a loving son to a father who abandoned him, forgetting the vow he made even before his birth in the jungle. Ghatotkacha idolised his father Bheem. Hidimba devoted her whole life to taking care of her tribe's people and her only son. Although she hadn't spoken to Bheem for years, she was strong and compassionate enough to send her son Ghatotkacha to fight in the war. Though she turned down Bheem's request to stay with him in Indra Prastha, she sent Ghatotkacha to fight alongside his father in Mahabharata war.

Divakaruni believes that women and men are equal in society. She proves that the female characters in the Mahabharata are more famous than the epic's heroes. When Chitra Banerjee retells and reconstructs the greatness of men and women characters of the epic/ the Mahabharata in her novels in line with the contemporary world is attempted, it leads to the conclusion that women characters display far more courage, determination, will power, and fishing instinct than men. She emphasizes the individuality of Gandhari, the blinded

spouse of the blind king Dhritarastra. She chooses to live as an equal to her husband, giving up her position as queen and mother. Due to her willing blindfolding, she was unable to fully experience motherhood by seeing the faces of all her sons. She was unable to assist them in their development or guide them down the moral road. A child requires their mother's love and attention to the end to be successful. Motherhood is connected with divinity not only in India, but all around the world. Gandhari's sons, deprived of a genuine mother's love and care, grew up rebellious and undisciplined under the wicked tutelage of their uncle Sakuni. She felt powerless and suffered greatly as a result of her motherhood-induced blindness. Gandhari cannot suffer the deaths of her 100 sons in the war of Kurukshetra. The death of all her sons gave her great grief, which led her to blame Krishna and cursing the Yadavas to be destroyed.

Chitra Banerjee depicts the conflict between family tradition and individual liberty. The novels' core protagonists are designed to showcase social and cultural extremes. Because of fate, Bhishma is born as Ganga's son. Bhishma is his mother Ganga's ninth child. Due to their curse, seven of his brothers are drowned in the river by their mother Ganga. She taught Bhishma all he needed to know to succeed his father, Santhanu, on the throne. Unfortunately, he made a promise not to seize the Hastinapur throne and therefore became subject to the monarch and realm.

Chitra Banerjee's take on feminism is unique in that her heroes are not rebellious in nature; rather, they endure in order to learn how to deal with life's harsh truths. Each character rises to the situation by establishing her uniqueness, choosing to live her own life, and they overcome unexpected and tough circumstances to emerge victorious as they make the best of their situation. When given the opportunity, they battle and find satisfaction, yet other times they settle for the best they can achieve rather than languish under male repression. Subhadra, Arjuna's wife and mother of the heroic and valiant Abhimanyu, is an example of this sort of female character.

Few heroines in Hindu mythology stand out as much as Draupadi. She is a volatile and steadfast lady with the austerity of a typical Hindu wife. She talks for herself, aware of her rights. Draupadi bore five sons, one from each of the Pandavas, who were known as Upapandavas. Unfortunately, she was unable to raise her children due to her exile in the jungle with the Pandavas. Dhristadyuma in Panchala taught Upapandavas their academics and talents. Draupadi had less opportunities to experience parenthood. Draupadi's sons fought in the conflict while they were young. Ashwathama brutally shot at the shack they resided in. When Draupadi learned of her boys' deaths, she was devastated.

Chitra Banerjee's voice for women was forced into acknowledgment, not only as a prominent voice in literary canon worldwide, not just as an authorized Indian women writer, but as an important voice in the mainstream of world literature. Her writings celebrate a woman's power rather than her vulnerability. Using a vocabulary of passion and exact metaphor, the author has characterized the multifaceted sorrow and revolt of contemporary

Indian women, not just in India but also in the world. Many of her works include female characters that are more eloquent, loud, and communicative than their male counterparts. Women characters are prominent in the literature. The author highlights the situation of contemporary women both at home and throughout the world by depicting the fate of these female characters. With the development of current technological tools, the entire globe has shrunk to the size of a town. The title refers to the beautiful palace that the Pandavas constructed for Panchali early in their strange marriage. ■

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Recentring the Anti-Racism Theory in the Texts on Multiculturalism: A Critical Study of Children's Literature

Mutturaj Hipparagi

The children of 21st century are global participants. It is inevitable to instil cultural sensitivity into their young minds. The crises ridden contemporary world has subverted the idea of peace and order and has been causing strife and unrest in the wake of growing racial clashes. The present paper attempts to re-centre to the aspects of anti-racism in children's literature to mould them into sensitive humans and hence, Ziba Came on Boat (2007), and Mahtab's Story (2011), and John Marsden's Home and Away (2008) were investigate if these literatures encourage identity formation in children. The Analytical and Exploratory methods of research were adopted to study the positionality of anti-racist theories in the multicultural texts. The research establishes that re-centring anti-racist perspectives are important to mould the young minds to be transformed into global citizens. It is also underlined that children vicariously experience the tenets of multicultural facets through literature and their attitudes and opinions about the world community can considerably be altered.

Keywords: Constructs, Discrimination, Dismantle, Literature, Race.

Introduction:

In nearly all young children's books, social and historical narratives are insensitively constructed. The coloured people are objectified and portrayed as animals. Both the Negro-African and the Afro-American are seldom portrayed as thinking human beings. They are devoid of displaying any value system. They are portrayed as demi-animals internalizing the value system of the white American. Racism is mooted into the layers of society, and in educational system. It could be termed as "Institutionalized Racism". Christopher Meyers in his "*The Apartheid of Children's Literature*," outlines the problem of racial representation in children's literature. Books may serve as an important medium for children to develop their own self and identity and if the Afro-American or the Negro-African children do not see themselves in the books they read, it sends out a wrong message that they are an insignificant part of this world. During 1920s W.E.B. Dubois had expressed his concern about the lack of space for anti-racist tenets in the children's literature.

Black bodies matter and the black children of African continent belong to the same world in which European and Asian children also inhabitants. Hence, children across the globe must be stimulated to cultivate a broader thinking and a strong sense of acceptance. The objective of this paper is to re-examine the position of anti-racism in the contemporary scenario. It also aims to re-centre the anti-racist theories in the multicultural narratives, and in turn to integrate such narratives in children's literature. Locating children's texts on multiculturalism and investigating the status of anti-racism aspects in is one of the prime objectives of the present paper.

Critical race theory must develop structures to criticize the racial representation in children's books. Children must get to see characters of colour as key characters, positioned at the central point of the stories they read. The main characters should not fall into the racist tropes or stereotypes. "The Story of Little Black Sambo," a children's book published in 1899, featured racial stereotypes of Black Children. It has been found that the communities of colour are viewed as culturally deficient. Hence, it is important to change the stories about people of colour and their representation in the children's literature. In Pam Munoz Ryan's "Esperanza Rising", the story follows, Esperanza, a young Latin girl whose affluent Mexican family loses everything in a series of tragic events that force her and her mother to migrate to California, where they end up as farm workers.

Images like this have racially targeted Latinas and Latinos in America. Even the language of the colour is mocked in certain books written for children. Education scholar Carmen Martinez has found that "Mock Spanish" is used frequently in the best-selling children's book series "Skippyjon Jones" by Judy Schahner. Children must be given the ability to understand how everyday experiences exist within the larger society. A broader historical, social, political context must be provided while narrating the stories about people of colour. Multiple vantage points could be identified from which stories can be told.

A certain power is assigned to characters narrating their own stories. Agency should be given to the characters in narrating their own stories. This gives a sense of strength to the characters to construct the narrative, and to resolve the ending. In a moving story of a little girl, "Alma and How She Got Her Name", by Juana Martinez-Neal, the little girl learns the power of her name is connected to the history of her family. Rather than making a humanistic connection, most of the children's literature creates a social distance between the story and reader. It is important to help children to make sense of what they see. Perceive and understand that story telling is a critical tool to read the world and its social order around them.

The depiction of Black Children in the literature usually is racist, paternalistic, or condescending. Children's literature often narrates more about grownups than it does children. It portrays what adults want children to think. The racial imagination of adults is mooted in the children's literature and adults decide what to replicate in the children. The Blacks were also portrayed as caricatures in children's literature and the shocking message

that children were getting about race, is complete erasure of Blacks. Children's literature should never exclusively be white. A book told the tale of a white boy and girl who went on various magical adventures, accompanied by a Black girl, shown throughout their adventures as their servant.

According to Gailey, lack representation is detrimental to white children too. Their world is impoverished when they are led to believe their perspectives and identity is the only one that counts. The University of Wisconsin's Co-operative children's Books Centre, or CCBC, has become the authoritative source nationally for tracking diversity in children's and young adult literature. Since 1985, the Centre's librarians have indexed every new book, providing data for a long-overdue re-evaluation of the publishing industry, and promoting a more accurate reflection of a diverse world. In 2000, the CCBC notes, less than 3%. 147 of more than 5,000 children's books published - had a Black Character. Children's literature become a site for both, racism hiding there and a platform for the opposition. Racism is deeply embedded in the children's literature.

The academic journal *Children's Literature Reviews* offers critical analysis of many famous children's books. In its 114th volume, the journal discusses the cultural stereotypes in Belgian cartoonist Herge's Tin series in reference to its depiction of people from the Congo (Burns 114). The colonial and the postcolonial era in literature created a state of mixed cultures and identities. In this course, the Indian and African protagonist became a familiar element in literature, especially children's literature. The *Adventures of Two Dutch Dolls and a Golliwogg* by Kate Upton has also been criticized for its racist and contentious images. Mary RenekJalongo argues, that images of indigenous people living in the 1800s with feathers and face paint lead children to believe they are fictional rather than real (39). In some of the most well-known children's classics from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the presence of empire as well as pro-colonialist and imperialist themes has been highlighted.

It is argued that, "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" a children's novel published in 1964 by Roald Dahl, was originally written as, "Charlie, a little black boy". This explodes pertinent questions about choosing black protagonists for children's literature. It is important for the voices of the coloured to be heard in children's literature and it also matters how the history of race and equity is interpreted and validated. Along with true diversity in children's literature, re-positioning the anti-racist theory within the frame work of children's literature is also important. Books about Black people contain the stereotyped characters of situations, Slavery, violence, struggle for freedom are the only elements portrayed about Black people. What about the Black adventurers, artists, or detectives? Why cannot books with Black protagonists feature the diverse storylines that books with white protagonists include? Such restricted options and a top-sided view of the Blacks deeply impact the minds of the young children. It must be understood that, "Representation Matters". The narratives that Black people are defined by their struggles should be changed.

Children's literary corpus must be diversified. The stories presented does not always have to acknowledge race. Black boys and girls could be scientists, explorers, astronauts, supermodels - everything the white children have gotten to be. Branding the characters as Black explorers, Black adventurers, etc. is not integral to the storyline. These depictions of Black people are anomalies. A white protagonist's race is not highlighted front of their role; Black protagonists also do not need it.

Bishop (1990) argued that books must act as mirrors, as windows, and as glass sliding doors. Children from ethnically diverse back ground must feel overjoyed to find themselves on every page. This can make a strong impact on their self-development. Studies based on research have determined that reading multicultural literature can have an impact children's Interethnic attitudes (2016), as well as on the cultural awareness and perceived ability to be culturally responsive. The racist mindsets have been dishing out heady diet for young children who Cannot help but conclude that white is the norm in our society and that a superior privileged status is the natural birth right of white people. Mark Twain's classic, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885) has been re-read and revised, and by replacing the word "Nigger" with "Slave". This does not solve the problem of the racist content. On the contrary, it exacerbates the problem. Replacing the word with a job description such as "Slave" is derogatory. Classic texts containing overt racing should be taught that help white children how to read uncomfortably, and use these overtly racist materials as a spring board to reading texts where the racism has been submerged.

The cultures of coloured people are still under represented in children's literature. Anti-racism must be re-positioned in the frame work to sensitive the children about the racial issues. Though multiculturalism is represented in children's literature, respecting, and representing marginalized people, all marginalized groups must be included. The people have suffered enough because of the colour factor, and have become the victims of attitudinal, institutional and government discrimination for centuries. All this should be told to children through literature. By repositioning the anti-racist theory in children's literature, it helps them to understand their geography and history, broaden their appreciation for literary techniques used by writers from multicultural backgrounds, and improve their comprehending abilities. Research has proved that infants as young as four weeks old enjoy looking at human faces in picture books. As early as six months, infants begin to ask questions about differences in skin colour. And by the age of three, children notice physical differences such as hair texture and the shape of facial features, which leads them to categorize people and to begin to form attitudes about people of different races and ethics groups (Hughes-Hassell, & Cox, 2010). It is important, especially for children of colour to understand the subtle tenets of racism to increase self-esteem as well as cultural identity.

Children of colour absorb many of the beliefs and values of the dominant white culture, including the belief that it is better to be white. Stereotypes, omissions, and distortions, combined with an image of white superiority, play a role in socializing children of colour to value the role models, lifestyles, and images of beauty of white culture over

those of their own cultural group. The illustrations in children's literature are a very important element as they make up the meaning of the text. "The Five Chinese Brothers" by Claire Huchet Bishop and Kurt Wiese, has been criticised for its stereotyped depictions of Chinese people. Criticisms of Frances Hodgson Burnett's 1911 novel, "The Secret Garden" say that the language of main character Mary Lennox endorses racist attitudes against black people. "Curious George" by H.A. Rey and Margaret Rey, was initially published in 1941 and has been attacked for its overt slave and imperialist tales. The pervasive symbols of race and gender oppressions in children's literature must be erased. Eminent writers starting from Roald Dahl to J.K. Rowling, Enid Blyton and Herge have been accused of upholding power structures and portraying marginalised identities in a problematic manner. Hence, it is time to revamp the literature being written for children. Children of all colours must be able to hold hands together and laugh with joy. Children's literature should aim at creating the above said atmosphere.

Conclusions:

Books of children's literature are important, as the representations in books can offer a key means to address perpetuate, of entrench core societal inequalities. Despite growing awareness in recent decades about race and gender in curricula of children, literature generally skew toward lighter skin and male representation. Educators and policy makers are found to eliminate books that have overt racial and gender bias. Such efforts are piecemeal and the judgements behind them are volatile. It is observed that for two generations the brown and black children have been given a blonde ideal of beauty to worship, a milk-white literature to assimilate, and a pearly paradise to anticipate, in which their dark faces would be hopelessly out of place. Discussions of African American children and children's literature have necessarily had to address the long and broad history of anti-Black racism in white children's literature. To re-centre the Black perspectives in children's literature is the need of the hour. Children have, historically, read things that were neither explicitly nor exclusively intended for them. Landscape dominated by white print culture is condemnable. It is clear that there are new African American stories to be told full of new hope and vision. ■

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Yearning for Desire and Plight of Women in Bama's *Sangati*

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Women plight is depicted differently in novels than in real life. In reality women are worshiped and at the same time humiliated. In novels women are portrayed as dependant on others. Women are doubly suppressed and discriminated, in one way they are women, considered as 'weaker sex', and on another way based on their background. The main aim of this research paper is to show the real plight of women and how they are dominated by patriarchal societal norms. Women's movement lays stress on the empathetic condition of women, the way for attaining empowerment and on the fight for their rights. Dalit literature deals with the sufferings of the oppressed class. Bama is a dalit christian writer, who easily has mirrored the sufferings of dalit women, in her novel *Sangati*. The battle of women in their family and work place are discussed in this research paper. Writer, like Bama, has focused on dalit sufferings and dalit women oppression. Gender discrimination is another problem which is faced by women. Psychological set up makes women become aware on their customs and conditions.

Keywords: Dalit, Double-oppression, Self-esteem, Humiliation,

In novels, the condition of women is portrayed differently than in actual life. In truth, women are both worshiped and humiliated. Women in books are shown as dependant on others. Women are suppressed and discriminated for two reasons: once because they are women, deemed to have 'weaker sex,' and again because of their heritage. The primary goal of this paper is to study the true struggle of women and how patriarchal society norms rule them. The women's movement emphasizes women's empathetic condition, the path to empowerment, and the fight for their rights. Dalit literature is concerned with the plight of the downtrodden class. In her novel *Sangati*, Bama, a Dalit Christian writer, effectively replicated the sorrows of Dalit women. This study paper discusses women's fights in their households and workplaces. A writer like Bama has focused on Dalit hardships and the subjugation of Dalit women. Another issue that women encounter is gender discrimination. The psychological framework makes women conscious of their customs and circumstances.

Women's standing in society is found to be better than before. Women are venerated as goddesses for the entire cosmos in Indian society. Women have been represented as dependant on others in literature, particularly fiction. They are mistreated, silenced, seduced, undervalued, and humiliated. Humans face discrimination based on caste, birthplace, language, ethnicity, and gender. Women are oppressed and discriminated against on two fronts: as a 'weaker sex' and on the basis of caste, creed, and race. Any great writers and reformers, like B.R. Ambedkar, M.K. Gandhi, and so on, focused their attention on them and contributed a lot to the revolt against the discrimination of subaltern people. The main aim of the research study is to explore racism, find ways to help women empower themselves and come out of suffering. The study throws light on the condition of women at work, the social disparities, the status of women in their own community, the real identity of the oppressed women, and the fight for their rights. Tamil writer Bama has portrayed the plight of women in her novel *Sangati*. She has shown women's double suffering as a result of gender and communal discrimination.

The women's movement was started in the 1960's. There are a number of writers who contributed to the movement, such as Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of Rights of Women* (1792), Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949), Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (1929), Kate Millet's *Theory of Sexual Politics* (1970), Frederick Engel's *The Origin of the Family* (1884), John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women* (1869), Elaine Showalter's *Towards a Feminist Poetics* (1979), etc.

These writers discussed the genuine state of women who had struggled with social norms under conditions that were heavily propagated by a patriarchal society. Bama, a Tamil writer and one of the writers mentioned above, is able to express emphatically the woman's individuality clearly. She investigates both caste and gender injustice.

Literature is meant to depict both the happy and tragic sides of people's life. Fiction, in particular, deals with current concerns raised in reality, and as such, it is primarily founded on the common ground of society and the oppressed people. It is a study through which Bama's *Sangati* speaks about the lives of marginalized and colonized people. Marginalized people, who always used to rise in revolt against the oppressive measures undertaken by the upper-caste people. They fight for their rights, and notably women are able to express their gender identity strongly. Bama analyzes the true sorrows of women in her story, which emphasizes the sufferings of women.

Dalit literature is about the sufferings of oppressed class. *Sangati* delves profoundly into the lives of Dalit women who confront the everyday hardships of caste and gender discrimination. *Sangati*'s main theme is "subjugation to celebration." By portraying the many dalit women under the usual Tamil names Irulaayi, Manacchi, Mukkama, and Pichiamma, Bama underlines the gender bias and status of women in a subaltern group in her work *Sangati*, utilizing a unique storytelling style.

Bama is a Dalit Christian writer whose narration effortlessly conveys the sorrows of Dalit women in her novel *Sangati*. She speaks up about how men and society demean women. It is inevitable to discuss Dalit literature when emphasizing the true condition of marginalized and suppressed women. Writers such as Bama have concentrated on dalit hardships and the subjugation of Dalit women. Bama, as a dalit lady, has witnessed the miseries of dalit women. She narrates a dalit woman's life from childhood to old age. Apart from caste and sexual inequality, *Sangati* emphasizes physical violence, disproportionate labor between men and women, superstitious beliefs, the panchayat system, and women's oppression. It explores the memories of women in the Paraiya community. Bama always chooses women as protagonists in her novels. The characters of Bama are often found brooding over the past and sequential situations, and so there are many instances in which the protagonist is found to be in a state of recollection.

Sangati means occurrence or event "that happens or takes place, especially one of importance". A woman in the paraiya community is portrayed as the protagonist through her voices. The novel starts its journey with a series of narrating stories and anecdotes, and it also gets highlighted with the autobiography touches of Bama, so it can be considered the narration of the struggle of paraiya women. The novel brings to the attention of all the incidents of day-to-day events taking place in the particular community like a chain. The narrator exposes the gender and caste problems arising often in the community. not only in *Sangati* but also in all the novels of Bama, her language is influenced by the Dalit Tamil dialect. Bama has taken a linguistic leap by reclaiming the language of her community's women. These women's voices represented on the whole, Dalit women's pain and agony. Sharp and obscene words are like a weapon of women, used to shame men in order to escape from the extreme physical violence. As a result, the harsh words emerging from their mouths revealed patriarchal institutions based on power and sexual dominance.

All women are portrayed as daily wage earners like males, working as agricultural workers or on construction sites, and earning less than men. However, they must bear the financial burden of running the family and managing domestic responsibilities. In addition, they are subjected to workplace sexual harassment and assault. In their community, power is retained in men's hands. The subject matter of the novel centers on the hard and painful labor borne by them and also the economic burden lying on the shoulders of these women, which leads to emotional outbursts and violence. Obviously violence from the sides of father, husband, and brother is stressed with reference to violent domestic quarrels that take place publicly. Reading Bama's *Sangati*, the cultural identity of a dalit lady is plainly noted by all those celebrating puberty ceremonies such as betrothal, wedding, and so on. They have no sentimental views; for example, thali has no binding relevance in this caste structure. In the same way, widows are not restricted or discriminated against, and they are free to make their choice to remarry.

The novel *Sangati*'s main theme is the life of dalit women from birth; discrimination from the start, whether it is a girl baby or not, is unpleasant, unhappy,

unlucky, and a great load on the head, the father, and the entire family. This occurs not only in the Dalit group, but in all communities. The novel depicts the rituals of puberty and the sufferings of women during labor as the major crunch of the novel. Women's plight and pain are exacerbated after marriage; they are beaten up by their husbands and forced to work harder than before for far less pay. Vellaamma is the grandmother of Bama, a typical first-generation woman. Through the Vellaamma character, Bama shows how childbirth takes place in their village. As there were no hospitals, all the childbirths used to take place at home.

Her grandmother is an uneducated gynecologist in her village. She never asks for any money for her help. She was married at the age of 14, and her husband left her after four years. Bama is fascinated by her patti (grandmother), who was a brave and strong person who never had a fever or illness till her death. She suffered a lot as a single-handed lady in the family to manage her family and care for her children on her alone. Through this character, we come to know the assertive quality, courage, and fearlessness of Dalit women in general. Their independence and self-esteem are found to be very amazing. and they are not found to be shy or fearful. Pachamuukipillai is another notable figure; her character description demonstrates the true strength of a Dalit woman. Her life experience is an apt example for women who are exempt from rest and relaxation. She went out to cut grass on the verge of her pregnancy. She managed the childbirth and returned home with the baby and the patch of grass where she gave birth. The suggested connotation depicts a condition in which women do not get enough rest, even when giving birth.

The boy in the household is free to eat as much as he wants. However, the ladies in the family eat only what is left over. Boys can go out and play whenever they want, while girls are required to stay at home and serve their elders. They do not always have time to rest. Another challenge in women's lives is reaching the mature period. Another big ritual is being celebrated. A girl who reaches puberty is admitted to a small hospital for 16 days. Mariamma, Bama's cousin, falls victim to this customary practice.. Many sweets were delivered to her, and she was protected by others like a newly bloomed flower. She was intended to have an iron rod or an iron-made adornment in her hand to protect her from evil.

This is a superstitious belief held by elders to protect their people from the evil influence of the spirits. Nattamai, which settles disputes among people, follows the Pachayat system. An incident relating to Mariamma's relationship with Manikkam is an example from the novel in which the Nattamai rules that Mariamma must pay a fine of Rs 200 and Manikkam must pay a fine of Rs 100. Everyone can see the discrepancy even when it comes to punishing men and women for immorality. Women are not forbidden from speaking loudly or laughing loudly.

Thaayi is a sympathetic and compassionate character. Bama describes another superstitious belief in detail. Women characters place greater emphasis on superstitious

beliefs by believing in pey (a ghost or spirit). Manacchi and Esakki were possessed by the devil, or pey. Patti (grandmother) regularly warns the little ladies not to go near the Manacchi because Pey will capture them. There are several methods for removing the pey from Manacchi. She is discovered lying down in front of St. Anthony's Shrine, and a rite is initiated to drive away the pey. A large crowd has gathered to observe what is happening to Manacchi, including Bama. From the point of view of Bama, she too has the curiosity to know what has happened to Manacchi. It shows how all the women living in the village have superstitious beliefs. Kodangi produces the sound that will drive away peas. The rhythm of kodangi, a musical instrument, is used by pusari (priests). This sound helps young girls get away from pey. It is shown through the character of Irulappa's wife, Virayi, who was possessed by Esakki. These rituals illustrate Dalit beliefs and demonstrate how they suffer as a result of their superstitious mentality. In fact, these ideas lead to specific psychological problems that make them frail.

A pitiable state that is described in the novel is the loss of childhood in their community. From childhood, children are forced to work as workers. Maikkami is the victim who was destined to work the moment she began to walk. She provides for her family by working at the match factory and caring for her siblings. She has offspring in her family after her. Match Factory is a fantastic adventure for child laborers. It removes the focus of education for children. Many families, including Maikkami's, rely on their children's earnings.

The poor knowledge of social awareness is focused on by Bama. She narrates the ignorance of the election system and the importance given to the voting process, which is ridiculous. When Bama asked Patti (the grandmother) about the voting process, She told me that when they give a sheet with four or five pictures, a rubber stamp is used, and she stamped the pictures on the sheet like an old blind owl in the morning. Sometimes, Malayandi, who insists on Patti stamping a particular picture for a few rupees, will forget the picture while standing in the queue.

The ignorance of the politics is shown here,

Whatever it is, what do we know about it? Whether it is Rama who rules, or Ravana, what does it matter? Our situation is always the same. I wouldn't have even gone to cast my vote. It was only because of that macchaan Malayandi that I went in the first place. He gave me a couple of rupees and told me to put a stamp on some picture or the other. I stood in the queue and went in, but completely forgot which picture he told me to stamp. So then I decided on my own to put one stamp on the cycle picture and one on the elephant picture. Then i bought myself some *mochai payiru* with the two rupees he gave me.

Gender discrimination is another problem that is faced by Dalit women. In general, it is not only the problem of Dalit women but also the common problem of all

women in the world. Only men are allowed to go to the cinema. They can marry other-caste women, but women cannot. If it happens, it will result in a caste riot.

Bama remembers some best thing in their caste.

Although there are many good things about us, we tend to forget it all and believe that to be upper is best. The grass is always greener on the other side, isn't it? The way we wear our saris with the pleats at the back and the way we pull our hair back and knot it to one side-all these have their own beauty. But because others have called these uncouth, we have believed that and have wanted to copy upper-caste ways and customs (*Sangati*113).

Bama, has faced many suffering and difficulties. Being an educated christian unmarried working dalit woman has suffered a lot alone because of social disparities. She has to answer for a few questions wherever she goes. They are;

What caste are you? What's your religion? Where do you work? How much do you earn? How old are you? Are you married? Why haven't you married yet? Are you going to marry at all? Why not? They will keep on pestering away like this (*Sangati*120).

So, there is no depreciation for the suffering of educated and uneducated Dalit women. Both suffer and get wounded mentally and physically at their workplace. It is an autobiographical novel that throws light on the pathetic plight of Dalit people and the double suffering of women. Women are worshipped, respected, and treated as more pure than others in the world. Through Bama's narration, women can argue but they are silenced. Women are glorious, but they are humiliated. Women are brutalized, but they are the epitome of receptive love.

Psychologically, the female characters that are demonstrated in the novel *Sangati* by Bama are not aware of their real strengths. The power of eagerness is concealed from ancient days itself. They locked themselves under the specific communal handcuff. They do not know their real power, like the chained elephant. In a Room of One's Own Virginia Woolf searches for a book written by women on the superiority of women. But she did not get anything. So she records angrily that women were unaware of their true power. Similarly, Bama has described her experiences from both her own and others' perspectives. However, there are several loopholes to avoid the ill-treatment committed by others.

To summarize, the writer Bama has brought to light the hearts of Dalit women to others through *Sangati*. She anticipates a more tangible setting. This may aid in the upliftment of the community by diverting attention away from many sufferings. Bama's remarkable narration makes an appeal for a new life in a better way. Her opinion is that no one can change their lives, and no one is going to help the hopeless women in her community. It rests only in the hands of women to take their lives according to their own wishes. Women are not supposed to work and face precarious striations. They must take action to alleviate

the pain they have caused in society. Bama speaks up for Dalit women's concerns. She has personally experienced this marginalized condition.

She sums up their condition in the following lines, "everywhere you look you see blows and beatings shame and humiliation..... Because we have not been to school or learnt anything, we go about the slaves all our lives, from the day we are born till the date we die, As if we are blind, even though we have eyes".(*Sangati*118)

Through these lines, it is hard to digest the condition of people in the dalit community, especially women. Women are exploited by society's customary practices. The only way to empower themselves is to build a stronger and more vibrant mind to revolt against social conditions and controls. Proper education and awareness of the rights of women can eradicate their crusade state. Finally, Bama optimistically looks for the development of dalit women. ■

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Narratives of Migration: Exploring the Triumphs and Trials of Expatriate Life in Benjamin's *Aadujeevitham*

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Migration has become a pivotal aspect of contemporary Malayali society, with individuals seeking foreign lands for opportunities and prosperity. This research delves into the multifaceted experiences of expatriates, particularly those from Kerala, as they navigate the challenges and aspirations of life in Gulf countries. Through an analysis of Benjamin's novel *Aadujeevitham*, this study sheds light on the narratives of migration, alienation, loneliness, and the suppression of marginalized voices. The research highlights the broader impact of diasporic literature on fostering cross-cultural awareness and addressing themes of identity and belonging. It also examines the novel's resonance with individuals who have undergone geographical relocations due to economic aspirations. As the narrative unfolds, it traverses the intricate tapestry of emotions that bind individuals to their homeland, accentuating the poignant pangs of nostalgia that arise in the face of displacement. Ultimately, this research underscores the transformative potential of literature in bridging societal gaps and portraying the indomitable human spirit in the face of adversity.

Keywords: Migration, Expatriate Life, Diasporic Literature, Alienation, Loneliness, Marginalization, Identity, Belonging, Cross-Cultural Awareness, Nostalgia, Benjamin, 'Aadujeevitham', Kerala, Gulf Countries, Economic Aspirations, Resilience.

Migration to foreign countries has evolved into an ordinary occurrence, imbued with a sense of accomplishment and societal prestige, within the contemporary fabric of Malayali society. European, North American, and Gulf countries have materialized as newfound homelands for countless Keralites, revealing a phenomenon where approximately 10% of Kerala's population now resides beyond its geographical confines. This reality stands as a testament to the indomitable spirit and unwavering determination of the Malayali community, which has propelled them to establish a presence in virtually every corner of the global landscape. The act of migration has emerged as a potent instrument, pivotal in addressing the persistent challenges of impoverishment and unemployment that have long hindered the progress of the state's educated youth.

B.A. Prakash in “Gulf Migration and Its Economic Impact: The Kerala Experience” underscores this transformative influence of migration, noting that the influx of substantial Gulf remittances and their subsequent expenditure have engendered unprecedented economic shifts in Kerala’s industrially disadvantaged and economically constrained environment since the mid-1970s. The migration-driven rise in income, consumption, asset acquisition, and consequent poverty reduction among migrant households is undeniable. However, as Prakash elucidates, this surge in economic activity has also contributed to elevated prices of essential commodities, land, construction materials, and services, adversely affecting non-migrant households belonging to various economic strata (Prakash 3209).

In light of Kerala’s prominence in international migration, validated by the Reserve Bank of India’s Inward Remittance Surveys, which affirm Kerala’s contribution of a substantial 19% of India’s total inward remittances, the state undeniably exemplifies India’s leading position as a recipient of global remittances. Kerala’s stature as the preeminent remittance-receiving state further solidifies its status on the national front. As Myron Weiner in “International Migration and Development: Indians in the Persian Gulf” observes, the intricate tapestry of migration dynamics extends beyond mere manpower requirements, projecting a vision where the Gulf states continue to host expatriate communities throughout the foreseeable future. The evolving migration trends towards skilled and semi-skilled labor and the increasing representation of professionals and paraprofessionals further substantiate the trajectory of prolonged migration. (Weiner 29)

In light of the compelling insights provided by Prakash and Weiner, it becomes evident that migration from Kerala to foreign lands extends beyond mere geographical relocation; it is a multifaceted phenomenon that shapes economic trajectories, transforms social structures, and delineates the aspirations of an entire generation. This essay delves into the profound exploration of the trials, tribulations, and triumphs encapsulated within the narrative of Benyamin’s diasporic novel “Goat Days” (Aadujeevitham), uncovering the existential journey of Najeeb, the protagonist, as a representative of the broader experiences of expatriates in the Gulf countries.

Continuing within the contemporary landscape of Kerala, the younger generation harbours a fervent ambition to pursue advanced education and seek settlement abroad, particularly exhibiting a marked preference for European and North American destinations. The avenues for international education have markedly expanded, rendering them more accessible and financially viable. These foreign shores have metamorphosed into aspirational realms, encapsulating the ideals of self-actualization and prosperity. However, beneath this veneer of optimism simmers an undercurrent of apprehension, a collective fear that the unabated persistence of current migration patterns could potentially lead Kerala into a demographic predicament characterized by a dearth of young individuals. This concern has ignited intense dialogues among scholars and sociologists alike, fostering a renewed interest in examining the circumstances faced by expatriates. Often captivated by the allure of

opulent foreign landscapes, these individuals inadvertently overlook the latent challenges. This introspective dialogue has rekindled an earnest engagement with Benjamin's poignant Malayalam novel *Aadujeevitham* (Goat Days), which first saw the light of day in 2008.

In stark divergence from lofty expectations, the long-dreamt Gulf experience can, at times, metamorphose into a mere illusion. The undeniable veracity that appearances can deceive becomes resoundingly clear when Malayalis arrive at their coveted destinations only to confront harsh realities that exceed even their most dire apprehensions. Many find themselves ensnared in the shackles of drudgery, with promised remunerations proving elusive. Servitude, stringent religio-cultural norms, monarchical control, the denial of elemental amenities, and the inhumane treatment meted out by 'Arbabs' (bosses) who often cling to archaic ideologies, together with the unrelenting desert extremities, constitute the grim panorama that many endure. It is a grievous oversight that such excruciating ordeals of migrants often remain marginalized in public discourse. In this very context, Benjamin's magnum opus, *Aadujeevitham* (Goat Days), emerges with remarkable relevance. This heart-wrenching narrative of modern-day enslavement has etched an indelible imprint on global readers, serving as a clarion call to awaken dormant empathy. It has even motivated the celebrated Malayalee filmmaker, Blessy, to adapt this tale into a survival drama under the same title. Anticipation for this high-budget production, titled 'The Goat Life,' is palpable, with its debut expected at the Cannes Film Festival and a subsequent theatrical release on October 21, 2023.

Authored by Benjamin himself, *Aadujeevitham* is a narrative woven from the harrowing real-life experiences of an abused Malayali migrant labourer named Najeeb during the 1990s. Notably, Benjamin himself, an expatriate residing in Bahrain since 1992, attests, "Loneliness, boredom, depression, numbness, and excess in the Gulf made me a writer." This study seeks to delve into the profound reverberations of this novel in readers' consciousness, particularly its impact on the perception of the predicaments endured by countless hapless expatriates in Gulf countries. K J Joseph Observes: "Authenticity of narration and explicit portrayal of Najeeb's fiasco in Gulf lent this troubling study of Indian labour migrants an extraordinary literary charisma. This novel also provides an insight into the lives of many suppressed people who suffer in countries other than their homeland and throws light on the have nots' helplessness in haves' land in a realistic way" (89).

At the narrative's core stands Najeeb, a young sand miner hailing from Kayamkulam. Benjamin casts Najeeb as a beacon of philanthropy, his endeavours abroad driven by the noble pursuit of facilitating a dignified existence for his cherished family. This central figure, relatable in his simplicity, presides over a small family unit comprising his mother and expectant wife, Sainu. Benjamin deftly paints Najeeb as a quintessential Malayali content with modest aspirations, a loving family, and an unshakeable belief in God and destiny. The throes of poverty propel Najeeb to secure a visa through a friend, embarking on a journey he and countless others envision as a passage to the proverbial Promised Land—the Gulf. He, like many of his contemporaries, dreams of earning sufficient income

to ensure the comfort of loved ones back home. As he eloquently shares, “How about going abroad for once? Not for long. I am not that greedy. Only long enough to settle a few debts. Add a room to the house. Just the usual cravings of most Malayalis” (Goat Days, 35).

Najeeb’s subsequent odyssey takes him to Riyadh, accompanied by a fellow traveller named Hakeem. Yet, upon arrival, their sponsor remains conspicuously absent. Seizing the opportunity, a wealthy Arab supervisor named Arbab erroneously ferries Najeeb and Hakeem from King Khalid International Airport to an animal farm, forever altering the trajectory of their lives. In an environment punctuated by tented enclosures housing camels and goats, Najeeb’s once lofty aspirations crumble to dust. The chasm between fantasy and brutal reality is laid bare, punctuated by his isolation due to linguistic barriers. His sole companion, a long-standing resident of the farm, remains an enigmatic presence due to language divides. Confronted by the stark reality of perpetual desert captivity, Najeeb’s spirit gradually succumbs to the inevitability of his grim circumstances

After a while, though Najeeb comprehends that his life is shackled to rearing goats he does not lose hope. He makes the goats his natives and family members to alleviate his loneliness. Necessity is the mother of creation and he addresses them Pochakkari Ramani, Aravu Ravuthar, Mary Maimuna, Parippu Vijayan, Nabeel, Kausu and even EMS (the first Chief Minister of Kerala) and Mohanlal (a popular Malayali actor). He ultimately becomes a goat among goats with the suppressed feelings and emotions of a man and this survival instinct of Najeeb is really commendable. However, it is saddening that Najeeb is denied even the basic amenities. He has no right to take bath or brush his teeth. During his gruesome life in desert, he is treated not like a human being, but as an animal or even as a mere inanimate object and this ordeal lasts for three years, four months and nine days.

In the meanwhile, he gets an opportunity to see his long lost friend, Hakeem. It is appalling that the once handsome young boy has transformed to a slim, dark, scary figure. Compared to Najeeb, Hakeem is lucky that he has an African friend, Ibrahim to communicate. One day, the three get a chance to escape from their inferno. After going through insufferable hard knocks for several days, Najeeb succeeds in reaching a town by name Batha with the help of an Arab. Regrettably, he loses both his friends on the way. Nevertheless, his immense faith in the Almighty is rewarded and a benevolent Malayali named Kunjeeka provides him with refuge. At last, Najeeb is sent back home with the intervention of Indian Embassy and Good Samaritans like Kunjeeka.

Aadujeevitham can be interpreted as a profound example of a Diaspora novel, a genre that explores the experiences of individuals displaced from their homeland to new cultural contexts. The term ‘Diaspora,’ originally signifying the dispersion of Jews among non-Jewish communities, has evolved to encompass any group sharing a common culture and residing in new lands. Geographical relocations occur for various reasons, whether voluntary or forced due to factors like persecution, poverty, slavery, racism, or national conflicts. One compelling motive for migration is the pursuit of financial security, improved

job prospects, or an elevated standard of living. When individuals document their experiences in the host country or discuss the cultural shifts that stem from relocation, their narratives transcend both the literature of their home country and that of their new abode. These writers straddle the margins of two societies, embodying qualities common to all expatriate or Diaspora literature.

Central to the notion of Diaspora is the assimilation of the host culture. As settlers integrate into the host country, significant transformations occur in language, lifestyle, and even personal identity. Diaspora writing emanates from a state of unsettlement on a metaphysical plane, born out of dislocation that fosters nostalgia and a yearning for the homeland. Identity searches in fragmented settings, feelings of alienation, immigration, and expatriation constitute recurring themes in Diaspora literature. Writers like Salman Rushdie, VS Naipaul, Monica Ali, and Jhumpa Lahiri have explored these themes extensively in their works. The quest for identity within unfamiliar societies stands as a prominent motif within Diaspora writing, a sentiment notably reflected in the novel *Aadujeevitham*.

The narrative of *Aadujeevitham* authentically captures the Diaspora experience, delving into themes of alienation, loneliness, realism amidst optimism, dialogism, the plight of marginalized individuals, mistreatment, nostalgia, and a yearning for the homeland. These themes converge in the life of the protagonist, Najeeb, emblematic of the broader experiences of expatriates. The novel provides a window into the challenges, hopes, and struggles faced by individuals navigating the complex territory of life in foreign lands. The exploration of these facets is not exclusive to Najeeb; countless expatriates encounter similar realms at different junctures of their lives.

Undoubtedly, the novel's portrayal of these dimensions resonates with the broader Diaspora literary tradition. It captures the essence of life as an expatriate, fostering empathy and understanding among readers worldwide. Benyamin's narrative exposes the multifaceted layers of the human experience, particularly poignant in the context of migration and its impact on identity, cultural assimilation, and the pursuit of a meaningful existence. The thematic depth of *Aadujeevitham* adds to the ongoing discourse on Diaspora literature, offering a distinctive lens through which to examine the complexities of displacement, resilience, and the universal quest for a sense of belonging.

Alienation emerges as a recurring theme within the narrative, shedding light on the stark contrast between utopian expectations and the brutal realities of life in Gulf countries. The portrayal of Gulf nations often carries a veneer of idealized prospects, often fueled by the stories of Malayalis achieving remarkable success after humble beginnings. However, the mental anguish experienced by Najeeb, the protagonist, transcends even the most harrowing imaginings, highlighting the excruciating trials he endures. This novel can be seen as a tribute to the resilience of diligent Gulf Malayalis, as Najeeb's arduous physical journey and profound mental strain mirror the experiences of fellow sufferers such as Hameed, Hakeem, and other characters.

Initial experiences of those embarking on a journey abroad often evoke a sense of detachment from the new environment and culture. Najeeb's arrival at the airport encapsulates this feeling of alienation. Upon landing, he finds no one there to receive him and his fellow traveller Hakeem. The bustling surroundings and lack of attention to their arrival symbolize the anonymity and isolation inherent to the experience of arriving in an unfamiliar land. Despite Najeeb's attempts to reach out to others, the language barrier proves to be a formidable obstacle. His inner turmoil is vividly captured when he shares, "I distracted myself by picturing ourselves in Antarctica instead and imagining those who crossed as black and white penguins. I would pleadingly look at the faces of each penguin" (Goat Days, 45). This poignant reflection reveals his vulnerability in an alien setting, marked by instances where he feels estranged.

The deliberate separation of Najeeb from Hakeem by the Arbab underscores the exploitation of this sense of alienation. By isolating Najeeb from a fellow Malayali, the Arbab cunningly denies him the potential solace that camaraderie could offer. This alienation becomes a manipulative tool, granting the Arbab absolute authority over Najeeb's emotional state. Even the most mundane aspects of Najeeb's environment contribute to his sense of estrangement. The unfamiliar odor of the goats and the novelty of terms like "arbab," "khubbus," "thobe," and "sheeladi" serve as stark reminders of his detachment from the familiar.

However, it is noteworthy that, like many migrants, Najeeb eventually adapts to this sense of isolation. His demanding labor-intensive work leaves little room for prolonged contemplation of his circumstances. The rigorous nature of his tasks, paired with the arduous conditions he endures, tempers his initial feelings of alienation, as survival takes precedence over emotional reflections. This transformation exemplifies the complex interplay between the individual and the environment, as well as the resilience that emerges in the face of adversity. Najeeb suffers from severe loneliness also. Alienation and loneliness are two sides of the same coin. This sense of feeling follows him after the departure of Hakeem at first. In the midst of the vast desert, he is deserted with hundreds of goats and camels. Though he cannot speak to anyone, the central character lives with the ardent ambition to survive. Loneliness is not his choice but he is destined to lead such a miserable life. He is forced to spend three years, four months and nine days in wretchedness. The glaring of the sun, the kissing of the wind and the raining of the dust are all accepted by him with passive resistance. During his entire life in desert, there is not a single moment when Najeeb is tormented and tortured not only by the Arbab but also by the fond memories of his near and dear ones. This utter loneliness adds to his sufferings with no other person to share his woes. His providing the names of his acquaintances to goats can be seen as a way of allaying this desolation. Man is a social animal and he is different from other animals in his capacity to speak. But if this faculty is restrained, a man cannot survive for long. On the basis of this human nature, Mikhail Bakhtin, the Soviet critic, developed his idea of 'Dialogism'. Bakhtin attempted to demolish the monopoly of monologist narration in novels. He tried to bring

the voice of the characters into the main stream. In *Aadujeevitham*, the voice of the author is nothing but the voice of the protagonist as they are unified as one. Here, the idea of Dialogism is explained in a philosophical dimension which questions the existence of Najeeb. From the beginning itself he is kept off from human contacts and his only companions are goats. As goats need care and they are as poor as Najeeb, he can easily identify himself with them in all ways. As he himself testifies, "I was one of the goats. Mine was a goat's life" (Goat Days, 253). This identification with the goats could perhaps be the suspense behind the title. As mentioned, he converses with these goats by giving them the names of his favourites and they become an integral part of his life in the desert. This is his unique way of tackling with loneliness and alienation.

Another feature which can be attributed to the hardships of expatriates is the suppression of the marginalized group. This suppression is best explained by Gayatri Chakraborty Spivak, who uses the term 'subaltern' in her well known essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" 'Subaltern' is a term for anyone who is "subordinate in rank, status or importance and refers to any member of a group that because of their class, gender race or cultural background (or a combination of these) has little access to the mechanisms of representation and power within any given society" [Contemporary British Fiction; Nick, Bentley]. Najeeb has no voice and the Arbab suppresses him and browbeats him to do jobs without sufficient food or any remuneration, just like a slave. In such a situation, he is merely a subaltern.

The common universal element in this novel is nostalgia and the yearning for one's homeland. Najeeb's quest for his own land and his family is more intense than the heat in the desert. During this period, he is not able to contact his family through a letter or over the phone. Hence the pungency of his departure from his land pierces his heart like a sharp dagger. As an ardent believer in God, Najeeb endures all His tests. Najeeb in the novel has a "quest for life" but the real Najeeb, with whom Benyamin was acquainted had thought about "suicide", says Benyamin (Bhashaboshini, int, (p.30)). In the course of the novel, his best companion is hope. In one sense, this novel can be called a story of optimism. This is also a fine post-colonial novel in which the writer describes the unexpected twists and turns in the life of an unfortunate expatriate in the midst of sands and sun.

Benyamin has moulded the story of *Aadujeevitham* with his captivating creativity and has enfolded the occurrences with a bitter taste of humour. Benyamin, with his first hand exposure to the hitherto unknown human misery, with a strong empathy for the subjugated and the deprived, with a deep insight into the intricacies of human mind, with a lucid, natural, fluent and persuasive narrative skill and a brilliant craftsmanship, has endeared himself to millions of readers all over the world. He has become an iconoclast who has burst the lucent image of the Gulf. It is no exaggeration that no other novel in Malayalam or in any Indian language has been able to recount the trials and tribulations of a migrant worker so poignantly.

Aadujeevitham by Benjamin stands as a poignant representation of the multifaceted struggles faced by expatriates, particularly those hailing from Kerala, as they venture into the Gulf countries in search of a better life. Through the lens of Najeeb's harrowing journey, the novel delves into themes of migration, alienation, loneliness, and the suppression of marginalized voices. It exemplifies the complexities of expatriate experiences and sheds light on the challenges and aspirations that shape their lives. The novel serves as a testament to the evolving nature of diasporic literature, resonating with individuals who have undergone geographical relocation due to various motives. Najeeb's relentless pursuit of survival amidst extreme adversity parallels the quest of numerous expatriates for financial security and improved living conditions. This narrative reflects contemporary global dynamics where migration has become a defining feature of modern societies, often driven by economic aspirations.

The literary exploration of Najeeb's isolation, both physical and emotional, underscores the universal human need for connection and belonging. It draws from Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of "Dialogism," as Najeeb's silence is juxtaposed against the lively conversations he establishes with his goat companions. These interactions reveal the fundamental human desire to transcend solitude, even through unconventional means. Moreover, the novel unveils the dichotomy between the perceived glamour of expatriate life and the stark reality that many face. The disillusionment Najeeb experiences after arriving in the Gulf serves as a cautionary tale against the idealized dreams often associated with migration. This theme resonates across borders, as individuals from various cultures navigate the challenges of adapting to new environments.

Benjamin's *Aadujeevitham* not only sheds light on the plight of expatriates but also resonates with the broader discourse on identity, belonging, and the human spirit's resilience. As the narrative unfolds, it traverses the intricate tapestry of emotions that bind individuals to their homeland, accentuating the poignant pangs of nostalgia that arise in the face of displacement. The novel's power to evoke empathy and understanding reflects the transformative potential of literature in fostering cross-cultural awareness and bridging the gaps between different segments of society. Ultimately, through its vivid portrayal of Najeeb's journey, the novel stands as a testament to the indomitable spirit of human perseverance in the face of adversity and the enduring quest for a place to call home. ■

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An Ecocritical Study and Anthropological Concerns of Classical Sangam Poetry Translated by A.K. Ramanujan.

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Sangam Literature is an assortment of poetry written by Tamil literary Scholars who lived around the time of 600 BCE to 300CE. The poems incorporate the values, sentiments, lifestyle, emotions, and intellect of the inhabitants in connection with their landscape. The poems are divided in two thematic categories such as Akam and Puram. Akam could be translated as inner-self, or interior or love. In general, Akam poetry would personify the matters of heart and emotions. Puram could be translated as external-self or exterior or war. In general, Puram poetry would portray the intellect and external activities. The concepts through which these poems would engage are through space, time, god, food, occupation, flora and fauna, code of conduct, characters etc. This genre incorporates more imagery and symbolism through its concepts, inhabitant and landscape which demand readers intellect. The landscape of this genre is divided into five categories such as Kurinchi, Mullai, Marutham, Neithal, and Pallai. The intellects are applied to human emotions, not as a burst of sentiments but as a preach on the ways of lives with nature at its center. Through these aspects, this paper aims at conducting an Ecocritical Study and Anthropological Concerns on selective works of Classical Sangam Poetry Translated by A.K. Ramanujan. The ways in which this paper achieves its aim is through understanding the lifestyle during Sangam Literature, the universality of Sangam Poetry and incorporating other concepts such as Ecocriticism or Eco Poetry, Affective Ecocriticism, Green Studies and Nature Writing.

Keywords: Sangam poetry, Ecocriticism, Affective Ecocriticism, Green Studies, Nature Writing.

A.K. Ramanujan was an Indian poet, Scholar, Translator, and a Sahitya Academy Award Winner for Best Poem in English. One of his most predominant works refers to his translation of Sangam poetry. In an essay called “An A.K. Ramanujan Story” edited by Molly A. Daniels-Ramanujan, states that “One ordinary afternoon, in the fall of 1962, he went to the library and two great books literally fell into his hands. The two texts, *Kuruntokai*

and *Tolkappiyam*, changed the direction of the rest of his life” (xi). The two texts belong to the historic period which took place almost two thousand years ago, called the Sangam or Cangam period of Tamil literature. It is one of the oldest classical literature in Tamil language and one of the few classical literary texts which is not derived from Sanskrit.

Sangam literature portrays the culture and traditions of Tamil society before the influence of the Northern Aryans. Through these texts, the readers could understand the pure and beautiful representation of Tamil customs and cultural affiliation of its people. In an article called “Cangam Literature” by Katherine Harper, she states that

The early Cankam poems were written during a period in which Brahmanism was not prevalent in the Tamil region. Thus, the rich language reveals more than profound sentiment; it also conveys extremely important facts about a culture that was submerged and altered in later centuries by the migrations of northern Aryans, who brought their own culture (05).

Sangam Literature was not written by one person. It is a collection of poetry by various scholars who lived under various Tamil Kingship such as Chera, Chola and Pandiyan.

A.K. Ramanujan has translated some of these texts in English Language and placed it as the Crown Jewel of his scholarly works. In the essay “An A.K. Ramanujan Story” Daniels states that “The Cangam or Sangam (Ancient academy of poets) became Ramanujan’s alma mater, his post-doc fraternity” (xi). The collection of poems in which he wrote these translations are *The Interior Landscape* (1967) and *Poems of Love and War* (1985). In these translated texts, withholding the essence of the original meaning of the text and transferring it to the target language might have been a lot of literary and linguist problem as the original poems are written Classical Tamil Language. Daniels states in his essay that in terms of translation

Ramanujan succeeded because his own poems showed an affinity to the texts he chose to translate. While translating from *Kurunthokai* (the anthology of love poetry from first century AD) he kept in mind ‘the phase-order in English’ and tried to ‘preserve the order and syntax of themes and not of single words’. In focusing on the structure of each poem, he had help: in the *Kurunthokai* form is inseparable from content. This was Ramanujan’s apprenticeship as a poet (xii).

The richness of Sangam Literature could be difficult to be recreated but Ramanujan has carried his translation around syntax and themes to provide *The Interior Landscape* and *The Poems of Love and War*.

Sangam Literature has various divisions and incorporates various literary elements in its genre. It is important to understand the numerous literary elements with regards to the anthropological understanding of the texts. The major thematic divisions of Sangam Literature are Akam and Puram. Akam refers to the matters of the heart and emotions such as love, friendship, etc. Puram refers to the intellect and activities that are considered as

external affairs such as War, Bravery, etc. Sangam Literature has eighteen divisions with Eight anthologies and Ten Idylls. The Eight anthologies are *Ainkurunuru*, *Akananuru*, *Purananuru*, *Kalittokai*, *Natrinai*, *Kurunthokai*, *Pathirrupattu*, and *Paripatal*. The Ten Idylls are *Thirumukuruppatai*, *Kurincippattu*, *Maturaikkanci*, *Malaipatukatam*, *Mullaipattu*, *Netunalvatai*, *Pattinappalai*, *Perumpanarruppatai*, *porunarruppatai* and *Cirupanarruppatai*. There are also other lesser-known divisions. All these literary divisions contain various poems written among various scholars over a period of six generations under different kingship in different landscape and following common literary elements to portray their inhabitants, flora and fauna, food, customs, gods, lifestyle, etc.

The first literary element that the scholars followed would be the landscape. During the Sangam period, the division of Tamil society is based on their ecological region. There are five divisions based on their ecological landscape. The thematic characteristic of Akam and Puram stand for Love and Military respectively with these five regions. They are Kurinchi, Mullai, Marutham, Neithal and Pallai. These regions are named after the flower peculiar to that region. In terms of literary action, A peculiar behavioral pattern is associated with each of these regions. These regions are also referred as Thinaï. In a text called *Earlier South Indian Society and Economy* by Sivatabi states that when the different patterns of the region such as geographical aspect, flora and fauna, economic activities, diet, etc. are schematized and set out by the grammarians seem to emerge as codes and conduct prescribed to each region representing the culture of the society.

It is important to understand the culture of the society while conducting an ecocritical study because the term Ecocriticism finds its relevance in a place where nature and literature encounter or connect.

Ecocriticism, a term first coined by William Rekert in 1978, addresses the issue concerning landscape and environment that have previously been overlooked by the literary academy. A few examples would include: how nature is represented, when it is represented, how environmental crisis has influenced literature, and how concepts of the environment have evolved through centuries (Dreese, 04).

In reference to Sangam and Thinaï landscape, Wendell Berry calls Ecocriticism as Landscape Criticism. He does that because he wants his readers to create a respect towards nature and to develop an interconnectedness with nature.

Ecocriticism is a critic of patriarchy and materialism. It is constantly political. It helps at viewing the relationship between human and nature through various lens. For example, literature as a representation of human life with relation towards nature could be categorized into Eco-Literature and Eco-Communism. Eco-Literature is a place where literature is just an expression of poem's attitude towards nature. This attitude can be positive or negative or neutral. Eco-Communism is an emotional and a spiritual bond with nature which goes beyond the world of physical appearance. This makes the ecological experience as transcendental. Ecocriticism points out that this transcendental

experience is still in the preview of language as language is in the form of construction. So, the first thing that Ecocriticism analyses is pre-embedded system of language and culture.

The culture of Sangam period could be understood with its literary elements as nature was not used as survival but as part of its life. The landscape or Thinaï provide various concepts with nature such as code of conduct, concept of space, time, aspects of love and types of love. Everything is very symbolic which demands human intellect and showcase the society's deeply rooted tradition with nature.

In terms of Akam poetry, the name of the landscapes is Kurinchi, Mullai, Marutham, Neithal and Pallai. Kurinchi refers to the *Strobilanthus Kunthianus* shrub that grows in the mountain region. In the poetry, it refers to hill landscape for the concept of space and appearance of this region is symbolic towards the sexual union between Hero and Heroine and those that leads towards it. The rainy season and cold midnight belong to Kurinchi region in terms of the concept of time. Kurinchi represents the prosperity of the nation. The type of love expressed here would-be union of lovers. In reference to Puram, which talks about the military practices, the hill landscape is represented by the flower, Vetchi which is the red flowers from the Jungle Geranium plant. This flower is symbolic towards the act of Cattle capturing in a war which represent the beginning of the war.

The Mullai region is represented by the forest landscape. The flower Mullai refers to Jasmine that grows in the forest region. In the Akam poetry, the code of conduct for Mullai is the patient waiting of the lovers due to a separation and everything that leads towards it. The concept of space refers to the forest and pastoral region. The low rainy seasons and evening period represents Mullai in terms of the concept of time. Mullai represent the prosperity of the nation in the dry region. The type of love expressed here would be on patient endurance of the lovers. In reference to Puram, the forest region is represented by the pastoral land. The flower representing the pastoral land is Vanchi which is *Salix tetrasperma*. This flower is symbolic towards the travelling from the homeland to the area of war, also as a code of action, the elderly and the children of the community will be transferred to a guarded region.

The Marutham region is represented by the agricultural landscape. The flower Marutham refers to the Indian Laurel that grows in the agricultural region. In Akam poetry, the code of conduct for Marutham is wife or lover sulking over husband's or boyfriend's visit and everything that lead toward it. The concept of space includes agriculture and agrarian landscape. All seasons and Dawn represent Marutham in terms of concept of time. Marutham represents the inhabitants of the region such as the farming community and their lifestyle. The type of love expressed here would-be Variance. In reference to Puram, the agricultural region is represented by Agrarian landscape. The flower representing the Agrarian Landscape is Ulinai which is *Aerva Lanata*. The code of action that this flower symbolizes is the attack of the foreign land.

The Neithal region is represented by the Sea or River landscape. The flower Neithal refers to the Red or Blue Water Lilly that grows near the river. In Akam poetry, the code of conduct for Neithal is the Agony of Separations and everything that leads towards it. The concept of space includes Sea or River or Littoral landscape. All seasons and Sunset represent Neithal in terms of the concept of time. Neithal represents the coastal region and their lifestyle. The type of love expressed here would be of Pining. In reference to Puram, the Sea area is represented by the dry Littoral landscape. The flower representing the Littoral landscape is Thumbai which is *Leucas aspera*. The code of action that this flower represent is the fight to finish in the war.

The Pallai region is represented by the Desert region. The flower Pallai refers to the Desert flower. In Akam poetry, the code of conduct for Pallai is the complete separation from loved ones and everything that leads towards it. The concept of space includes Desert and Dry landscape. Summer season and Mid-day represent Pallai in terms of concept of Time. Pallai is the representation of the sad state of the society and sometimes stealing could also become a part of the inhabitant lifestyle for survival. The type of love expressed here would be of Separations. In reference to Puram, the Dessert area is represented by Dry landscape. The flower representing the Dry landscape is Vagai which is *Albizia lebbek*. The code of conduct that this flower represent is victory.

The Sangam poetry are universal in nature by incorporating a ubiquitous theme. It achieves universality in its writing by providing a structural representation of the code of life and honest portrayal of how people lived. The characters in the poems are also universal in nature. There are few human characters and they are called Hero, Heroine, Confidant, Male Companion and Foster Mother representing the everyday characteristics in the society. The other characters in the poetry are the vast and beautiful natural landscape of the Tamil society. Each natural element would portray the emotions and feelings of the inhabitants. The treatment of nature is not just an indicative of imaginative fecundity of poets but where the rhythm of human life corresponds, co-exist and coherence in the form of poems as poetry is the finest form of expression in literature.

In Sangam Period, every form of human life is embedded with nature. The first phase of Environmental writing is known as Nature writing. In Eco Literature, every relationship becomes a symbolic relationship. In that context, Eco Poetry is a place where nature is textualized. Nature Writing will elaborate on the major concern of Eco Poetry against Centrism. This Centrism would problematize the inherent idea of Man being the center of all creations is not real. Instead, he is a part of those creations. Sangam poetry eliminates man-centric world that promotes materialism and incorporates nature-centric world which creates a harmonious relationship with mankind. Sangam poetry achieves the nature-centric world in two ways. The first way is through the naming of the landscape. The different flowers named after each landscape are from various kinds of natural elements. The flower Kurinchi is from a shrub, Mullai is from a tree, Marutham is from a grass, Neithal is from a plant and Pallai is from a species. In a man-centric world, nature is treated

as an ornament and any one or two elements of nature is appreciated as it pleases his patriarchal world. But, in Sangam poetry, every aspect of nature is celebrated irrespective of its appearance. The second way in which Sangam poetry incorporates nature-centric world is by including every aspect of life with nature. The discussion on human life did not stop with prosperity is *kurinchi*, the discussion continues till famine and hardship in *Pallai*. Every human emotion is recognized and connected with nature and promotes the concept that nature is part and parcel of life. One single emotion is not celebrated over the other. Every emotion is treated equally. This style of writing could be influenced due to the casteless way of life in the Sangam period.

The 740 poets who contributed to the eight collections include people of different backgrounds, with various trades, and from several communities. Many poets, themselves from a high class, composed in a form of oral poetry popular among the lower classes, and therefore the poems provide a comprehensive view of the language and customs of Tamil society (Harper, 02).

This portrays that Sangam period in Tamil society led a harmonious living in every aspect of life.

Ecocriticism promotes towards nature-centric world for sustainable development. They bring in alternative perspective and proactive measures towards an affective ecocriticism. In a text called *Towards an Affective Ecocriticism* by Kyle Bladow and Jennifer Ladino, they state that

Affective Ecocriticism imagines a more *affective* and consequently, we argue, a more *effective* ecocriticism, as well as a more environmentally attuned affect study. Bodies, human and nonhuman, are perhaps the most salient sites at which affect and ecocriticism come together. While affect theorists have tended to prioritize affect within and in a relation to bodies and to overlook the environment's role in shaping it, eco critics have too often neglected the affectivity of human bodies in their eagerness to champion greater attention to the more-than-human world (12).

Affective Ecocriticism postulates that it is important for the Environmental scholars to create a connection between the environmental crisis, social justice, and human emotions. Sangam literature could be a part of great genre with its historical heritage but its connection with the current environmental crisis is important. As Affective Ecocriticism points out, this connection with human emotion, social justice and environmental crisis will help in reaching across the ideological boundaries and will find a common ground in this new geological epoch. One way of achieving this affect is by transforming the eco theories from the Macro level to the Micro level.

Many theorists analyzed Sangam poetry and placed it as a mere part of human evolution and development. In the text *Early South Indian Society and Economy* by Sivaramani, comments on those various theorists and states that "this assertion that features

observed at macro-levels are not applicable at micro-levels would indeed surprise even the most devout of the functionalities (05).

The historic setting of Sangam period is the Macro-level analyses. The Micro-level would include the economic basis of that period. For example, during the Sangam period in Tamil society, the production process was entirely dependent on their natural region. Since the Neithal landscape is along the coastal region, the natural inhabitant in that landscape would be on fishing, salt cultivation, etc. Their business was through Barter system. The exchange of goods was in terms of livelihood and not for the sake of profit. This would make readers understand the importance of minimalistic life and the negativity in over exploitation.

Green Study is a place where Ecology, Culture and Literature comes together. It encourages a radical view of the future development for its readers. Ecocriticism is considered as emotional and on the other hand there is Green Studies which is considered as political and proactive. However, in today's literature, it is not necessary to make that above mentioned distinction because if Ecocriticism is not political and proactive then it is not acknowledged as Ecocriticism. In other words, if it is not Green Studies then the essence of Ecocriticism is lost. The Tamil society of Sangam Period brings nature, literature, and culture together with its poetry.

In an Akam poetry called "What She Said" Translated by A.K. Ramanujan, it states that

Sweeter than milk
mixed with honey from our gardens
is the leftover water from his land,
low in the waterholes
covered with leaves
and muddied by animals (10).

This poem could be interpreted as the Heroine's desire to live with her Hero is so strong that she finds the leftover water from Hero's land to be better than honey. This image personifies the emotion that everything is better with the presence of Hero in Heroine's life. This emotion emphasizes on the relevance of Kurinchi landscape with milk and honey, the richness of Neithal landscape with waterholes, leaves and muddied animals. The sensitivity of human spirit is related with the spirit of nature and simultaneously encourages the readers to be sensitive towards nature.

Sangam literature encompasses variety of techniques and images and creates universality through characters and themes. The emotions are explained with intensity, analyze human experience with articulation and with the language of suggestive richness. Through these aspects it reminds its readers that human beings are intact with nature and through this genre Ecocriticism emphasizes that without sustainable development of the environment, there cannot be anything good left for the future.

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A Critical Survey on the Freedom of Australian Black Women

Ananya Mohakud

Aborigines are the natives in the Nations like Cannada, New Zealand, USA and Australia. They inhabited first in these lands. Later on, the hegemony of whites snatched away their freedom, and they suffered under the colonial rule and racism. The colonizers became the inhabitants in these lands. Nowadays Blacks in the USA are in the senate house while in Australia the matter is different. In 1980's Canada, Australia and New Zealand severed their financial constitution from the UK power. Still now blacks are not preferred along with the Whites into the parliament in Australia. The land right of Australian aborigines is restricted. Though laws are enacted in favour of them, such laws are not properly implemented in favour of the Blacks yet.

Keywords: *Racism, Colonialism, Feminism, Patriarchy, Hegemony, discrimination, aborigines, Lost-Generation, etc.*

Usually, Australian black writers protest racism in their writings. Likewise, Australian Women writers like Kath Walker, Lisa Bellear, Ali Eckermann and some others protest against racism and discrimination with strong womanish feeling.

Ali Cobby Eckermann (born, 1963) is an Australian poet of Aboriginal Australian ancestry. She is a Yankunytjatjara / Kokatha woman. Eckermann has described her writing as a protest to Stolen Generations as she herself suffered from the same lot. She was stolen from her mother. Later in life, her son was taken from her. Her poems like "Too Afraid to Cry", "Grade One Primary", "Kumana", "How Does a Father Feel", "Shrine", "I Tell You True" and some others speak strongly for the human rights.

In her memoir "Too Afraid to Cry" 2013 she relates how she had been tricked away from her mother as a baby. Her mother had also suffered the same, when she was taken from her grandmother many years before. Eckermann in turn had to give up her own child for adoption. In her new poetry collection, "Inside My Mother", she voices against the distance between the generations marked by sadness and mistrust. Her poetry reminds the poetry of the Australian poet, Oodgero Noonuccal, whose successor Eckermann is.

The website, [www.https.enwikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Stolen_Generations) writes on “The Stolen Generations” that the Stolen Children are the “children of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent, who were removed from their families by the Australian federal and state government agencies and church missions, under acts of their respective Parliaments. The removals of those referred to as “half-caste” children in the period between about 1905 and 1967”. Some complained that the amendment results in children being subjected to unpaid labour (at institutions or farms) or suffer due to the life of a slave. Eckermann was disturbed when her child was stolen like herself.

In the poem “Grade One Primary” Eckermann as a grade one child voices against racism and biased education system. In the first stanza, she says how she is neglected and criticized for her race even in the school, where impartiality should predominate. She writes:

“I don’t feel safe at school no more
Just ‘cos my skin is brown” (L. 3-4)

She is tired of “all the nasty words”. She as a black woman loses her identity and searches her place in the world-”Where do I fit in”? (L. 10)

The white children also abuse the Blacks and misbehave them. They hurt the poet and she feels serious pain. Then she complains to the teacher, but the teacher slaps her in a harassing manner. So she leaves the school and rides up the tree leaving education behind.

The native aborigines of Australia are shocked when British Government intentionally tests the atomic bomb at Marlinga in South Australia during 1940s and 60s. About two thousand or more aborigines died there. The dehumanizing effect of bomb test snatched away peace and happiness from the aborigines. In the poem, “Thunder Raining Poison” Eckermann writes:

“You stole our happiness with your poison ways
You stole our stories
Two thousand.....” (L. 13-15)

Someone lost her mother, someone his/her father, grandfather, son or daughter. The refrain, “Two thousand or more” amplifies pathos in counting the dead bodies. The native aborigines lament at the death of their kinsmen. The pathos rises when the poetess writes:

“Our hearts grow as we mourn for our land
It’s part of us. We love it. Poisoned and all.” (L. 34-35)

Her another poem, “A Dream” is included in the anthology, “Little Bit Long Time” which reveals racism. Eckermann explores the good days of native aborigines. The white colonizers of the UK arrived there and appropriated native Australians’ happiness. Freedom of women was lost. She writes:

“Women in awe whisper
The Whiteman came

And murdered you.” (L. 7-17)

Eckermann’s poem, “Kumana” is included in the anthology, “Little Bit Long Time”. In this poem she grieves memorizing her childhood, when she was separated from the family due to the harsh law of the Stolen Generation.

She reminds us about the Stolen Generation. She is sorrowful as she had to remain lonely by missing her family. She thinks, when she would die, her disordered family may be united. According to her, not only she suffers from such cursed fate, but the whole aboriginal community faces such unjust fate due to the harsh laws for the aborigines.

In the poem “How Does a Father Feel” Eckermann discusses on the torture to Black woman. She also grieves on rape victims and on the harassing condition of the rape victim’s father. She can understand the sad condition of a father, whose daughter has been abused by the rapist. The feeling of the father may be to kill the rapist, who has snatched away the innocence and identity of the rape victim. Eckermann writes:

How does the father feel
After his child is abused?
does he want to kill the man
Who stole the innocence forever? (L. 1-4)

She questions the society, whether her father will try to keep secret about the rape or he will go mad due to the abuse. The mental condition of the father gets disturbed. He may drink or may want to kill the criminal rapist.

In the poem, “Ribbons” the aboriginal woman poet says about the aboriginal children, who are simple and devoid of all privileges as the white children enjoy the privileges in the country. She grieves on their fate. She finds a dusty atmosphere of the aboriginal children, who suffer in the desert.

Eckermann exposes her sorrowful states how she lost her daughter, sister and finally her mother due to the racial discrimination. She also regrets on the torture and assault to Black women. She says how the rapists move everywhere without restriction. No law can check them. They perpetrate evil deeds, but they are not arrested. Poet writes: “That rapist bastard still lives here/ unpunished in the town” (L. 13-14). So to forget such hazardous alarming situation, she takes wine.

Likewise, in the poem “Shrine” Eckermann expresses the delapidated condition of Australian aborigines. They don’t have good shelter or good living condition. They suffer in between rubbish and garbages due to their poverty. So Eckermann hopes for a good change as the aborigines won’t suffer anymore. Their Government should be careful for their shabby condition and hazardous life.

In the poem, “Thunder Raining Poison” poet Eckermann says how the native aborigines of Australia are shocked when British government intentionally tests the atomic

bomb at Marlinga in South Australia during 1940s and 60s. About 2000 or more aborigines died there. The dehumanising effect of bomb snatched away peace and happiness from the innocent aborigines. Eckermann writes:

You stole our happiness with your poison which
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Someone lost her mother, someone her father, daughter or grandfather. The refrain two thousand or more amplifies pathos in counting the dead bodies. The natives lament at the death of their kinsmen. The pathos grows when the poetess writes:

“Our hearts grow as we mourn for our land
It’s part of us. We love it. Poisoned and all”. (L. 34-35)

In the poem “How does a Father Feel” Eckermann writes about the bad affect of women torture. She says about the condition of a father, whose daughter has been abused by the rapist. The feeling of the father may be to kill the rapist after identifying the rape victim. She writes:

How does the father feel
After his child is abused ?
Does he want to kill the man
Who stol the innocence of forever?(L. 1-4)

She asks whether her father tries to keep secret about the rape or he becomes mad due to the abuse. The mental condition of the father gets disturbed. He may drink or want to kill the criminal rapist.

In the poem “I Tell You True” Eckermann exposes her sad state as how she lost her daughter, her sister and finally her mother due to the racial discrimination and due to the torture and sexual assault to women. She says how the rapists wander everywhere without restriction. There is no law to restrict them. They freely perpetrate evil deeds, but they are not arrested or restricted in the society. They can move freely everywhere without hesitation. No law can control them. The poetess writes:

“That rapist bastard still lives here / unpunished in the town”.

So to forget such alarming hazardous situation Eckermann very often takes wine. She thinks that this is the only means to live in life. She is not the only poetess to protest on the loss of women’s identity in Australia. There are other poetesses like Kath Walker, Lisa Bellear of Australia, who raise voice against the loss of humanism and racial discrimination.

Both as a poet and as a socialist, Lisa Bellear sings the same rhymes of poverty, inequality and grief of Koori people of Australia. Strong aboriginal feeling stings her heart. The feeling of black and white, racial inferiority, hatred and political suppression can be distinctly discernable in her poems. The Abos are ostracized. They are poor and have no

land rights. They are undermined by the colonizers, the whites in the land. Institutionalized racism points to discrimination. Lisa could understand their problem as she was also one among the aborigines. Lisa's poems like 'Justice,' 'A Rural Tragedy,' 'The Rapist,' 'Survivin', 'Woman of the Dreaming', 'Women's Liberation' 'Grief' tell the real hazards of Australian Aborigines. According to her women and girl child of the land are neglected. Girl-infanticide increases. Girls and women are tortured and raped. A woman does not even get peace at home as there is her husband, who tortures her mercilessly.

The Australian website, <http://www.culturalsurvival.org/australia?gclid=CPbRkKaahbICFQV76wodV04AUg> writes on the Australian aborigines: 'The government of Australia has a very poor record when it comes to treatment of its Aboriginal citizens. Indigenous Australians were dispossessed of their land, despised for their culture, and marginalized, abused, and murdered. Perhaps the most notorious of all the Australian policies were those that led to what has become known as the Stolen Generations.

Poetess Lisa Bellar of Australia presents the local inaudible shouts of aborigines. She tries to transform such inaudible pains of her natives audible not only to Australian parliament but to the human rights commission through her writings, photographs and radio messages.

Being an indigenous Koori woman of Australia Lisa had an inordinate and congenial love for the aboriginal people of Australia. Discrimination on racial ground in Australia was unbearable for her. She also vehemently opposes the government and its policies as not to grant proper rights to the Koori people.

In the poem 'Conversations', which is in www.poemhunter.com, Lisa writes that the hectic conversation for the development of indigenous people continues. All administrators from the Prime Minister to the Mayor speak for the betterment of Australian aborigines. But there are no 'treaties'. Indigenous people get only a message of hope. But the hope fades with the passage of time as they do not possess land rights or sovereignty. They are trapped in racism. Poet writes:

The message as always,
Even though we smile.
Land rights, sovereignty, no more
Crap, ignorance and unabated racism. (L. 12 - 15)

But their message fails. In the poem, "Message Failed", www.poemhunter.com, Lisa writes that their message of hope fails as the parliament does not agree with them, i.e., with the aborigines.

Likewise in the poem, 'Women's Liberation', UQP, Australia, 1996, Lisa wants for an egalitarian society for her aboriginal people. She wants equal rights as the rights are enjoyed by the whites in the land. As an activist she wants social change. She does not want

any discrimination or racism in her country Australia. So, she writes:

What will happen in an egalitarian society
If the women and the kids start becoming complacent
In that they believe they should have rights
And economic independence, (L. 15 - 18)

Australian feminist activist and aboriginal poet Kath Walker having the same opinion writes in her poem, 'Aboriginal Charter Rights': 'We want hope, not racialism, / Brotherhood not ostracism. /.....Make us proud, not color-conscious/ Give the deal, you still deny us.' Love of mankind forces her to fight for the aboriginal group. Kath Walker demands near Government in the poem, 'Aboriginal Charter of Rights', included in /web:

'Give us welcome, not aversion.
Give us Choice, not cold coercion
Status, not discrimination
Human rights, not segregation.' (L. 23 - 26)

On the humanistic base, the Aborigines want love, fraternity and fellow-feeling from the white Australian people, because whites are their neighbours. It is important that neighbor should be good and should keep good relationship. So they want a warm welcome and oppose racialism. They love whites. But whites do not love them. Through writings Aboriginal writers appeal the whites to extend love and affection for them.

Australian aborigines want help and not exploitation. The government of Australia is least concerned to find out their problems. The first aboriginal poet, Kath walker refers to the freedom of Aborigines. She writes:

We want freedom, not frustration
not control, but self reliance
independence, not compliance. (L. 06 - 09)

The parliament and parliamentarians cannot like aborigines. They cannot grant proper rights to Australian aborigines. So in "Message Failed" Lisa writes:

Indigenous: If you share with our traditions
Parliamentarian: We do not come in peace.

The racial feeling of white Australians is criticized by Lisa Belleair as political injustice. The Australian government is unable to give them justice. Rather Lisa says that even parliamentarians do not want to grant equal status. Their superiority and white colour mark them differentiation. But Parliamentarians are representatives of general people. They are like gods. They are to provide justice. Then how can they become unjust towards Aboriginal black people?

According to Lisa the voice of aborigines is suppressed, while they survive within torture and disappointment. In the poem, "Grief" included in "Dreaming in Urban Areas"

Lisa seeks love for all. But it is grief that pervades over every aborigines. Lisa writes in the poem 'Grief':

This is about me
my life, my grief
my need to maintain
the capacity to love. (L. 07 - 10)

In Africa and Australia the same story runs. No proper laws are made to save an aborigine's life and property. Though laws are made like the law '*Aboriginal land Rights Act 1976*' and '*Native Title Act 1992*', yet such laws are not properly enforced.

The poor African women cannot oppose their White masters. Like slaves they go on working only to fill up their empty bellies. In the poem "Poor Pretty Polly" by Lisa points out how the aborigines are tortured from their childhood. Polly, the little girl has lost her father. Her mother dies of torture. She herself is also a victim of rape. The higher class white man tries to ravish her and finally succeeds.

Polly's birth is unknown to the society. No one identifies her father. Here it is a mystery about her identity in the society.

Government laws fail to support poor pretty Polly. Whites cause discrimination. The discrimination and racialism are the major problem. Aboriginal Poet Kath Walker writes in the poem 'Aboriginal Charter Rights':

'Give incentive, not restriction.
Give us Christ, not crucifixion.' (L. 33 - 34)

The torture refers not only to Polly but the whole aborigine world. The same plight pervades there; and they rot in gutters. They want freedom; they want development; they want justice but not discrimination. But all are dream for them. Poet Lisa and Walker try to find a happy day, when they will be free and will be given their rights to survive and to develop.

Lisa is revolutionary in the poem 'Final Warning'. She addresses her fellowman for a war. They have not forgot the Australian Frontier's War. They cannot forget the discrimination, a very great difference between black and white. Poet Kath walker writes in the poem 'All One Race' included in the web, <https://maja-aboriginal protest poetry.weebly.com>:

'All one family, so why make wars?
.....I am international, never mind place;
I am for humanity, all one race'. (L. 12 - 14)

In the poem 'White Man Dark Man' she criticizes white man that the God has not discriminated, but the real culprits are the man. Colour is the gift of God to mankind, which is a contentious bone here. Addressing to whites she says that they should not boast of color or for Christ as they crucified Jesus. She writes: 'But Him you crucified/ and still do'.

According to Lisa now it is thought of an interim council of war. She advises aborigines to be patient. In the same manner Walker in the poem 'Racism' writes:

Take care! White racists!
Blacks can be racists too
A violent struggle could erupt
And racists meet their death. (L. 07 - 10)

The non-cooperation of the administration of the administrators leaves them in dark. Administrators do not want to allow them rights equal to the Whites. In the poem 'Let us not be Bitter' the aboriginal poet Kath Walker addresses the aborigines to raise voice against torture. She wants the support of the aborigines. They are poor and ignorant. Poet energises them to go ahead for a better change and for better days. She dreams:

The past is gone like our childhood days of old.
The future comes like dawn after the dark
Bringing fulfilment.' (L. 18 - 20)

In the poem, 'Aboriginal Charter Rights' Poet Walker writes: 'Banish bans and conquer caste/ Then we will win our own at last'. Poet Lisa is a revolutionary one. She wants a change, a grand reform. So, in the poem, 'Final Warning' she writes:

Our elders, olders, respected warriors
have thought and fought for generations
they have requested to inform this country
of an impending official war. (L. 01 - 04)

Being dissatisfied with the discrimination of the administration of Australia the aboriginal revolutionary poet Kath Walker writes in her poem 'United We Win':

'Murderers honoured with fame and wealth.
Won of our blood and tears.
Brood no more on the bloody past
Than is gone with regret.' (L. 11 - 14)

In Australia murderers go forward with rewards. Criminals are not punished. But discrimination is for the innocent aborigines. Their rights are not protected. They suffer and suffer.

The above three poets: Walker, Lisa and Eckermann sing the same rhyme of melancholy and pain. They all want a revolution in the society for a big change. Man forgets the ideal of love and fellow-feeling. He hates his own brothers and sisters and perpetrates rape, murder, torture, etc. The superiority feeling in him creates difficulties for others. Feeling of fraternity can eradicate discrimination. Let's love each other and forget discrimination and racial feeling. ■

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An Analysis of Interpersonal Interaction in Preeti Shenoy's *Life Is What You Make It*

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Literature has always served as a reflection of the various facets of human existence. It encompasses all human connections, not just those between men and women. It emphasizes the different social facets of human life with a strong eye toward societal advancement. The intricate ways in which men and women organize themselves, their interpersonal connections, and their perception of the socio-cultural reality are all influenced by literature, which not only reflects social reality but also shapes it. Every person depends on the company and help of other people to survive in this world. Nevertheless, despite all of the shared objectives and passions, emotional worth cannot be disregarded. The same points are emphasized in the current paper as they were in one of India's best-selling novels by Preeti Shenoy. "*Life is What You Make It*," her second book, was one of the best-selling books in India in 2011. She has been referred to as a relationship expert. The purpose of the current paper is to analyze how Preeti Shenoy's book "*Life is What You Make It*" portrays human connections.

Keywords: Society, Human connections, Reality, Socio-cultural, Individual, Bi-Polar Disorder.

The foundation of a society is a set relationship. They are essential to someone's personal growth. An individual will develop if their relationships with others are positive, but if they are negative, they will deteriorate. One lives in a complex web of relationships in a modern world. Ankita, the protagonist of the book, is not an exception. One such author that highlights the significance of values like love, trust, and relationships along with those of faith and courage of a person is Indian novelist Preeti Shenoy, who has her base on Bangalore. Preeti Shenoy is a bestselling author and well-known social commentator in the literary world. Her novel "*Life is What You Make It*" a narrative of love, hope, and how determination can conquer even fate seems more oriented towards the existential principles, the absorption of which is greatly essential for scrubbing the desperate inclinations that have crept into the younger generation.

Ankita Sharma, the protagonist, serves as the basis for the book. She has achieved all a young woman in her twenties might hope for. Ankita seemed to have received all the available benefits, including alluring beauty, a bright and endearing personality, and a talented disposition. Her life seemed to be flourishing to the fullest. She appears to have the world at her feet, with a ton of friends and boys drooling over her. As the plot develops, we learn that Ankita's parents are very traditional and do not like the idea of her hanging out with men, even in a group. Or letting her male friends phone her at home. The novelist emphasizes the importance of fundamental life principles and relationships with family and friends built on trust and love by arguing that these are the very things one can cling to in difficult times. The story provides a subtle suggestion that having these principles in one's life is what makes life genuinely joyful and fulfilling. Love, friendship, acceptance, and optimism make the world a better place overall. With these, one can conquer any obstacle, including poverty.

A network of connections created for the benefit of human society is called society. The same thing is presented by Preeti Shenoy in "*Life is What You Make It.*" Vaibhav, Abhi, and Joseph all enter Ankita's life as boyfriends. Vaibhav, a member of her school gang, is friends with Ankita. Both students initially attend the same school in Delhi, but after Ankita's school education her father is transferred to Cochin. Vaibhav is admitted to IIT Delhi. Later, they exclusively exchange letters for communication. Ankita begins working toward her graduation from St. Agnes in Cochin, a prominent women's institution. She is appointed college's Arts Association Secretary. In conjunction with a function, she meets a coed college student named Abhishek or Abhi from Mahaveer College. Abhi grows romantically interested in Ankita. In blood, he writes her a letter of love. Suvi, a friend of hers persuaded her to comply with Abhi's request for a meeting. Ankita was informed by Suvi that she was not married to Vaibhav and that she needed to tell him about everything, including meeting Abhi. Throughout the three years leading up to graduation, both gradually and steadily get close to one another.

Both graduates submit MBA applications. Only CUSAT, or Cochin University of Science and Technology, admits Abhi, whereas Bombay's MBA program offers Ankita an opportunity to pursue her MBA. Abhi wants her to get an MBA at CUSAT, but she would rather attend the superior school in Bombay. Abhi wants to married her or at the very least wants a promise of wedlock, but Ankita is unwilling to make any commitments and ignores him afterward. He asked her to stay in touch and had a melancholy expression. Ankita was shocked to learn a day later that Abhi had drowned in the sea due to high amount of alcohol he consumed. Ankita regrets not keeping her word to Abhi to stay in touch; perhaps he would not have killed himself. Things might not have been as bad if she had promised to see him once a year in Cochin.

For growth, the relationship must be two- way and not just one. Due to Abhi's higher expectations and Ankita's lower responsiveness, the Abhi and Ankita case became difficult and important. It had a horrible ending because of this. Ankita learned from the

experience to never discount love, no matter where it originates. Ankita erred by falling to consider Abhi's viewpoint on this issue. She would have known where the shoe pinches if she had placed herself in Abhi's shoes. But Abhi was also at fault since he was unable to embrace change. It is customary for girls to consider their future together. However, a boy is serious when he considers his future with his partner.

Preeti Shenoy appears to be interested in young boys' and girls' interactions from a concealed but actual perspective. Relationships have the potential to have any kind of effect. It might be advantageous or detrimental. Following Abhi's passing, Ankita developed bipolar disorder. A brain illness called bipolar disorder causes a sharp change in mood and energy levels. The individual may experience a "high episode," during which their creativity is at its height. She occasionally experiences low moods or emptiness. In this stage, one begins to consider suicide or death. Ankita initially believes she is at the height of her creative potential. She develops a photographic memory. She excels in her field. She writes a forty two page love letter to Suvi when her suffering becomes intolerable. Ankita and Joseph, was a classmate at Bombay University where she is doing an MBA, become friends. She was attempting to use Joseph's presence to help her replace Abhi's void, but she is unsuccessful in doing so. Ankita makes the error because she believes she has moved on and that the joy of work can help her forget the emotional anguish.

She receives praise, success, friendships, and everything else, but the anguish she had been ignoring somewhere still bothers her. She starts acting strangely slowly begin acting foolishly, such as drinking and dancing on the top of the terrace, seeing Joseph in an effort to rekindle her love for Abhi, studying day and night, and writing poetry as a means of coping with her guilt. Joseph reminded her of Abhi. She kisses him in an effort to undo the past and revive Abhi. Ankita's mind appears to be overburdened with guilt. There has always been an idealized portrayal of interpersonal interactions, particularly those with parents. But it has other repercussions in the present day. Preeti Shenoy places particular emphasis on a few elements that alter this portrayal.

In the beginning Ankita's relationship with her parents was completely normal, but when they learned that Vaibhav had written her a series of love letters, they became upset and burned all the letters, including the one that Abhi had written in blood. These ties with strangers can at times be more important than some blood relations. All of these events help to turn her life around; she eventually begins to feel miserable and stops going to college. She has sleepless nights due to her anxiousness, and during her worst episodes, she makes two suicide attempts. She has been identified as having bipolar disorder, a mental illness characterized by abrupt, mood swings that alternate between two phases: the manic phase, during which the sufferer is bursting with energy and good spirits, and the depressive phase, which frequently leads to suicidal thoughts. Her parents become extremely concerned about her illness as it worsens and they make every effort to get her treated. Once she is taken to the psychiatric institution, her grief, melancholy, and anxiety know no bounds. The merciless plans of her destiny at this time made it seem as though she had no control over her life.

What makes him unique as an author is his ability to observe his surroundings carefully? He chooses a topic that appeals to his sensibilities and that he believes has to be shared with others in order to share set of principle or vision. One of the main reasons for such communication is strong desire to dispel the stereotypical ideas and incorrect viewpoints that the speaker believes to exist in his environment. A contemporary author is not an exception to the rule. However, Ankita, the main character, receives a lot of support from the doctor, another total stranger to her, who takes care of her case. The doctor explains to her with sympathy that she is suffering from a very intriguing mental state that is extremely typical among sensitive and gifted people. Ankita was motivated by Dr. Madhusudan's own tale. He was inspired to study of psychiatry and aids those with mental illness as a result of his sister's death. He says Ankita's life is a blessing; Dr Madhusudan says nothing is lost just because you left the MBA program. You still have options in life.

Dr Madhusudan says that she has wonderful writing talent and her artwork is also excellent. He told that she had bipolar disorder and could control it. Ankita had entire faith in him. And he represents himself as the ideal physician, one whose actions and conduct saved Ankita's life. Preeti Shenoy's effort to promote harmony across relationships, particularly that or not found on blood. It creates a pathway for fresh connections between those considered strangers or unknowns. Friendships are one of the primary ways that new human interactions are represented.

So it is clear that relationship in Literature is found on both internal and external affairs. This novel is based on the variety of relationships, including man-woman interactions, difficulties in falling in love, heart breaks, and connections with the parents. A stable relationship requires striking a delicate balance between response and the feeling, or between the heart and the head. Due to the improper communication, Ankita let her relationship with Abhi to deteriorate, but Dr. Madhusudan saved her from this predicament. Ankita is able to recover from the trauma thanks to her confession to Vaibhav. The novel is remarkable in this regard since it addresses contemporary interpersonal issues.

Today's speakers, intellectuals, philosophers, and other luminaries appear to be in a kind of self-congratulatory mood as they praise the age for its materialistic successes and the various facets of growth and development. But there is another side to the coin as well. The period of time that we so dearly treasure is also tinged with the ominous and gloomy hues of sadistic events and incidents that seem to detract from the splendor and grace of this developmental strand itself. This generation appears to be falling behind in the ability to handle the stresses that today's chaotic and frenetic lifestyle carries with it, despite the practicality of its approach.

Thus, there is ambiguity in the situation, making it difficult to decide whether to celebrate the profits or lament the resulting losses. It would not be an overstatement to say that literature can never fail to serve as a guide, a torchbearer, and a solution of these. Literature appears to be an appropriate response to the aforementioned dilemma, as it not

only seeks to outline the same but also to offer a suggestion, or rather possible solution, to the existing problems experienced by humanity in general. There is no denying that society and literature have a relationship where they are both supplemental and complimentary to one another. The society and the literature that exist there are always believed to be complimentary to one another. Literature serves to promote current ideas into society, reinforcing the norms, fashions, manners, and values that society has established. Society impacts literature on the one hand through the conventions, trends, manners, and values that are already in place. ■

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Breaking Stereotypes: A Comprehensive Study of the Role of Memory and Hegemony in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*

Kasthuri S

P.R. Sujatha Priyadharsini

Modern India has been proclaimed to be progressive in terms of understanding the diversity of millions of people who share the same space within the demographic territory of the nation. The phrase 'Unity in Diversity', though frequently used in textual references, the practicality of its application is hardly visualized. As E.M. Forster rightly pointed out, *Tolerance* (1945) is the key to survival in this fast pacing world, especially to put up with people and standing things, which is a better suit as a substitute to potentially drive the nation chaos-free. However, the suppressed state of mind that encounters constant oppression, both from wounded memory and current circumstantial confronts, would perhaps start thinking of breaking the clutch and advancing to tread independently. Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* (2009) is a contemporary example to showcase the realistic picture of modern India. Though advanced in technology, it never ceases to maintain its sustenance in discriminating the nation between the haves and the have-nots. It is seen that the idea of tolerance has been an inherent trait of the poor and an obliging factor to adorn. Set in the first decade of the twenty-first century, the novel pictures the condition of the marginalized with varying degrees of Irony to bring the dichotomy that prevails in the nation and how it is carried generation after generation with the ink of prejudice. Taking reference to the aforementioned details, the paper would attempt to bring in the element of Hegemony through the narration of the protagonist Balram, who apparently fills the plot tracing back his memory lane with ironies and analogies to substantiate the corresponding incidents eventually arguing the thought of him stepping up not to die as the man of a slave.

Keywords: Modern India, Hegemony, Ironies, Marginalized, Discrimination.

The convention of Indian English Fiction is an oeuvre of multiple voices depicting representations of real-life scenarios, mostly blurring the fictional line. The term 'Indian' in Indian English Fiction' is always problematic to define since many of the literary personas were not evidently living in India, despite sharing the same Indian origin. Rushdie, the

renowned figure in Indian literature, severed his link with the nation a long time ago. Similarly, the Indian icon Raja Ram Mohan Roy penned most of his productive works while he was abroad. Thus, the fixation on the definition is contested. However, their respective perspectives are often celebrated to comprehend the contemporary lifestyle followed in the nation. In the tradition of the aforesaid line of writers comes Aravind Adiga, born in Madras but living most of his life in different foreign countries, who managed to produce a masterpiece titled *The White Tiger*, encompassing ironies and analogies to substantiate the corresponding events that were uncovered in the novel.

The White Tiger is a confessional epistolary novel narrated by the CEO of The White Tiger Company, Mr. Ashok Sharma, who claims himself as a thinking man and an entrepreneur (3). It is the letter addressed to the desk of Wen Jiabao, the Premier of the Freedom-Loving Nation of China, drawing vivid pictures from his solid experiential memory. But as the narration takes us forward, we learn that the name of the narrator is not the one he claims to be but a different one. His actual name was just 'Munna', which plainly means a boy in Hindi, but later when he was enrolled in school, he was given the name 'Balram' by his school teacher, 'Krishna', inferentially implying his state of living as a sidekick (14). From then on, he was called Balram not until he professed to change his identity to Mr Ashok Sharma of "The White Tiger" Enterprises.

The journey of Balram from the state of a mere driver to a successful entrepreneur is an exhilarating story that builds up several incidents to represent the ironic condition of independent India, which directly stands opposite to the visualization of the country after freedom by Mahatma Gandhi. The dichotomy that is pervasively spread across the novel depicts the understanding of two facets of a nation. "Please understand, your excellency, that India is two countries in one: an India of Light and an India of Darkness. The ocean brings light to my country. Every place on the map of India near the ocean is well-off. But the river brings darkness to India-the black river" (14). The spatial reference during the introduction of his rural raisings in the village called Laxmangarh throws light on the absence of basic amenities in the government institutions like schools and hospitals, which the government should have managed to provide, but the respective authorities were reluctant to carry out their duties to meet the necessary ends of the people. This hesitancy of the concerned authorities eventually ended the life of his beloved father and forced him to stop his studies and look for a job to support his family. The satirical remark during the description of his village asserts to state that "Laxmangarh is your typical Indian village paradise, adequately supplied with electricity, running water, and working telephones, and the children of my village, raised on a nutritious diet of meat, eggs, vegetables, and lentils" (19) which stands absolutely as a dream far from their actual reach.

The word irony has different subdivisions, but the general one "remains the root sense of dissembling, or of hiding what is actually the case- not, however, in order to deceive, but to achieve special rhetoric or artistic effects" (Abrams 186). Moreover, the series of paradoxical elements did make the intrigue more interesting to read through and

survived the text as an accomplished effective page-turner. A point shall be evidently noticed that the division that we encounter in the novel basically deals with the haves and have-nots, where the privileged rule over the deprived class with the set of irrational prejudiced notions that are carried along the intrigue to sustain the status and to stick with the pedestal without a trace of assimilation within the country. It is important to point out that this difference grew so large to avoid not just the dictation of the privileged but also the idea of slavery being predominately engrained in the minds of the poor. They chose to work this way because they were wired to act subversively generation after generation. This could be substantiated by Gramsci's Hegemony theory where he claims that "a social class achieves a predominant influence and power not by direct and overt means but by succeeding in making its ideological views so pervasive that the subordinate class unwittingly accept and participate in their own oppression" (Abrams 208). This unwitting participation shall be encountered in many significant incidents that eventually admit the victimizers of domination from both ends.

"A sharp blow landed on my head. I looked up and saw the Strok, with his palm still raised over my skull, glaring at me. 'Know what that was for?'"

'Yes, sir,' I said- with a big smile on my face.

'Good'

A minute later he hit me on the head again.

'Tell him what it was for, Father. I don't think he knows. Fellow, you're pressing too hard. You're too excited. Father is getting annoyed. Slow down.'

'Yes, sir'

Do you have to hit the servants, father?'

'This is not America, son. Don't ask questions like that'

'Why can't I ask questions?'

'They expect it from us, Ashok. Remember that- they respect us for it'" (72)

The constant humiliations that Balram faced settled in his heart, subconsciously questioning him about the conditions that existed around him. Trust is the major factor that shall be introspected and questioned at different levels as far as this novel is concerned. Mahatma Gandhi who staunchly believed honesty, sincerity, truth, trust, and dedication as significant factors to elevate a human life turned gravely wrong according to the plot, as being sincere and dedicated, handcuffed the person to remain in the same place for years together till his ruination.

Go to a tea shop anywhere along the Ganga, Sir, and look at the men working in that tea shop-men, I say, but better to call them human spiders that go crawling in between and under the tables with rags in their hands, crushed humans in crushed uniforms, sluggish, unshaven, in their thirties or forties but still 'boys'. But that is your fate if you do your job well- with honesty, dedication and sincerity, the way Gandhi would have done it, no doubt (51)

Less Balram knew what the future held for him when he was given a copy of the book *Lessons for young boys from the Life of Mahatma Gandhi* for his best performance during the inspection at his school. The trust that has to be broken to soar high on the ladder of hierarchy is the actual lesson Balram was taught through his own life.

At this point, it should be stated that “Memories” of one’s past do play an important role in influencing the present and ultimately determining the future. As Bosch (2016) acknowledges in his article titled *Memory Studies: A Brief Concept* article, “Memories are social and they are passed from generation to generation” (2), this obviously has an impact on how one shapes their identity based on the structured past, leaving little room for meaningful change to happen. Sturken (2008) brings out the fact that Memories are a component of a wider process of cultural negotiation that characterises them as narratives as well as fluid and mediatized cultural and personal remnants of the past. The initial fraught fragment of Balram’s life can be understood as he remembers himself as the one who is destined to suffer. Remembering is thus not just an articulation of individual psychologies, but a performance rooted in living contexts (Keightley 2010). Nevertheless, Balram changed the course of his life by comprehending the monotonous repercussions of his unilateral interpretation of his past memories and stepping up to sketch new dimensions of the same memories to escape the treacherous vortex. Having said the nature of memory, the paper proceeds to resume analysing the plot in the light of hegemony covering the debatable dogmas that fill the space of the novel.

In a state of Democracy, voting plays a significant role in reiterating the powerful role of people in choosing their desired leader. The real story of the nation often turns up to recite the reverse of the written constitution, where bribery does the real fieldwork and the opinions of the common men were least bothered. It was the Great Socialist party that usually won the election with all their promised freebies in the village of Laxmangarh, however, men would not stop discussing the election along with their piping hot tea. “...Like eunuchs discussing the Kama Sutra, the voters discuss the elections in Laxmangarh” (98). The act of bribery is a never-ending act in the plot as Mr Ashok would himself indulge in such an act to surpass the authorities to manage their illegal business procedures and for which he regrets. “We’re driving past Gandhi, after just having given a bribe to a minister. It’s a fucking joke, isn’t it”(137).

Sincerity is the topic to discuss in the latter part of the novel, as Balram will be tested on his level of faithfulness towards his masters. As the story unwinds, we are aware that Pinky, the wife of Ashok will run over a slum child under the influence of alcohol and the family insists the innocent Balram take the charge and, if needed shall go to jail. Balram lost all interest in serving his masters as he understood that he was merely used and would rot if he forced his mind to blindly follow the orders. The part of hegemony that stuck in Balram’s head eventually faded off once the masters showed him who exactly they were. “The jails of Delhi are full of drivers who are there behind bars because they are taking the

blame for their good, solid-middle-class masters. We have left the villages, but the masters still own us, body, soul, and arse” (170).

The analogy of the Rooster Coop is best highlighted in the story. The mentality of the chickens in the coop is compared to the mentality of the poor and how they never dare to step ahead out of the fear of being eliminated. The coop apparently kills the chickens, but the ones inside the coop never dare to sound fearful nor try to get out but wait to get chopped. “...The very same thing is done with human beings in this country” (174).

Masters trust their servants with diamonds in this country! It’s true. Every evening on the train out of surat, where they run the world’s biggest diamond cutting and polishing business, the servants of diamond merchants are carrying suitcases full of cut diamonds that they have to give to someone in Mumbai. Why doesn’t that servant take the suitcase full of diamonds? He’s no Gandhi, he’s human, he’s you and me. But he’s in the Rooster Coop. The trustworthiness of servants is the basis of the entire Indian economy (175).

But Balram chose to get away from the Coop by slitting the throat of Mr. Ashok, his former employer and took away the money bag containing Seven hundred thousand rupees. He flew to Bangalore to set up his own enterprise named “The White Tiger”, the animal he relates himself most fondly to. Thus the money spoke for his growth, besides his assistance with the practical knowledge that he gained over the years. The narrator switches to brief his desire for establishing a school where the children would not be corrupted by the thoughts of God or Gandhi, instead, he would be concerned with teaching them life lessons, after all, that will be the ultimate point to free the liberal spirits of children than confining them into the coop again. (319).

The range of collections under the Pulp fiction might present the nation through a glass of modernity where the advancements are cherished and celebrated in the diversified culture but a mainstream literary fiction like Adiga’s *The White Tiger* boldly pronounces the existing discrimination and the viability of the prejudiced perspectives that still haunt the nation even after seventy-six years of Independence. Mr Ashok was very right in stating that the whole country is Half-baked (10) as people have limited knowledge about the very country they live in but he did not realise that when people commit to baking fully, the race of dominants would expire to fall. Though Balram admits his mistake of taking one’s life, he confesses, “I’ll say it was all worthwhile to know, just for a day, just for an hour, just for a minute, what it means not to be a servant” (321).

With the aforementioned points, the paper advocates the significance of understanding the discrimination in the “line of memories” and the vanishing level of tolerance in contemporary culture in the novel *The White Tiger*, highlighting its references to ironies and paradoxes to comprehend the dichotomy prevalent in the plot discussed with special attention to the concept of Hegemony by Gramsci. ■

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Daphne Du Maurier's *Rebecca*: A Psychoanalytic Study

Mercy Thapa

Nisha Gupta

This paper examines the novel *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier through the lens of thematic and psychoanalytic analysis. It highlights the complicated psychological dynamics between the characters and the underlying themes of the work from the perspective of psychoanalytic theory, specifically drawing on the concepts of repression, the unconscious mind, and the Oedipus complex. The principal heroine, whose identity is never revealed, is visited by Rebecca's ghost, the deceased first wife of her husband, Maxim de Winter. This investigation dives into the protagonist's emotional and psychological anguish, revealing indications of her suppressed impulses, worries, and anxieties. It delves into the protagonist's struggle with her identity and self-esteem, which is constantly influenced by Rebecca's idealized image. Furthermore, the study delves into Maxim de Winter's character, delving into his own psychological issues as well as the impact of his unresolved love for Rebecca. The Oedipus complex is investigated as a major psychological framework for comprehending the protagonist's connection with Maxim and her search for love and acceptance. Besides character analysis, this study delves into the larger themes of secrecy, power dynamics, and the interplay of fantasy and reality. It analyzes how these themes represent the characters' unconscious wants and struggles, as well as their psychological reasons. Overall, this thematic psychoanalytic examination of *Rebecca* gives insight into the characters' complex psychological qualities as well as the novel's underlying themes. It provides a deeper insight into the characters' motivations, internal battles, and the psychological complexity that drives the plot by utilizing psychoanalytic theory.

Keywords - Rebecca, Psychological analysis, Oedipus Complex, Repression, Unconscious mind

Introduction

Literature has traditionally been a canvas on which the complexities of the human psyche are clearly depicted, allowing readers to delve into the minds, emotions, and motivations of characters. *Rebecca*, Daphne du Maurier's timeless masterpiece, is a classic example of a narrative that not only captivates with its captivating mystery but also provides

fertile ground for the investigation of psychological intricacies. This research paper conducts a thematic psychoanalytic examination of *Rebecca*, with the goal of uncovering the latent psychological underpinnings that drive its characters' behaviors and define the narrative's enigmatic allure.

Rebecca, published in 1938, introduces us to an unidentified narrator who finds herself caught up in a maze of emotions and secrets following her rapid marriage to the intriguing Maxim de Winter. The novel unfolds a tale of psychological suspense, obsession, and identity crisis against the backdrop of Manderley, a large estate cloaked in the ghostly presence of Maxim's murdered first wife, Rebecca. "Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again. It seemed to me I stood by the iron gate leading to the drive, and for a while I could not enter, for the way was barred to me" (*Rebecca*, Intro 6).

The latent potential for psychoanalytic study derives from the subtle interplay of characters and their intricate relationships. Psychoanalytic theory, founded on the pioneering works of Sigmund Freud and developed by succeeding theorists such as Jacques Lacan, provides a conceptual framework for revealing characters' 'unconscious drives, wants, and fears. This method is an excellent way to comprehend the plethora of psychological levels hidden in *Rebecca*. This study tries to reveal the psychological underpinnings that make the narrative so intriguing by diving into the characters' unconscious conflicts, repressed desires, and intricate power dynamics that drive their thoughts and behaviors.

The fascination of *Rebecca* rests not only on its depiction of a complex mystery, but also on its study of the darker corners of the human brain. The unnamed narrator's journey from self-doubt to self-discovery matches a significant psychoanalytic trajectory, and she serves as a canvas for readers to reflect on their own concerns and ambitions."We have lost a lot but I have at last grown up. I am very different from the shy, frightened girl who first went to Manderley. The fear and the terror made me a woman. A dull woman perhaps. But I am with my husband and he is all I need. We have lost a lot but I have at last grown up" (*Rebecca*, Intro, 7).

At the same time, the haunting phantom of Rebecca, a presence that refuses to be put to the past, represents the protagonists' unsolved psychological difficulties. The purpose of this thematic psychoanalytic research is to reveal the multifaceted layers that change *Rebecca* from a traditional Gothic story into a psychological thriller. This study intends to shed Daphne du Maurier's elaborate tapestry by evaluating the characters' dreams, desires, anxieties and unconscious motivations. We shall go into the psychoanalytic theories that offer the theoretical underpinning for this investigation in the following sections. The nameless narrator, Maxim de Winter, and the ethereal Rebecca will then be explored, with psychoanalytic notions used to explain their psychological depths and the intricate dynamics that push the narrative along. We seek to shed light on the ongoing appeal of *Rebecca* as a psychological study through our investigation, emphasizing the significant connection between literature and the complexity of the human mind.

A thorough psychoanalytic investigation of Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca* would entail a deep examination of the novel's characters, their motivations, wants, and the underlying psychological conflicts that drive the narrative. We will concentrate on three important individuals in our analysis: the unidentified narrator, Maxim de Winter, and Rebecca. We will examine how psychoanalytic theory might help us understand their behaviors, thoughts, and interactions, notably Sigmund Freud's notions of the unconscious mind and Jacques Lacan's theories on desire, the mirror stage, and the Other.

The anonymous narrator, also known as the second Mrs. de Winter, is the key protagonist whose journey from insecurity and self-doubt to self-discovery and assertiveness is reminiscent of a Freudian trajectory. Her fascination with Rebecca and her fears about her own identity can be viewed as symptoms of unconscious urges and suppressed conflicts, according to Freudian theory. Dreams, fantasies, and inner monologues of the narrator reveal her secret worries and unresolved Oedipal dynamics. The concept of the "uncanny" as defined by Sigmund Freud, can be linked to the narrator's experience in Manderley, where she encounters the unsettling familiarity of Rebecca's lingering presence. Her psychological metamorphosis becomes symptomatic of the process of ego development and individuation as she gradually uncovers the truth about Rebecca's death. She evinces her dreadful experiences in the following words: "Suddenly I shivered as though a door had opened behind me. Someone else had sat in my chair. Someone else had poured coffee and stroked the dog. I was sitting in Rebecca's chair. I was leaning against Rebecca's cushion. The dog, Jasper, came to me because in the past he had come to Rebecca" (*Rebecca*, Ch 6, 33).

The gloomy and secretive spouse, Maxim de Winter, is a rich figure for psychoanalytic exploration. His tremendous sadness over Rebecca's death, and his subsequent detachment, can be explained by Freud's grieving and melancholia theory. His complicated connection with Rebecca, which is laced with desire and resentment, resembles the Oedipal dynamics, Freud frequently studied. Maxim's struggle with the "Name-of-the-Father," a symbolic character whose presence looms big in his existence, can be illuminated through Lacanian theory. This struggle for identification and desire shapes his interactions with the narrator, as he puts his history as well as his ambitions onto her: "All right, I didn't. I didn't want to go to the other bay. I never go near the place or that damned cottage. If you had my memories, you would not go there either. You wouldn't talk about it or even think about it" (*Rebecca*, Ch 9, 49).

Rebecca's missing but ubiquitous persona acts as a focal point for psychoanalytic interpretation. Using Lacan's concept of the "Other," Rebecca becomes a symbol of desire that is unattainable and enigmatic. The "Gaze," which she wields over the living characters from the tomb, adds to her intriguing qualities. Her sophisticated manipulation of the narrative via her memory's repercussions on the other characters shows Lacan's concept of the "objet petit a." Her image and legacy serve as a mirror for the narrator to assess her own worth and identity, echoing Lacan's concept of the "mirror stage." This fight for identification and desire shapes his interactions with the narrator, as he puts both his history and his

ideals onto the narrator, “There were some letters in the corner - a tall “R” and “deW.” It was Rebecca’s. The raincoat, too wide, too long for me, must have been hers too. Rebecca had worn that raincoat. She had left the handkerchief in the pocket. I could smell a scent, an scent I knew. I shut my eyes and tried to remember what it was” (*Rebecca*, Ch 10, 50).

In Daphne du Maurier’s novel *Rebecca*, the Oedipal complex can be analyzed in relation to the protagonist. The Oedipal complex, proposed by Sigmund Freud, suggests that individual’s experience and subconscious feelings of attraction and rivalry towards their parent of the opposite sex, often leading to conflict and emotional complexities. In the case of the protagonist, who remains unnamed throughout the novel, her interactions with Maxim de Winter and the memory of his deceased wife Rebecca evoke elements of this psychological phenomenon.

An Oedipal lens might be used to examine the protagonist’s connection with Maxim de Winter, a much older and more powerful man. Her first feelings of admiration and servitude towards him could have sprung from a desire for a parental figure. Furthermore, the overpowering presence of Rebecca, who epitomizes everything she feels inadequate about, intensifies her worries about her own identity and worth. These emotions could be the outcome of an unconscious conflict between Maxim and Rebecca for Maxim’s admiration and attention. Furthermore, the protagonist’s tour through Manderley, primarily through Rebecca’s possessions and the house itself, reveals her inner strife. As she finds secrets and confronts the past, her emotions reflect the Oedipal complex’s qualities of attraction and competition. Her obsession with Rebecca’s riddles reflects both a desire to understand her and a drive to establish her own worthiness in comparison.”A man mostly dreams of his father’s death, a woman of her mother’s. [This rule is] required to be explained by a factor of general significance. Put crudely, it as though a sexual preference were established very early, as though the boy saw a rival for love in his father, and the girl in her mother, and removing them could only be of benefit to the child.” (*On The Interpretation Of Dreams, The Material and Sources of Dreams*, 197)

Since its publication in 1938, Daphne du Maurier’s *Rebecca* has fascinated readers not just for its fascinating mystery but also for its profound investigation of human psychology. Scholars and literary critics have approached the work from various viewpoints, including psychoanalytic theory, to uncover the novel’s hidden psychological layers. This study of the novel provides an overview of the important contributions in the realm of psychoanalytic analysis of *Rebecca*, demonstrating how scholars have used psychoanalytic frameworks to explore the novel’s thematic intricacies.

The pioneering theories of Sigmund Freud on the unconscious mind and psychoanalysis have served as a foundational lens through which historians have studied *Rebecca*. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar’s groundbreaking work *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979) employs Freudian principles to explore the duality of the anonymous narrator’s mind. They contend that the narrator’s fascination with Rebecca and her fears about her

own identity, are the result of repressed impulses and unresolved Oedipal tensions. The novel's themes of desire, identity, and the unconscious are illuminated by this Freudian understanding of the protagonist's psychological journey. Jacques Lacan's post-Freudian psychoanalytic theories were also useful in analyzing *Rebecca*. Slavoj Zizek uses Lacanian ideas such as the "objet petit a" and the "Gaze" to investigate the dynamics between the narrator, Maxim, and Rebecca in "Desire and the Interpretation of Desire in *Hamlet* (1991). It says that hidden wants and power conflicts govern the characters' interactions, citing connections between Lacan's concepts and the novel's dense web of relationships.

Feminist psychoanalytic theories have also broadened the reading of *Rebecca*. In *The Daughter's Seduction* (1982), Jane Gallop analyzes the complex relationships between mothers, daughters, and male characters, claiming that the narrator's attention to Rebecca serves as a form of identification and rivalry. Gallop's feminist viewpoint uncovers the layers of patriarchal influence that underlie the female characters' emotional life. In conclusion, the psychoanalytic study of *Rebecca* demonstrates how the novel's investigation of desire, identity, power, and the unconscious has struck a chord with scholars from various psychoanalytic frameworks. Scholars have delved into the characters' complicated psyches and the narrative's underlying psychological tensions, drawing on Freudian and Lacanian theories and feminist studies. These various viewpoints contribute to our overall appreciation of *Rebecca* as a psychological thriller that deals not only with the mysteries of the outside world, but also with the complexities of the human mind.

Conclusion

Finally, the thematic psychoanalytic examination of Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca* sheds light on the complicated interplay between literature and psychology, demonstrating how the novel serves as a canvas on which the complexities of the human mind are eloquently depicted. We have traveled into the depths of the characters' psyches through the lens of psychoanalytic theory, unraveling their desires, fears, and conflicts that define the narrative's irresistible attraction.

The evolution of the anonymous narrator from a shy and hesitant person to a self-assured individual is consistent with Freud's theories of ego development and individuation. Her journey, influenced by the late Rebecca, embodies the force of suppressed desires and the search for self-identity. Maxim de Winter's mysterious manner and complicated connection with Rebecca provide insights into the dynamics of melancholia and sorrow, as well as the subtle interplay between the conscious and unconscious realms. The investigation of his quest for identity and the symbolic significance of the "Name-of-the-Father" mirrors Lacanian conceptions of desire and the Other.

Rebecca, despite her absence, is a driving force throughout the story. Her symbolic presence symbolizes the Lacanian concept of desire, questioning the perceptions of the living characters and stimulating their psychological progress. Her function as a mirror and personification of the "Gaze" exemplifies the narrative's ongoing influence on Lacanian

conceptions. This thematic psychoanalytic investigation of *Rebecca* reveals that literature, particularly a work as complex as this, serves as a reflection of the psyche's complexity. The marriage of psychoanalytic theory and storytelling provides readers with a unique lens through which to connect with characters, motivations, and narrative depths that would otherwise be buried.

Finally, *Rebecca* highlights the ongoing importance of psychological research in fiction. The story's enticing allure, founded on its characters' latent desires and struggles, encourages readers not only to solve a fascinating mystery but also to go on a psychological journey into the depths of the human psyche. As a result, the novel's pages come alive with echoes of Freudian and Lacanian ideas. ■

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Patriarchy and Gender Violence in Vijay Tendulkar's *Silence! The Court is in Session*

Vineet Kumar

The domination of men in a patriarchal society is always questioned by women. Women's emotions, desires, ambitions, rights, and feelings are oppressed by a male-centric society. Matriarchy has been suffering a forlorn state of mind since the establishment of society through various institutions conferring unlimited power to the masculine gender. In the rise of the twentieth century some female theorists – Virginia Woolf (1882-1941), Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986), Elaine Showalter (b.1941), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (b.1942) etc. drafted some revolutionary works to promote awareness among the females in the globe. Indian culture is no exception to such malpractices with fair sex. The ruthlessness against women has been depicted by many Indian writers including Mahaweta Devi, Krishna Sobti, Amrita Pritam, Ismat Chughtai Kamala Das and many more. The objective of this research work is to analyse how patriarchy dominates female emotions, desires, and ambitions in the domestic, educational, and political sphere represented by Vijay Tendulkar in his masterpiece play, *The Court is in Session*. The methodology of the present article is qualitative research of empirical nature collecting data from various data sources from the feminist study. The *significance* of the research will help the readers to understand the gender gap in Indian society with deeper sensitivity.

Keywords: feminism, gender violence, patriarchy, subjugation

Society is a group of individuals living together to get their mental and physical needs. Society is humans' first requirement to establish a connection with one another. Humans, being social animals, constituted some social norms to live in a society. These social rules provide opportunities for social growth. Since the social setup is formed by humans, some rules or norms have been constantly questioned. The domination of men in a patriarchal society is always questioned by women. Women's emotions and feelings were oppressed by a male-centric society. In numerous societies, the picture is still the same; women are still oppressed and they are kept away from many social rituals. Matriarchy has been suffering a forlorn state of mind since the establishment of society. From time to time, numerous women have questioned these hollow social rules which make matriarchy

powerless. To hold the power and control of the social setup, patriarchy, knowingly or unknowingly, propagated hegemony over matriarchy. 'Hegemony', a term coined by Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, is defined in *Post-colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* by Bill Ashcroft et. al. as:

...hegemony is the power of the ruling class to convince other classes that their interests are the interests of all. Domination is thus exerted not by force, nor even necessarily by active persuasion, but by a more subtle and inclusive power over the economy, and over state apparatuses such as education and the media, by which the ruling class's interest is presented as the common interest and thus comes to be taken for granted. (Ashcroft et al.106)

To hold control of women's bodies and minds, patriarchy holds the power of the social and political norms of society. Particularly in India, many communities have different norms in the form of rituals to hold control of matriarchy. In traditional Indian cultures, women are kept away from education and they are considered as mere slaves or born to serve the men. The beginning of the 20th century brought new hope for women when few women writers wrote treatises on women's education and demanded the social status of women. The pioneering writers were Virginia Woolf and Simon De Beauvoir; Woolf questioned women's education in patriarchy when she asks a room for women in her famous book *A Room of One's Own* as:

All I could do was to offer you an opinion upon one minor point—a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction; and that, as you will see, leaves the great problem of the true nature of women and the true nature of fiction unsolved. I have shirked the duty of coming to a conclusion upon these two questions—women and fiction remain, so far as I am concerned,unsolved problems. (Woolf7)

Here, Virginia Woolf questions women's education and asks why women were kept away from education? She further demands some money and personal room for women. Woolf asks if Shakespeare had a sister as talented as he was, would she have got the same opportunities to develop her skills? Another famous feminist writer was De Beauvoir, who argues for the social norms of the society which constructs the identity of women as social beings. De Beauvoir writes in *The Second Sex*:

One is not born, but rather becomes, woman. No biological, psychic, or economic destiny defines the figure that the human female takes on in society; it is civilization as a whole that elaborates this intermediary product between the male and the eunuch that is called feminine. (Beauvoir330)

She urges that the gender of women was created as weak and dependent on men for their welfare and this gender construction of women is not based on their biological function

rather it is socially assigned by patriarchy. Indian cultures are no exceptions to such malpractices with the fair sex. The ruthlessness against women has been depicted by many Indian writers including Mahaweta Devi, Krishna Sobti, Amrita Pritam, Ismat Chughtai Kamala Das and many more. These writers wrote at different times from different places but their stories have common themes of women's rights and their constant struggles for recognition in a patriarchal society. Kamala Das's autobiography, *My Story* (1973), portrays the subjugated emotions of a young and beautiful protagonist, Aami (Kamala), who was married to a much older than her age and her sexual awakening. This book brought mixed reactions of admiration and criticism from the readers. *Mitro Marjani or To Hell with You Mitro* (1966) by Krishna Sobti smashes the patriarchal social norms that hover around women's sexuality where they are treated like whores if they come with their sexual desires openly or express their feelings in public. This happens with Mitro's quest for her sexual fulfilment when her husband is unable to fulfil her sexual demands. This boldness of Mitro subjects her to shame when she is interrogated (in a family meet) for having affairs. There are countless works in which women are portrayed as weak, neglected, oppressed, denied, or overlooked for their rights and desires. Works such as *Nectar in a Sieve* (1955) by Kamala Markandaya, *Lihaaf* (1942), and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's English translation of *Breast Stories* by Mahasweta Devi along with innumerable other works describe the helplessness of women in Indian cultural set-up.

The prosecution of women's character and dignity is presented by Vijay Tendulkar in his famous play *Silence! The Court Is in Session* (1978) first published in Marathi as *Shantata! Court Chalu Ahe* in 1968. Tendulkar was born in Kolhapur, Maharashtra. A school dropout boy at the age of fourteen joined the independence movement. Later, he worked as a social critic who brought the issues concerning women's rights in Indian society. The play gives an examined picture of conservative Indian society which victimizes an unmarried pregnant school teacher, Leena Benare, in her early thirties. The play is a dramatization of the German novelist Dürrenmatt's *Die Panne (The Dangerous Game)*. The play is set in a community centre in a village, where a group of actors is scheduled to perform an act of Living Classroom for the villagers. Ms Benare, the protagonist and the victim of the mock trial, faces the charge of infanticide and is accused of corrupting society.

The play begins with the arrival of actors in a village to perform an act about the 'The Trial of President Johnson'. Ms Benare reaches the spot before other casts and tries to woo Samant, a local villager who escorts her to the community centre. The real drama begins when Karnik reveals Ms Benare's secret he heard from Rokde, who lives with a childless couple Mr and Mrs Kashikar. Benare is prosecuted for a mock trial before the play begins and everyone agrees on Mrs Kashikar's purposed trial on Ms Benare to be charged with a crime with 'social significance'. She is charged with infanticide with Kashikar's announcement who acts as a judge for the mock trial.

Act II of the play opens with the framing of section 302 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) against Ms Benare for infanticide. At prima facie, she takes the charge light as, "I'm

absolutely—light-hearted, I just got a bit serious to create the right atmosphere for the court, that’s all. Why should I be afraid of a trial like this?” (Tendulkar40). Unhappy with the charge, Ms Benare asks the court to frame a light charge likesnatching against her. She questions the charge of infanticide, “Infanticide...infanticide! Why don’t you accuse me instead of—um—snatching public property! That has a nice sound about it, don’t you think? Sounds like ‘snatching’!” (Tendulkar43).

Mrs Kashikar supports the present charge against Ms Benare. Ms Benare’s request is denied and Sukhatme appeals to everyone to be serious, “Otherwise, this game becomes really childish. We demand seriousness” (Tendulkar44). The court begins with the glorification of motherhood with Kashikar’s recitation of a Sanskrit proverb, “*Janani janmabhumiścha svargadapi gariyasi*. Mother and /The Motherland, /Both are even / Higher than heaven” (Tendulkar45). Ms Benare’s charge is called “more devilish thing on earth” (Tendulkar46). She feels embarrassed when Ponkshe accuses her, “runs after men too much” (Tendulkar47). She stiffens at Rokde’s accusation of being seen at professor Damle’s house one evening. She accepts the accusation but warns the court not to discuss her personal life here. She further submits the names of twenty-five people she had been alone with. This clarification backfires and brings more suspicious doubts about her character.

Samant is called to witness-box and is asked to narrate the time he spent with Ms Benare at the community centre before their arrival and her behaviour towards him. To answer this question, Samant calls Ms Benare, “a very nice lady (Tendulkar56)” but fabricates the evidence when eased for only a mock trial. Samant accuses Benare of begging professor Damle not to abandon her at Damle’s house one evening. Ms Benare confronts Samant’s accusation and warns the court of his lie. She starts crying and tries to leave the place but find the door stuck, only to be opened from outside.

At the beginning of Act III, Mrs Kashikar pulls Benare into the witness box despite her constant refusal. She is asked to take the oath but she remains silent. Samant asks her to cooperate, as this is just a mock trial. She does not answer any further questions. She is questioned about not marrying at such a ‘mature’ age but she chooses to remain silent. Mrs Kashikar (being a woman herself) accuses Ms Benare of seduction and calls her act of dancing, laughing, and singing an act of characterlessness. Mrs Kashikar further blames Benare to make a pass at Rokde as well. Samant adds she acted with him the same when they were alone before everyone’s arrived at the community centre. Rokde admits she held his hand after a performance eight days ago. She says, “She expressed her desire to marry me.... But she told me she was pregnant” (Tendulkar74). This confession of Rokde heightens the hypocrisy of society when Kashikar speaks,”The cat’ll be out of the bag soon, anyway. Don’t be so impatient! But what I don’t understand, Ponkshe, is why, if Miss Benare was pregnant by one man, she expressed a desire to marry another—”(Tendulkar74). Benare begs Ponkshe not to reveal when he asks the court, “Shall I tell you the whole conversation?” (Tendulkar 75). Ms Benare reminds him of his promise, “No! You promised, Ponkshe!”

(Tendulkar75). In continuation of the accusations, Ponkshe tells the court that Ms Benare has a bottle of TIK-20, a poison, in her bag. He further speaks before the court that she is pregnant and had asked him to marry her to give his name to her child but he refused. He also alleged how she mocked the member of this theatre group accusing Rokde of having affair with Mrs Kashikar, Kashikar's mistreatment of Rokde, and Sukhatme unsuccessful in his career.

Kashikar also expresses his thoughts on Benare by calling her, "a sinful canker on the body of society—that's my honest opinion of these grown-up unmarried girls" (Tendulkar, 2016, p. 82). He also shares another incident when he tells about his recent meeting with Nanasahab Shinde, the local Chairman of Education who recently fired a female teacher for lechery. The female teacher was found to be Ms Benare. Sukhatme argues women are responsible for values and morals in society but Ms Benare brought shame to a moral society. He further claims that Ms Benare is not guilty of infanticide but she is guilty of a more heinous crime of corrupting moral society. The end of mock trial ends with actors turning towards Benare, now motionless on the stage, and trying to reassert her that the whole thing was just a mock trial. Everyone leaves to prepare for the play they scheduled to be performed leaving Samant and Benare on stage. Samant hesitates a little but leaves the stage by setting the parrot respectfully beside Benare. The curtain falls when Benare is alone on the stage with a background song in which a parrot asks a sparrow the cause of her cry.

In conclusion of the paper, this research explored the hardships faced by matriarchy in Indian society established on patriarchal principles. It explores the atrocities faced by the women at homes, at educational institutions, at work places for various causes. The present research tries to convey the message of the author to create an equal and sensitive society for women that can help feminine to live with dignity without fear for their counterparts. ■

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A Haunting Tale of Love and Redemption in K.S. Maniam's *Between Lives*

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P.Kannan

This study aims at focusing the elements of place and the phenomenology vis-a-vis human-place relationship in K.S. Maniam's novel *Between Lives*. The article continuously invokes a sense of place, and the powerful spirit originating from it calling for human beings to approach a given place with openness, which eventually draws them into an understanding with their 'lost' genuine self-identities. This article seeks to bring forth the significance of place and its significance over the characters involved, and how a deep relationship with place is as necessary, and perhaps as unavoidable, as close relationships with people; without such alliance, human existence is deprived of much of its significance. *Between Lives* has a rich incorporation of place, histories and the past are continuously revealed to project a 'sense of place' and a 'sense of belonging'

Keywords: Alliance, Character, Deprived, Vis-vis, and Spirit

Introduction

K.S. Maniam's Novel *Between Lives* (2003) seems to revolve around the idea of incorporating place as a powerful element that helps to strengthen the temperament of the central characters - one character's attachment to a place that she dwells in (the nature) leads to another's attempt to reclaim her identity and sense of belonging. The concern with the dialogue of place is a prime feature of literature of the Romantic period and was often regarded as a response to the great historical movements of urbanisation and industrialisation that marked British life in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Kitson, 2001). The wish of recapturing a sense of identity with a rediscovered or revisited place, as present in William Wordsworth's Poems on the *Naming of Places* (1800) and *Tintern Abbey* (1798), indicate the wish that the self can evoke the simplicity of life over time, through memory and the past. Though Maniam's *Between Lives* (2003) is not written entirely in response to the urbanisation of Malaysia, the novel does inherit the idea of looking into the past to re-enact reality.

In the Victorian period, Thomas Hardy, known for his originality in dealing (trading) with landscape, proved that his works not only involve a new manner of description, but also a new way of relating landscape and organic life upon his characters. In Hardy's novels, a person's body seems to grow like a tree from the soil: farmer Gabriel Oak, in *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1874) for example, projects a strong attachment to the place or landscape he finds himself in, and that he derives his sustenance, his name, and his stiff character from the soil in which he is rooted. Human being is part of the landscape in *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1874), and *Between Lives* (2003) demonstrates nothing short of that. Sellamma, a main character in the novel, possessed a great intensity of attachment to a place - and because of this attachment, she gains strength to live daily from the source that has kept her alive: nature. Therefore, this idea denies the definition of place as merely physical property or geographical landscape. Not only that, *Between Lives* (2003) exhibits the place as having spiritual, emotional, and psychological qualities that ground the human characters' attachment to it.

Between Lives (2003) showcases that in both our communal and personal experience of living authentically in a place, a sense of deep concern for that place will cultivate. This concern supports the journey of recovery and rediscovery, one that necessitates an understanding of one's identity and sense of belonging. The need for the assured identity that roots provide is fundamental, then; it is the equivalent of such needs as freedom, the exercise of responsibility, and civil order.

Right in the middle of a buzzing Malaysian city is a magnificent forest, now a piece of prime real estate and the perfect setting for a swanky theme park. The trouble, however, is Sellamma, the old woman who owns the forest land, and refuses to budge. Sumitra, who works for the Social Reconstruction Department (SRD), is given the challenging task of convincing the old lady to move into a welfare home. A great believer in her people skills and a focused professional, Sumitra is used to tackling all kind of cases. But, somehow, Sellamma eludes her manoeuvres.

Instead, Sumitra finds herself falling under the spell of the lazy forenoon, she spends with the old woman and her dog (nanda), listening to stories by the lavishing river. Bewitched by the unseen sounds of the forest that punctuate the ageless woman's narrative, she begins to reflect on her life and choices. On her death, Sellamma leaves Sumitra with yet another option by bequeathing the land to her.

Set in a beautiful landscape and illuminating the eternal struggle between the old and the new, *Between Lives* reveals us a journey of self-reflection and the hope of recovering what is lost forever to humanity.

The story is narrated by Sumitra. It focuses on one of her cases as a social worker, an old woman of Indian ethnicity named Sellamma. The Department of Social Reconstruction (SRD), for which Sumitra works, is determined to shift Sellamma from her own property to an old person's home. Then her property will be handed over to the developers for making

it into theme park for their selfish deeds. Sumitra's brief is to persuade the old woman to vacate. Her fluency in Tamil is regarded as a plus point in communication with the old woman. Initially, Sumitra affects a casual, complacent, and confident voice. Sumitra calls on all her speaking skills and vocational training and adopts an empathetic approach to the old woman, trying to find the psychological key that will unlock her attachment to the land. Sumitra is also naggingly persistent, visiting Sellamma and her faithful dog, Nanda, at least every day over a sustained period. On first meeting, the old woman is distant and wary, but, to her pleasant surprise, Sumitra also finds her to be "an almost ageless woman" who "really knows the land she treads on". Moreover, as she rigorously explores the 'nooks and crannies' of Sellamma's life in Malaysia, Sumitra becomes immersed in the worldview of her subject, including her affection for the lore and tradition of Indian folk-culture, and the past experiences of Sellamma's family as they migrated from poverty-stricken plantation labour to rural landownership under British colonial rule. Sumitra discovers that Sellamma is no mere aging occupant of property, but a spiritual presence in the landscape with its jungle-clad interior, flowing stream of water, and red laterite soil.

Sumitra realizes her subject, "She's here all over the place". Again, to her surprise, Sumitra develops an overwhelming affection for the old woman, her dog, and her place. "I allowed myself to fall under the spell of a living ghost", she acknowledges. Sellamma extends hospitality to her interrogator, and before long, they are digging the garden together, bathing together in the river, and reorganising Sellamma's home and belongings. In fact, Sellamma seems to regard Sumitra as her long-lost sister. Ironically, it is Sumitra rather than Sellamma who is challenged by their association. The younger woman comes to query her very vocation as social worker. "Had I become only words, just empty gestures"? she asks herself. Eventually, Sumitra leaves her own comfortable house and her office in the Department to move in with Sellamma. When Sellamma becomes very ill and dies, she transfers ownership of her property to Sumitra. However, the legality of this ownership proves difficulty in the face of the political and economic clout of the big, rather sinister property developers. Not even Sumitra's call on the influential Malay connections of her colleague, Aishah, can resolve the physical standoff which concludes the novel. Nevertheless, Sellamma has become Sumitra's ancestor in Malaysia.

Conclusion

Stylistically, *Between Lives* is a rich but complex work that combines past and present through memory, flashbacks, myth, history, and contemporary description. The motion is fast, the tone almost entirely serious. The novel is set in multiple locations, starting with Sellamma's property, Sumitra's home, the Departmental office with its modern technology, personal tensions, and political fight, but always coming back to the land on which Sellamma, and later Sumitra, dwell. For a male author like K S Maniam, this unrelenting feminine perspective constitutes a remarkable, innovative success in the annals of Malaysian literature in English. On her deathbed, Sellamma speaks these words: "Now

I will truly belong to the land, Amma”. It is in her robust defence of Sellamma’s inheritance that Sumitra redefines her identity in accordance with place and tradition. Notably, she is a much stronger, grounded person and authentic participant in Malaysia at the end of the novel.

Thus, the conclusion of *Between Lives* crucially posits the construction of nationhood in absolute connection with the basic moral obligation of everyone to acknowledge his or her ethnic and organic origins by travelling to what is referred to in the text as the ‘alien spaces’ (2003: 221) of the mind. In an urging to ‘follow every twist and turn of our memories, fearlessly’ (2003: 388), Maniam argues that the key to creating a true National Kampung (2003: 385)-that is, an inclusive national space-is not only to confront the past in totality, but to exist through various levels of culture and language and, indeed, through multiple and continuously chronological, historical and spiritual planes, because, due to evolution of a poly-ethnic community cannot take place without understanding, and living through, its hybrid, diasporic genesis. A definition of Malaysia, then, must be preceded by self-definitions born of stability but harnessed to mobility: the first level of imagining nation is the resurrection of the moribund selves.

The notion of reclaiming place should not be limited only to the perception that one thrives in finding a centre or place to call home. Home itself is the foundation of identity as individual and members of a community, the residence place of being. Thus, a place is not only a specific geographical coordinate that one identifies as home, but rather a multi-layered structure that gives feelings and shared identities. It is shared identities because a place itself cannot stand alone in enabling a sense of identification. It is the presence of human beings within a place that facilitates this phenomenon (as echoed in studies by Lopez, 1997; Hay, 2002; Davidson, 2007).

The mutual relationship of human-place is realised through the human praise of place. In doing so, the right approach towards a place must be employed. For instance, in the earlier sections of this discussion, we can trace Sumitra’s pseudo-dweller character: that is, her attempt to pretend effervescent from the outside, playing along with the activities that Sellamma prepares for her, but remaining unabsorbed in the inside. She believes that her linguistic technic and vocational training would be sufficient in finding the psychological key that would eventually unlock Sellamma’s attachment to the land. But later sections show that frequent excursions to Sellamma’s piece of land, the jungle, and river, as well as the immersion into activities indirectly subsist a realisation to Sumitra: to comprehend Sellamma’s attachment to the land, she must employ the status of dweller. Her fascination with her subject also affects the way she sees and feels the land. It is through this excursion and total immersion that Sumitra can identify herself with the land and Sellamma. Sumitra discovers that Sellamma is no mere aging occupant of property, but rather a spiritual presence in the landscape with its jungle-clad interior, flowing stream of water, and red laterite soil. Sellamma’s presence, as a human being and a spirit that continues to haunt the land even

after her death, is the mother source that leads to Sumitra's recovered and rediscovered self. Sellamma's trip into her memories can be seen as a bridge for reconciliation of the past and the present, vital in Sumitra's process of recollection. ■

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A Critical Assessment of Indian English Plays : A Bird's Eye View

Sanghamitra Nath

In my paper I intend to make a critical assessment of Indian English plays with special emphasis on the plays of Asif Currimbhoy, Manjula Padmanathan and Mahesh Dattani. My brief introduction is meant to context their writings in their proper setting and perspective.

When the British came to India, their theatre also came with them. Under the influence of Western education and the rich theatrical traditions, English plays, especially those of Shakespeare, were translated or adapted into Indian languages, and in the process Indian drama in English was introduced and came in practice. This also induced Indian people to learn a new language – English and get the perception of Western world and their Literature. English and Italian dramatic troupes toured India and performed many English plays, mainly those of Shakespeare, in cities like Bombay (now, Mumbai) and Madras (now, Chennai). The Portuguese brought a form of dance drama to the West coast. A Russian music director Rebedoff, is said to have produced the first modern drama in Calcutta (now, Kolkata) towards the end of the 18th century. Thus, the Western impact awakened “the dormant, critical impulse in the country to bring Indians face to face with new forms of life and literature, and to open the way for a fruitful cross-fertilization of ideas and forms of expression” (K.R.S. Iyengar:4), and the modern English Drama “Owned its first flowering to foreign grafting”, in the words of Krishna Kripalini.

Keywords: Hindu Society, Indian language, Indian Theatre, English Drama, Characters and, Cultures etc.

With the impact of western civilization on Indian life, a new renaissance dawned on Indian arts and furthermore English education gave an impetus and a momentum to the critical study of not only western drama but also classical Indian drama. It took a century and a quarter for Indian drama to reach a respectable stage and it now challenges comparison with other forms of literature- poetry and fiction- in terms of its quality.

Amidst these various challenges, the Indian drama in English grew and flourished and it took a century and a quarter for Indian drama in English to reach respectability. In

1831 the first Indian English play was written by Krishan Mohan Banerji, the *Persecuted or Dramatic Scenes of the Present State of Hindoo Society in Calcutta*. It is a social play which presents the conflict between Indian orthodoxy and the new ideas which came from the West. It exposes the hypocrisy of the affluent in Hindu society and also highlights the historic theme of East-West encounter.

The First Parsi Baronet, perhaps the earliest Indo-Anglian verse-play, was written by C. S. Nazir in 1866; but he was thereafter attracted towards Gujarati and Hindustani plays. Next we find a phase wherein plays in English like *The Bombay Palkheewala* and *Bengali Baboo* entertained some Hindu weddings and similar ceremonies of other religions. But in all such phases, the Indian drama in English could not face the challenge put forth by plays in vernaculars such as Marathi, Bengali, Tamil, Kannada etc. The theatre movement in Bengal had started with the presentation of Bengali plays adapted first from English and then from Sanskrit; but the real beginning of Indian English drama is traced to Michael Madhusudan Dutt's *Is This Called Civilization* which appeared on the literary horizon in 1871. In Madras, amateur Europeans could stage plays in English in the Madras Dramatic Society which was established in 1875. It was followed by the Oriental Drama Club and the Sarasa Vinodini Sabha, the first Indian amateur dramatic society in South India. But they were not exclusively meant for performances in English. Since the nineteenth century, there has been a demand for plays in modern Indian languages (including translations). Side by side the educated class was fascinated by plays in English. The Bombay Amateur Theatre (the first theatre in Bombay built in 1776) presented mostly the later Georgian comedies; this was followed by the opening of the Grant Road Theatre. But the original plays in English written by Indians were not encouraged by these early theatres. Yet there was a faint desire here and there to have new dramatic pieces in English based on Indian themes. In addition to the staging of Western plays in the major cities of India by some European touring companies, many amateur groups and clubs flourished; but they concentrated more on modern drama in Indian languages.

Ever since the beginning of twentieth century the theatre movement in the Indian languages gained momentum and the period (from 1940 onwards) presents the birth of several dramatic organisations like the Indian People's Theatre, the Indian National Theatre (established by Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya), Ebrahim Alkazi's Theatre Unit, the Bharatiya Natya Sangha (affiliated to the World Theatre Centre of UNESCO) and several regional amateur theatres.

In the Post-Independence period, the performing arts were given further impetus by the establishment of the Sangita-Natak Akademi, the National School of Drama, training centres like Adyar Kalakshetra in Madras and Darpana in Ahmedabad and Drama Departments in some Universities in the country. But, as these opportunities have been mostly intended to encourage plays in Indian languages, the sad tale in respect of Indo-Anglian drama continued.

Since then, many plays have been genuinely written in English by ‘enterprising’ Indian writers, in spite of the fact that drama in English fascinated only- “The super- sophisticated who live in the cities and the larger towns, in the universities or in certain government offices or business houses”. (K.R.S.Iyengar: 236).

The post-Independence Indian English drama, however, was benefitted by the increasing interest of the foreign countries in Indian English literature in general and Indian English drama in particular. A good number of plays by Indian playwrights like AsifCurrimbhoy, Pratap Sharma and Gurcharan Das were successfully staged in England and U.S.A. But no regular school of Indian English drama was established in India. This was mainly because of the encouragement drama received from several quarters immediately after India got freedom but it was monopolized by the theatre in the Indian regional languages while Indian English drama was ignored.

What could be seen in most Indian theatres, however, were the so-called well-made plays centred on a hero undergoing a crisis, which would mark his progression from ignorance to knowledge, bound by a plot fixed by the unities of time, place and action. By the 1950s, the well-made play sounded too contrite and artificial, the twisted endings too contrived and the technique of naturalism, especially in acting, was gaining ground. By the 1970s, the time was ripe to react against the traditional drama and the stage faced two challenges: 1) one posed by the minimalist, absurdist drama of Samuel Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot* (1955), 2) the other by the socially critical theatre of John Osborne’s *Look Back in Anger* (1956). Beckett had proposed a reflection on the form of drama, drawing the audience’s attention to the artificiality of speech, plot and characters on the stage. Osborne had invited the audience to the reality of social alienation of the rising lower middle-class, thereby shattering the conventions and the decorum observed on the English stage.

Several new trends thus merged in the mid-1960s with the rise of the second wave of new dramatists, and between 1956 and 1966 there was an extraordinary transformation of the Indian theatre with the emergence of many new playwrights, and the rise of the theatre directors in importance and so of the companies formed around them.

The Post-Independence Indian English Drama developed with the rise of Indian English Poetic dramatists who imitated the Western poetic drama tradition and followed the tradition of Tagore-Aurobindo and Kailasam and later the tradition of drama developed in the hands of ManjeriIsvaran , G.V. Desani, Lakhan Deb and PritishNandy, Nissim Ezekiel, Gurucharan Das, Pratap Sharma, AsifCurrimbhoy and, Gieve Patel who made significant contribution in uplifting the drama tradition in Indian English drama.

It is also true that Post-Independence drama benefited by the growing interest of abroad in Indian English Literature and a number of plays by dramatists like AsifCurrimbhoy, Pratap Sharma, and Gurucharan Das were successfully staged in Europe and United States in America. But these stray performances abroad, in spite of all their advantages did not lead to the establishment of a regular school of Indian English drama at home. It is not like

that efforts were not being made in flourishing English drama in India, but the main hurdle in this flourishing was the English Language, because it being a foreign language, people hardly had any interest in English drama. Once Gurucharan Das told R. Parthasarthy some years ago in the course of an interview “English theatre in India will have to project the kind of hybrid English we speak, interspersed with Indian expression.”

A conscious effort was made to search for the indigenous forms to create a ‘national theatre’. Traditional forms began to be experimented with, new techniques were evolved, and old and new began to be combined to create a fresh approach to theatre. Even government encouraged the performing arts as an effective means of public enlightenment through its first five year plan and thereby established the National School of Drama in New Delhi. Institutions for training in dramatics were founded in big cities; some drama departments were established in some universities and the National Drama festival was started in Delhi by the SangeetNatakAkademi in 1954 which was already started one year before in January 1953. Even during 1943-44, Indian People’s Theatre Association (IPTA) brought some life to the theatre in many regions of the country and it gave some strength and direction, though it catered the needs of regional language drama but still it had motivational power in the enhancement of Indian English Drama.

Another similar attempt made in Hindi theatre which too influenced Indian English drama was ‘The Prithvi Theatre’ founded by a notable film actor PrithvirajKapoor in 1944 in Bombay which insulated new strength in contemporary theatre. Even there were few organizations like Akshara Little Theatre in New Delhi and Bangalore Little Theatre which are solely meant for drama in English.

Why is the total achievement in the field of drama much less than that in other forms of Indo-Anglian writing? What were the problems and difficulties faced by the Indo-Anglian play-wrights? The success of a play is to be tested only on the stage as “drama is a composite art in which the written word of the playwright attains complete artistic realisation only when it becomes the spoken word of the actor on the stage, and through that medium reacts on the mind of the audience”. For a successful communication the playwright will have to take great care in the selection of themes and settings, in employing techniques and dialogues as well as the language suited to the purpose.

The biggest problem, faced by Indo-Anglian playwrights is that of the language. During all these decades, English (that too, spoken English) had been used only by a minority of the people in the country. Many playwrights (except a few like Currimbhoy, Ezekiel and others) were not well-acquainted with the spoken word which could check the artificiality in dialogues. It has been really a task for them to adjust the foreign tongue to Indian characters and culture in their plays. In social plays, even if the characters were carefully chosen, it could not solve the problem. For it means that only those characters who are supposed to know English, should have a place in Indo-Anglian drama. In that case, there would be too much of limitations; much more so in the case of characters from epics, mythology and

history. There are innumerable works on these themes in various Indian languages and it is absurd to expect that such characters should know these languages. For instance, to demand a certificate of qualification in Kannada from Tughlak would be as foolish as to expect a knowledge of English from Julius Caesar. So what one could expect is the use of a language in keeping with the dignity and decorum of classical characters. Further, in a play in any language, a character would be expected to use the spoken word of his or her level. A servant, for example, in King Duryodhana's court cannot be expected to speak the high-flown language of Drona or even of Duryodhana. How were these problems solved by the Indo-Anglian playwrights?

Even the English vocabulary was problematic as some English words were found incomprehensible to convey certain concepts of Indian culture, such as *dharma*, *sanyasa*, etc. Some playwrights like Kailasam tried to overcome this difficulty by using Sanskrit (or other Indian) words themselves in their original form. (In this connection, it may not be out of place to think of the methods used by some writers like Raja Rao who would rather have translations of local idioms to convey the Indian shades of thought and thereby impart a natural colour to speech.

The success of a play is to be judged mainly on the stage. In the classical Sanskrit drama itself, we come across Bhasa who was well in advance of his times in this aspect (compared even to later playwrights like Kalidasa). In modern times, mere imitation of the West (unless warranted) could not make our modern plays stageworthy. In fact, some playwrights used the living folk forms (thereby the classical Indian drama indirectly) with success; for example, the use of *Yakshaganam* in Girish Karnad's Kannada play, *Hayavadana*; *Dashavatar*; and *Kheletechniques* in Vijay Tendulkar's Marathi play *Ghashiram Kotwal*, *Jatra* in Utpal Dutt's *Jokumareswara* and Badal Sircar's *Evam Indrajit*.

But, so far as the Indo-Anglian playwrights are concerned, the rich Indian tradition of stage-plays appears to have been almost neglected. What "Sriranga" (Adya Rangacharya), a well-known Kannana playwright, remarks about the modern Indian theatre in general, may be particularly applied to Indo-Anglian drama: "Unthinkingly we opened our theatre and bewitched by the (Western) breeze we forgot it and just walked over to the Western theatre... Like parentage it (the classical Indian drama) lives in us even in these days. We may denounce our father, but we cannot empty ourselves of his blood in us".

Some playwrights like Sri Aurobindo rather unwarrantedly put the Elizabethan garb for their native themes; and the extent of artificiality on the stage is to be examined in respect to such plays. In the case of many social plays, authors like K.R. Srinivasa Aiyangar have not followed any model; but they appear to have written plays and playlets only to give a light entertainment to the audience, may be even with an interesting dialogue.

Yet, even in the early phase of Indo-Anglian drama we come across a few like Kailasam who had stage-sense. Of late, Asif Currimbhoy has shown some promise in writing the stageable plays like *Doldrummers*. *The Dumb Dancer* and *Goa* (which were a success

on the stage both in this country and abroad), but in some cases, there seems to be too much of stage-sense and cinematographic techniques at the cost of the development of plot. Further, with the help of modern stage-techniques, plays like Gurcharan Das's *Larins Sahib*, Dilip Hiro's *To Anchor a Cloud* and Shiv Kumar Joshi's *He Never Slept so Long* could be staged with success.

In the words of K. R. SrinivasaIyengar, "Modern Indian dramatic writing is neither rich in quantity, nor, on the whole, of high quality". Unlike other literary forms, drama faces the fundamental problems of its relationship with the theatre. If the theatre aspect is absent, the art cannot be completely realised. With proper settings and action on the stage only, the written word of a play attains its full meaning. Notwithstanding the Indo-Anglian playwright's problems (limited success in experimentation and in treatment of themes, the use of models and techniques and the language) and , the want of a "living theatre" solely meant for Indo-Anglian plays is a major factor responsible for the limited output and quality in the field, compared to other literary forms like fiction.

In spite of many handicaps, writing plays in English by Indians continued for about a century till now and we have more than 400 such plays and playlets as shown in the Bibliography compiled by the present writer and published in *Perspectives* (OUP, 1977). The number includes both the plays and playlets originally written in English by Indians and a few translations of their works by the authors themselves. While Sri Aurobindo, T. P. Kailasam, Harindranath Chattopadhyaya; Bharati Sarabhai and Asif Currimbhoy are some noteworthy playwrights, we come across a few like V. V. Srinivasa Aiyangar who appear to have written dramatic pieces just for occasional entertainment.

In 1970s, a new trend came forward in English plays in India which changed its face i.e. Translation method, that resulted in the translation of contemporary notable regional playwrights into English and staged in theatre. It got huge success for its bold innovations and fruitful experiments in terms of both thematic concerns and technical virtuosity within no time. Mohan Rakesh, Badal Sircar, Vijay Tendulkar, Girish Karnad and Mahashweta Devi are the most representative of the Contemporary Indian drama not only in Hindi, Marathi, Bengali, and Kannada but also on the pan Indian level. Mohan Rakesh, a Hindi playwright, projected 'Marxism' philosophy in his plays which presented a relentless fight against the traditional stranglehold of Hindi drama. "His plays dramatize the suffering of men and women who fell victims to socio-economic hierarchy and cultural hegemony", (R.K. Dhawan: 21). His plays 'One Day In Ashadha', 'The Great Swans Of The Waves', and 'Halfway House' are translated in English which had a immense success on stage. The second notable playwright was a Bengali theatre artist Badal Sircar who adopted existential philosophy in his plays, created a genuine people's theatre known as Third Theatre, a theatre supported and created by people and merely performed by people. His plays- 'Procession', 'Bhoma', and 'Stale News' are based on the concept of Third Theatre and projected existential philosophy of breakdown of communication. A Marathi playwright, Vijay Tendulkar, initiated avant-garde movement in Indian theatre through his plays by changing

the form and pattern of traditional Indian drama by demolishing the three act play and by creating new models. His plays- 'Sakharam Binder', 'GashiramKotwal' and 'Silence! The Court Is in Session' are worldwide famous which highlights the typical middle class morality, sexual harassment and complexities of human existence. As Veena Noble Das points out, "He does not consider the accuracy of human violence as something loathsome or ugly as it is innate in human nature". GirishKarnad, author of the kannada plays- 'Tughlaq', 'Yayati' and 'Hayavadana' is an important contributor to Indo-Anglian theatre."In all his three plays- be the theme historical, mythical, or legendary- Karnad's approach is 'modern' and he deploys the conventions and motifs of folk art like masks and curtains to project a world of intensities, uncertainties and unpredictable denouements"(K.R.S. Iyengar: 735). Another noteworthy playwright Mahashweta Devi satire the prevailing social system in her plays – 'Mother of 1084', 'Water', 'Aajir', 'Urvashi o Jhonny' and 'Bayen' etc. " Like Brecht, Mahashweta Devi never tries to disguise the stage apparatus so as to make the audience aware that it is sitting in a theatre", (E.Satanarayana:128). ■

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American Transcendentalism

S.N. Patil

Transcendentalism is a mid 19th century American movement. It is a belief in the superiority of intuition to sensory knowledge. It was more correctly thought of as an intellectual, aesthetic and spiritual ferment than as a strictly reasoned body of doctrine. In O. B. Frothingham's word, a 'gospel', or as Santayana accurately said of Emerson's thought, 'religion expressing itself as a philosophy.'

Keywords: Transcendentalism, Emerson, Thoreau. intuition, nature. God Kathryn VanSpanckern states:

The Transcendentalist movement was a reaction against the 18th century rationalism and a manifestation of the general humanitarian trend of the 19th century thought. The movement was based on a fundamental belief in the unity of the world and God. The soul of each individual was thought to be identical with the world – a microcosm of the world itself. The doctrine of self-reliance and individualism developed through the belief in the identification of the individual soul with God. (VanSpanckern 20)

The mind is originally a most delicate germ whose husk is the body, planted in this world that the light and heat of heaven may fall upon it with a gentle radiance and call forth its energies. Such a view helped the Transcendentalists interpret their own experience. As a basis of life, Miss Peabody said, it was 'the most direct path simple in relation to nature.' All of this scrutiny, so richly expressive of Thoreau's love, leads in Chapter IX on 'The Ponds' to moments of celebration. This passage is fairly typical of Thoreau's mysticism.

Transcendentalism is a semi-philosophical movement. The Transcendentalism movement arose in Concord, the first inland New England colony, near Boston. Emerson's poem 'Concord Hymns' celebrates both the American Revolution and American literature. Concord was the first rural artist's colony, and the first place to offer a spiritual and cultural alternative to American materialism.

Henry David Thoreau was a native of the town of Concord. Emerson moved to it in 1834. The locale attracted Nathaniel Hawthorne, Margaret Fuller, the educator Bronson Alcott and William Ellery Channing. James Freeman Clarke once felt we are called the like-minded because no two of us think alike. Charles Ellis in his essay “An Essay on Transcendentalism” (1842) states the most commonly held principles of the group:

Transcendentalism’ maintains that man has ideas, that come not through the five senses, or the powers of reasoning; but are either the result of direct revelation from God, his immediate inspiration or his immanent presence in the spiritual world, and it asserts to perceive what is true and right and beautiful and a natural love for these as the body for its food.’ (Ellis, qt Patil 46)

The Transcendentalists called this spiritual body as the ‘over-soul.’ Emerson’s essay ‘Over-Soul’ celebrates it.

Most of the Transcendentalists except Thoreau were the product of Harvard Divinity School which produced Unitarian ministers. Emerson found Unitarianism a cold intellectualism. The Transcendentalists wanted to have a broad philosophy. They found it in the German Transcendentalists of the 19th century, which was brought to America through the writings of Thomas Carlyle and S.T. Coleridge. Americans were basically eclectic in their thinking, and borrowed ideas from the Orient: Hinduism and Confucius’s Sayings. They used the writings of the French authors like Madame De Stael; those of Emanuel Swedenborg; and those of the Cambridge Platonists and the 17th century Metaphysical poets of England. George Hochfild writes,

In the decade before 1836, the year when Transcendentalism burst into public view-with a flood of manifestoes, a new sensibility was emerging in the journals and early writings of the young Unitarian ministers. This sensibility was created in response to the new world of European Romantic literature just then finding its way to Boston. The major figures of this period of discovery were Coleridge, Wordsworth and Carlyle in Britain, Cousin and Benjamin Constant in France, Goethe and Schiller in Germany, together with certain of the new German theologians like Strauss and Schleiermacher, and, more dimly, Kant and his philosophic successors. The upshot of all these influences was a turn towards introspection, towards a new awareness of the self as an object of scrutiny and as a source of insight into the meaning of experience. The whole purpose of modern literature seemed to be an investigation of the inner world and an attempt to relate this world to nature, history and the divine.(Patil 47)

Emerson’s *Nature* remains the most famous of them in 1836. His poems and essays speak of this new vision of life. See the following:

I will not live out of me.
I will not see with others' eyes;
My good is good, my evil ill.
I would be free; I cannot be
While I take things as others please to rate them.
I dare attempt to lay out my own road.
That which myself delights in shall be Good,
That which I do not want, indifferent;
That which I hate is Bad. That's flat. (Emerson 339)

In that year Bronson Alcott issued his first important statement on education, "The Doctrine and Discipline of Human Culture," and Elizabeth Peabody brought out her *Record of a School*. Orestes Brownson published an unapologetic summary of Cousin's philosophy. George Ripley, too, contributed his earnest *Discourses on the Philosophy of Religion*. These works, and a number of lesser ones, made it clear that a new school had arrived in America. In 1836, Emerson, Ripley, Hedge, and some of their friends, attending the bicentennial celebration of their *alma mater* Harvard College, gathered their discussions of the new philosophy more interesting. They met at Willard Hotel in Boston calling it 'the Hedge Club.' Their contemporaries, noticing the use of the word 'transcendental knowledge,' called them transcendentalists. They started *Dial* (1840) as their magazine. First Margaret Fuller, and then Emerson edited its 16 issues in four years.

The Transcendentalists placed an importance on individuality and self-reliance. George Ripley started Brook Farm, near Boston in 1841 hoping to create an environ for all kinds of artists. Bronson Alcott ran another short-lived one at Fruitland's in Harvard, Mass in 1843. Transcendentalists flourished in Thoreau's Concord. The major literary works of the movement are Emerson's *Nature* (1836), *Self-Reliance* (1841), *The American Scholar* (1837), *Compensation* (1841), *The Poet* (1844), his 'Divinity School Address' (1839), and his poems (1846); Thoreau's *Walden* (1854), *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (1849), *Civil Disobedience* (1849), and *Life without Principle* (1863); Jones Very's *Essays and Poems* (1839), particularly his sonnets; William Ellery Channing's *Poems of Sixty-five Years* (1902); Margaret Fuller's *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1845); Bronson Alcott's *Record of a School* (1935, edited by Elizabeth Peabody); and the anonymous "Essay on Transcendentalism," discussed above. Virtually the only work of fiction is *Margaret* (1845), a lengthy local-color novel by Sylvester Judd. Emerson's great contemporaries Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville were also Transcendentalists.

Likewise, Emerson, Thoreau, Alcott, Higginson and Fuller kept journals. They were active in the lyceum movement. Emerson delivered 100 lectures in America and England. Thoreau too. Fuller and Alcott preferred to conduct 'Conversations.' The transcendentalists participated in social reforms such as temperance, peace, universal suffrage, anti-sabbatarianism, and antislavery movement. Once Thoreau died, and Emerson

retired, the movement dissipated. Mark Twain called the later age as 'the Gilded Age.' There was a brief revival of Transcendentalism in the Middle West in the 1870's and another in Concord itself with the establishment of the Concord School of Philosophy in 1879. The Transcendentalist movement lasted for a little more than ten years, from 1836 to the collapse of Brook Farm in 1847. In 1844 the *Dial* stopped publication and Brook Farm went over to Fourierism. But Transcendentalism remained a strong influence during the Civil War. T. H. Elkins thinks Transcendentalism has had an influence far out of proportion to its size as a movement. Walt Whitman once said that Transcendentalism influenced him to write *Leaves of Grass*. Transcendentalism also influenced Emily Dickinson. It influenced both Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville. The educationist Charles William Eliot was influenced by Emerson. So did John Dewey. Bronson Alcott influenced Mary Baker Eddy, the founder of Christian Science school. ■

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Self-Reliant Bharat : Vision of Subhash Chandra Bose

Sudipta Mishra

Our freedom is embarked by the hard toil and unconditional dedication of our freedom fighters who have given every single drop of their blood to taste the spirit of independence from the monstrous clutch of Britishers. Freedom fighters like Mahatma Gandhi Ji, Jawaharlal Nehru and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose had dreamt of a better nation in which we Indians could breathe free air. Our freedom warriors adapted so many strategies to emancipate Indians from the slavery of two hundred years. Subhas Chandra Bose as a path seeker of the freedom movement emphasized the renunciation of self-interest to get independence. He has awakened the entire nation with the immortal slogan- “Give me blood and I will give you freedom”. As heralded by Netaji, the planning with India flourished in our nation before the independence. He was the one who laid the foundation of the National Planning Committee that changed the future of our nation after Independence. He has already made a blueprint for a self-sufficient India with rigorous planning for her future. He has created the roadmap for planning and formulated the ideas to become internationally connected to the external World. Before our independence, he has dreamt of a nation that would be strong enough to defend its sovereignty with the power of arms and ammunition by all means. He had a vision of an industrially developed country that will not depend on another country for fulfilling its basic needs. As the then President of Congress, he appointed Jawaharlal Nehru as the chairman of the National Planning Committee. Hence, it shows the farsightedness of Netaji and his long-cherished vision of making our country self-reliant.

Keywords -Emancipation, sovereignty, freedom, self-reliance.

Introduction

In the year 1938, Netaji formulated the National Planning Committee for shaping the future of free India. With the induction of an advisory board into this planning committee, he has planned for the regional autonomy of our nation through the introduction of local self-government. The Panchayati Raj system of today is the result of Netaji’s farsightedness that he implanted into the planning process in 1930s. He has sown the seeds of modernisation in ancient India’s foundation that had a traditional system in all approaches. He has seen

radical changes in all aspects of our country ranging from poor agricultural practices to impoverished Indians with an almost lack of education. After becoming the president of the Indian National Congress, Netaji had given importance to building the industrial revolution in our country like the west. But he realized that it was not so lucid to gain industrial autonomy over the night in an agrarian country like India. Along with the existence of the cottage industry, Netaji had tried to imbibe scientific insights into the future of our nation. Under his strong leadership, India began to reach new heights of success. He had planned the concept of ‘Atma Nirbhar Bharata’ from his college days as a believer, in 1921. Hence he commenced on a brighter path to achieve all glory for his motherland in his later years. This entire paper seeks to provide the futuristic vision of Netaji that he had dreamt of a free India.

Objectives of this Research.

The subject matter of this research paper revolves around the conscious methods and strategies made by Netaji to make India self-reliant. The scope of this research paper includes the ideas and planning that Subhas Chandra Bose has imagined making an independent India with economic reliance and of course with the power of strong defence

Research Question

- 1 What are the methods adopted by Netaji for the fortune of India after becoming the president of the Indian National Congress?
- 2 How can India be self-reliant by adopting the futuristic vision of Netaji?

Research Methods

The researcher has undertaken a qualitative research technique for deriving an insightful conclusion. The library research method has been adopted throughout the process. All the data are gathered meticulously from secondary sources like books, journals, and web resources.

Discussion

It was the dream of Subhash Chandra Bose to make India self-sustaining and independent of all external forces. He was aware of the fundamental differences between different religious beliefs and practices. That’s why he always stressed unifying the entire country despite all cultural differences. He cited at Haripura Session, “While unifying the country through a strong Central Development, we shall have to put all minority communities as well as Provinces at their ease by allowing them a large measure of autonomy in cultural and as well as governmental affairs.” Hence by thinking about the crises which our motherland was undergoing, he formulated so many schemes for the planning process. He focused on poverty eradication, unemployment problems, poor agricultural practices, the Industrial Revolution, casteism and various social maladies that covered the sky of pre-independent India because of the oppressors. After being honoured with the chairmanship of the Indian National Congress, he took giant steps to reform the present of the nation towards a great future.

Fostering Ties With External World

From the year 1921, he showed the ideas of freedom in India while staying at Cambridge University. His letters to Desbandhu Chittaranjan Das witnessed the strong patriotic ideas that he has been awakened already at a young age. With a subtle impression, he has already started to realise the 'divide and rule policy of the British Empire. That's why he has invited the sleepy Indians to awake from their deep slumber. He awakened them with the slogan, 'Delhi Chalo'. Since the First World War, he studied the decline of the imperial powers. The twentieth century witnessed rising powers like the Russian Empire and the Italian regime that could explore the power of the army in the air, navy and land against the British Empire. Netaji was aware of the geographical vastness of our country. For a self-reliant country, unity is required. This is his Haripura session, which revived the lost spirit of Indians. He emphasised the magnitude of building friendly ties with neighbouring countries like Japan, Singapore, Malay, Egypt, Iraq, Palestine and distant countries like Russia, Germany, Ireland, and so on. He tried to invoke the feeling of unity from the independence struggles of these countries. He aroused the strength of Indians by emphasising the population of India. The country with 350 million people shouldn't be frightened by the handful of people who had ruled only with the policy of division among the countrymen. Hence Netaji tried to foster an International relationship between India with the external world to attain vast support for our freedom struggle. He even inspired the youth of our nation immensely to transmit the cultural heritage of our country in the external world as non-brand ambassadors of our nation.

Protecting Minority Communities

A country with independent visions should never be fragmented by religion and caste differences. Netaji realised this fact earlier. So after being the chairman of INC, he worked for the cultural integration of Hindu and Muslim communities. According to him, the then modern India had already overcome the caste differences. So he aimed to stabilise the common interests of the two conflicting groups. He strove to resolve the issues between Hindus and Muslims. He has stated to issue equal rights and freedom to all groups. He stressed that no majority group will suppress the minority groups of our country. A communal harmony will be brought into practice and so also with religious tolerance. He advocated a "live and let live" policy for all religious groups. Unification of our immensely broad country will be possible through the cultural union of different communities. He argued that the regional and cultural autonomy of minor communities will stand against foreign invasion in future.

Inclusion of Modern Technology

For Netaji, self-reliance implied embracing modern scientific inventions like the radio, television, aeroplane, films and telephones. He several times tried to lay importance on scientific research works of our country by spreading awareness through his speeches.

Steps towards Educational Reformation

He advocated for one lingua Franca of free India to unite all the citizens in a single thread. According to him, the roman script was better in uniting India with the rest of the world. With a futuristic vision, he dreamt of a self-autonomous India that could reach the whole world through the spread of films and its various art forms. That's why he has given importance to literacy in our country. Self-reliance can't be attained through proper education. So he advocated educating 90% of our illiterate ones in the post-independence period. Netaji has given many implications on the scientific invention. He knows that the advanced countries of the world always chase technological innovations to dominate agrarian countries like ours.

Implementation of National Planning

Being the mastermind behind the execution of national planning in India, Netaji became the guiding star of the oppressed people who have the potential to change the future of our nation. He has suggested setting up of a planning commission for reforming the agricultural sector by introducing industrial reformation. Netaji focused on alleviating poverty and illiteracy by launching a food security programme with an educational policy in planning. At that time poverty was a serious disease that should be treated through planned actions. Through a comprehensive land reform system and scientific involvement in agriculture, poverty could be eased. With due importance to cottage industries, modern industries should be set up everywhere to tackle the slow growth rate of our nation. Netaji with a great vision for the future of India took long strides in building schemes to attain sufficiency in food, industry, education, research works and most importantly in defence.

Foreign Policy

For a developing or developed country, instilling interest in foreign policy is a foremost criterion. Our colonisers tried to alienate our country from the rest of the world. He realised that the British people wanted to make us civilised and gentle with the light of knowledge. They treated us as savages. That's why Netaji lets the whole world know about our rich heritage and culture. He had travelled to all other countries like Germany, France, Japan, Ceylon, Singapore, and Malaya, Burma and so on. Hence he had gathered the valued information of the entire world about kindness for our country. The students and the scholarly people living abroad gained love and much respect for our rich diversity. Even before independence, Netaji had stressed building strong trade ties with Germany, Italy, and the United States of America. Before colonial rule, India was an expert in maintaining export and import relationships with other countries. But due to some unnecessary restrictions posed by the British Government, India was cut off from the rest of the world. A safe trade policy is one of the best ways to connect with the rest of the world. After attaining 'Purna Swaraj', he has aimed at fostering bilateral trade agreements with other nations. For progressing toward self-sufficiency, Netaji aimed to revise the old industrial policy of India. By talking about the broad term of export and import with

other European or Asian countries, Netaji cited so many essential opinions. Even Netaji had gone one step further by adding the importance of the citizenship act for India. The citizenship act would protect the interests of nationals of India and set some rules for foreigners. For the economic development of our country, foreign trade policy must be revived for the benefit of Indian industries by making the policy flexible enough to trade with non-British empires. Without favouring the so-called British industries, Our Netaji stressed the importance of gaining autonomy on the trade policy of free India by deeply realising the strict agreement of India with England. He was a visionary who had realised that unless India could attain freedom from the clutches of colonial rule no trade agreements with other countries except England would be possible.

Education and Women's Emancipation

Netaji was aware of the fact that self-reliance can't be attained without education and woman empowerment. From the very beginning, he was conscious of the educational enlightenment that could make a revolutionary movement in the pre-independent era. For reviving the lost glory of the nation, education was one of the best weapons for Netaji. A conscious citizen could think of his betterment as well as of the nation. So he stressed Universal education and higher education for the youth of our nation.

Emancipation of women and their education can be a driving force for a developing nation. A country can't be a progressive one without its females. That is why Netaji stressed the liberation of woman force from the bondage of society. In his army (INA), he started to include females as paragons of power and courage. He has appointed one woman cabinet minister in the provincial government of Azad Hind. Due to his transformative speeches, the society of the then period began to change the orthodox mind-set regarding women. Various woman welfare programs and the National Council of Women were formed for the betterment of the female powers of India. He has even created a separate regiment for empowering women and allowed them to stand equal with the male forces of our nation in the freedom struggle with our colonisers.

Economic Independence

Subhash Chandra Bose was quite disheartened by the underprivileged and persecuted Indians. He knew that economic reliance can be found after the independence of our country. The oppressive British rulers were responsible for the poverty of our country. Hence, after gaining independence, radical industrialisation and implementation of modern technology with the scientific invention would change the situation. In most of the speeches, he has given a detailed analysis of the imperial rulers and poverty-stricken Indians. The construction of the planning commission was his master-plan to elevate the poor country towards self-sufficiency. Unemployment and illiteracy are the root cause of poverty, even nowadays. Back in the nineteenth century, Netaji had realised this tyranny of India. So constructively, he has decided on economic reconstruction and a political resurrection of the country. He has given each drop of blood for our country to gain economic independence that had been

snatched away by the Britishers. He needed economic reliance for stabilising the defence of our country. To safeguard the interests of a free India and to uphold the defence of the country, arms and weapons were needed. Netaji stressed the building of modern industries to meet the expense of common people and to create advanced agricultural products.

Spiritual Reawakening

A country can attain the pinnacle of glory through spiritual enlightenment. Netaji before preaching this sublime quest to divinity practised it in his personal life. He was deeply influenced by the philosophy of Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Vivekananda and Aurobindo. The philosophy of renunciation of materialistic joy and earthly lust was intensely ingrained in his mind. With an enormous patriotic fervour, he marched to liberate India from the monstrous control of the British people. By creating Azad Hind Fauj, he has shown an exemplary spirit of the mental strength that he gained from his years of meditation and self-control. He trod on the path of spirituality and he at the same time treated his country as a divine being. With a secular view towards all religions, he went on to release his mother India from the clutch of the British monarchy.

Limitation

The entire study has been done from one perspective of Subhas's vision and his perception of India, the motherland. The researcher has ignored the other aspects of the freedom struggle laid by different freedom fighters. Their ideology often clashed with the concept of Netaji. So this research paper shows a bright direction for future researchers to unravel fresh wisdom regarding this insightful topic.

Conclusion

Subhash Chandra Bose refuted the absolute power entrusted to our nation by the tyrants. He has brought a new thought into the world by collaborating spiritualism with intense patriotism. He changed the orthodox thought process of existing Indians. From his letters, we can easily infer his freedom of thought and liberal attitude towards life. He has interpreted the true meaning of freedom in his career. He has abandoned his lucrative job and even became stone-hearted towards his parents. The ancient, rich culture of India preached the same renunciation for the sages and monks. From this research paper, we can easily interpret the selfless objectives of Netaji. He was a thinker and a brave soldier who with his great vision changed the opinion of the entire world against India. Not only in the economic, industrial and defence sectors but also he attempted to bring a political revolution to our nation. His tireless struggle to bring reliance in every sphere of our nation will never go in vain. He had always believed to empower the general folk of our country. He realised that self-reliance can not be attained by a group of rich people. The common men can be the important source behind the renaissance. For him, the poor people of the pre-independent era became a ray of hope for the future of our nation. That's why he as the President of the Congress Party in 1938 determined to create a planning committee for our country. The

planning commission of India was his brainchild. To him, the lower strata of our society could be a game changer in that existing scenario. With this reformative and progressive mindset, Subhas Chandra Bose and his ephemeral fragrance will always be with us till infinity. As a visionary, Netaji had dreamt of a country where the people will be able to procure all the basic facilities without any torture or exploitation irrespective of their caste or religion.

Modern India is gearing up for the same economic, political and industrial transition from the previous years of backwardness which will be a great wonder for the entire globe. The attainment of such self-sufficiency in terms of external affairs will be a great tribute to Netaji. The ever-increasing International relationship of our country with the external world is the long cherished dream of Netaji. As an unsung hero of India's freedom movement, Netaji might be lost from the supposed counting list of distinguished freedom fighters, but through his stirring slogans and selfless devotion to the motherland, he will ever be alive in the souls of every Indian. ■

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The Dalit Women's Voice: A Study of Writing and Resistance

Durgadevi Prabhakar Rao Mohod

This article delves into the significant contributions of Dalit women writers to the contemporary literary landscape, highlighting their unique perspectives, struggles, and triumphs. Drawing from an extensive review of literary works, interviews, and critical analyses, this study aims to shed light on the diverse range of themes and narratives explored by Dalit women authors. The article also examines the socio-cultural and political contexts that have shaped their identities and influenced their literary expressions. Through this comprehensive exploration, we gain valuable insights into the intersectionality of caste, gender, and class, as well as the ways in which these writers challenge existing power structures and contribute to the broader discourse on social justice and human rights. Dalit women's writing is a powerful and intricate tapestry of narratives, weaving together the experiences, struggles, and resilience of a marginalized community within the caste hierarchy in India. Abstracts of their works often encapsulate the intersectionality of caste, gender, and socio-economic disparities. These writings delve into personal narratives, offering poignant insights into the lived realities of oppression, discrimination, and systemic injustices faced by Dalit women. Themes of identity, empowerment, and resistance reverberate through their stories, challenging societal norms and advocating for social change. Their literature serves as a potent tool for not only amplifying their voices but also for dismantling the entrenched structures of caste-based discrimination and advocating for equality and justice.

Keywords: Dalit, intersectionality, social justice, empowerment, marginalized voices, socio-political context.

Introduction:

The Dalit women in India have historically been marginalized and oppressed, and their voices have been silenced for centuries. However, in recent years, there has been a growing movement of Dalit women writers who are using their writing as a tool for resistance and empowerment. This research article aims to explore the writing of Dalit women, their unique perspectives, and the ways in which they are challenging the dominant narratives through their literature. Dalit women in India have long been marginalized and oppressed,

facing discrimination and violence based on both their gender and caste. Despite these challenges, many Dalit women have found empowerment through writing, using their words to advocate for social justice and challenge the status quo. Dr. Sharmila Rege, in her article “Writing Caste/Writing Gender: Narrating Dalit Women’s Testimonies”, highlights the power of writing for Dalit women to reclaim their voices and assert their presence in a society that seeks to silence them. The intersectionality of caste and gender is a central theme in the writing of Dalit women, as they address issues of caste-based discrimination and gender inequality. Many Dalit women use writing as a means of empowerment, sharing their personal stories and experiences to challenge societal norms and advocate for change. Their writing has also played a significant role in social justice movements, shedding light on the experiences of marginalized communities and contributing to larger conversations about caste-based discrimination and gender inequality. Overall, the writings of Dalit women in India have had a profound impact on society, allowing them to navigate their dual identity as both Dalit and female while advocating for social change. Their voices are essential in challenging the status quo and working towards a more inclusive and equitable society. Dalit women have long been marginalized, facing double discrimination due to their gender and caste. Despite these challenges, many Dalit women have emerged as powerful voices through their writings, offering a unique perspective on their experiences, struggles, and aspirations. This article delves into the significant contributions of Dalit women writers, highlighting their literary prowess and the transformative impact of their words on society. Their writings may shed light on the intersectionality of these forms of oppression and their lived experiences. Identity and Empowerment: Writing can serve as a means of reclaiming identity and agency. Dalit women’s voices often challenge stereotypes and seek to empower themselves and their communities. Many Dalit women activists use their writings as a means of resistance against social inequalities. They aim to bring attention to the structural discrimination they face and advocate for change. Dalit women’s literature may encompass various genres like poetry, memoirs, fiction, and academic writing, providing diverse perspectives and insights into their lives and struggles. Studies exploring these themes often contribute significantly to understanding the complexities of Dalit women’s experiences and their efforts in challenging societal norms and systemic injustices. Dalit women’s literature is a powerful and often overlooked genre within English literature.

Dalit literature emerged as a response to the social and economic discrimination faced by Dalits, historically marginalized communities in India, and the voices of Dalit women within this movement have added significant depth and perspective to this literary landscape. The works of writers like Bama (pen name of Dr. Bama Faustina Soosairaj), Baby Kamble, and Urmila Pawar stand out in the realm of Dalit women’s literature. Bama’s *Karukku* is an autobiographical narrative exploring the intersection of caste, gender, and religion in her life. It provides an intimate portrayal of the struggles faced by Dalit women in a deeply caste-ridden society. Baby Kamble’s *The Prisons We Broke* offers poignant accounts of her life as a Dalit woman, depicting the hardships and discrimination faced by

her community. Urmila Pawar's *The Weave of My Life* is another significant work that delves into the experiences of Dalit women, shedding light on their resilience and resistance against societal oppression. These writings often showcase not just the hardships but also the resilience, strength, and cultural richness of Dalit women. Their narratives challenge dominant societal structures and offer a unique perspective on identity, discrimination, and the quest for social justice. The significance of these writings extends beyond mere literary merit; they serve as a platform for empowerment, raising awareness about the intersectional discrimination faced by Dalit women and amplifying their voices in the larger discourse on social justice and equality. The impact of Dalit women's writings in English literature continues to grow, sparking important conversations and contributing to a more inclusive and diverse literary canon. In the vast tapestry of literature, the voices of Dalit women have long been relegated to the periphery, their narratives overshadowed by dominant discourses. However, within the folds of their stories lie compelling testimonies of resilience, resistance, and remarkable strength. The writings penned by Dalit women echo the intersections of caste, gender, and identity, unraveling a poignant saga of marginalization and triumph. Dalit women, positioned at the intersection of caste and gender hierarchies, confront multifaceted challenges that intertwine systemic discrimination and patriarchy. Their narratives are not just stories; they are a mirror reflecting the deep-rooted societal prejudices and the struggle against them. From personal reflections to fictional tales, their writings serve as a profound indictment of the caste-based oppression and its impact on their lives.

Resisting Erasure: Writing as a Tool of Empowerment

In the face of societal erasure and silencing, Dalit women have wielded the mighty pen as a tool of empowerment. Their writings reclaim agency, asserting their identities and asserting their rightful place in the literary landscape. Through memoirs, poetry, novels, and essays, they not only articulate their experiences but also challenge dominant narratives, fostering a space for dialogue, awareness, and change.

Beyond the Margins: Impact and Significance

The significance of Dalit women's writings transcends mere literary expression; it's a testament to resilience, a call for justice, and an avenue for empowerment. Their narratives serve as a bridge, inviting readers to confront uncomfortable truths and engage in conversations that dismantle entrenched biases.

Dalit women writers have made profound contributions to literature, society, and the feminist movement, offering a unique perspective shaped by their experiences at the intersection of caste, gender, and often economic marginalization. Here are some key impacts and significances of their work:

Representation and Visibility:

Dalit women writers have brought to light the struggles, aspirations, and identities of Dalit women, whose voices were historically silenced or marginalized in mainstream

discourse. Their literature provides a platform for these voices to be heard and acknowledged.

Challenging Caste and Patriarchy:

Their writings often challenge the entrenched structures of caste and patriarchy. They offer a critical lens on societal inequalities, discrimination, and oppression faced by Dalit women, sparking conversations on caste-based discrimination within feminist movements and broader society.

Narrative of Resilience and Empowerment:

Their stories and poetry often portray resilience, strength, and the resilience of Dalit women in the face of adversity. Their narratives empower other marginalized individuals and communities by offering stories of hope, determination, and agency.

Literary Contributions:

Dalit women writers have enriched literature with their unique perspectives, innovative storytelling techniques, and powerful prose or poetry. Their literary works contribute to the diversity and richness of the literary landscape, challenging existing norms and expanding the understanding of human experiences.

Intersectional Analysis:

They bring an intersectional analysis, highlighting how caste, gender, and often economic factors intersect to shape the lives of Dalit women. This intersectional approach is crucial in understanding the complexity of social hierarchies and discrimination.

Social and Political Impact:

Their writings have not only influenced literary spheres but also contributed to social and political movements. Dalit women writers have played roles in advocating for social justice, equality, and policy changes to address caste-based discrimination.

Inspiration and Empathy:

Their work serves as a source of inspiration and empathy, fostering understanding and solidarity across communities. It encourages individuals from diverse backgrounds to empathize with the struggles faced by Dalit women.

The impact of Dalit women writers extends far beyond the realm of literature; it resonates deeply in social, cultural, and political spheres, contributing to a more inclusive and empathetic society.

Unearthing Untold Stories

Dalit women writers delve into the intricacies of their lives, unearthing untold stories of oppression, resilience, and triumph. Through their narratives, they bring to light the harsh realities faced by Dalit women, challenging deeply ingrained prejudices and stereotypes. These writings serve as a powerful tool for social awareness and consciousness-raising.

A Visceral Reflection of Lived Experiences

The writings of Dalit women are a visceral reflection of their lived experiences. They provide a raw and unfiltered account of the everyday struggles, systemic injustices, and cultural biases that shape their lives. By putting pen to paper, these writers reclaim their narratives, refusing to be defined solely by their caste or gender. Dalit women's writing is a powerful lens into the lived experiences, offering a visceral reflection of their struggles, aspirations, and resilience. Their narratives often delve deep into the intersections of caste, gender, and societal oppression, revealing the multifaceted challenges they face. In these writings, you encounter raw emotions, unfiltered truths, and a piercing honesty that brings to light the harsh realities of discrimination and marginalization. The stories are not just about hardship but also about unwavering courage and the fight for dignity and equality. Through their prose, poetry, and autobiographical works, Dalit women authors challenge dominant narratives, reclaim their identities, and assert their agency. Their words echo the pain of exclusion and the quest for justice, creating a space for dialogue and societal introspection. The richness of Dalit women's writing lies in its ability to unsettle comfortable norms and provoke empathy and understanding among readers. It invites us to confront uncomfortable truths and advocates for a more inclusive and just society where every voice is heard and valued. Dalit women's writings offer profound insights into their lived experiences, reflecting their struggles, resilience, and aspirations within a complex societal framework marked by caste and gender discrimination. Authors like Bama, Baby Kamble, Urmila Pawar, and many others have crafted narratives that illuminate the intersectionality of caste and gender, offering a voice to the marginalized.

Their works often delve into themes such as:

1. Caste and Gender Intersectionality:

Dalit women writers explore the unique challenges they face due to their dual identity as both Dalits and women. They discuss the intersection of caste-based discrimination and gender bias, showcasing how these factors compound their marginalization.

2. Social Exclusion and Discrimination:

These writings vividly depict the systemic discrimination faced by Dalit women in various spheres of life, including education, employment, marriage, and social interactions. They highlight instances of ostracization, violence, and institutional bias.

3. Resistance and Empowerment:

Despite the adversities, Dalit women's writings often convey narratives of resilience, strength, and empowerment. They portray instances of individual and collective resistance against oppressive structures, showcasing the determination to challenge societal norms.

4. Identity and Selfhood:

These writings explore the complexities of identity formation and the struggle to assert one's individuality amidst societal stereotypes and prejudices. Authors often depict the quest for self-expression and self-assertion.

5. Family and Community Dynamics:

Dalit women's narratives also shed light on familial relationships and community dynamics, exposing the intricacies of social hierarchies within Dalit communities and the broader society.

6. Aspirations and Hopes:

Despite the challenges, these writings often reflect the aspirations and dreams of Dalit women for a more equitable future. They envision a society free from caste and gender-based discrimination. These writings serve as powerful tools for raising awareness, challenging ingrained prejudices, and advocating for social justice and equality. They offer a platform for Dalit women to articulate their experiences and contribute to broader conversations on caste, gender, and social change.

The Transformative Power of Dalit Women's Writing

The writings of Dalit women have a transformative power that extends beyond the literary realm. They challenge ingrained prejudices, inspire social change, and empower marginalized communities to assert their rights and demand justice. Through their words, Dalit women writers dismantle stereotypes and pave the way for a more inclusive and equitable society.

"Our stories are not just stories, they are acts of resistance, they are our way of reclaiming our voices and our identities." - Dalit woman writer, Sujatha Gidla

Their narratives serve as a source of inspiration for younger generations within the community and beyond, providing representation and role models that were previously lacking in mainstream discourse. Dalit women's writing transcends mere storytelling; it becomes a vehicle for empowerment, social change, and cultural transformation, resonating with audiences worldwide. Individuals and it challenges the dominant narratives that perpetuate their oppression.

Conclusion

Dalit women writers are beacons of hope, using their literary prowess to shed light on the experiences of a marginalized community. Their writings serve as a catalyst for change, prompting society to confront its biases and work towards a more inclusive future. As we celebrate the contributions of these formidable voices, it is imperative that their work continues to be recognized, valued, and shared, amplifying the voices of Dalit women across the world. In the emergence and flourishing of Dalit women writers in the literary

landscape is a testament to the resilience, creativity, and indomitable spirit of a marginalized community that has long been silenced and oppressed. Through their powerful narratives, these writers have not only brought forth the hidden stories and experiences of Dalit women but have also challenged prevailing stereotypes and systemic injustices. Their voices resonate with a universal call for justice, equality, and the recognition of human dignity. As we reflect on their contributions, it is imperative that we continue to uplift and amplify the voices of Dalit women writers, recognizing the literary contributions of Dalit women stand as a testament to the power of storytelling as a catalyst for societal transformation. By amplifying their voices, we not only honor their lived experiences but also recognize the urgency of dismantling intersecting systems of oppression. This introduction aims to set the stage for an exploration of the rich, profound, and often overlooked realm of literature created by Dalit women. It could lead into discussions of specific writers, their works, themes, and the impact of their writings on both literature and society. Their invaluable role in reshaping the literary canon and inspiring a more inclusive, empathetic society for all. ■

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Classical form of *Sarala Mahabharata*

Abhinna Chandra Dash

Form is an art and it is the beauty of classic literature. Self-realisation for expression of truth is considered as literature for a classic poet. This literature is emotion oriented and in expression of this emotion, a classic poet always needs industrial art. Whatever may be the form, if the theme is expanded, purified, understood and beautified, the poet uses it in a unique way to express his thoughts to make himself an eminent creator of classic literature.

For a classic writer, the existence of life and well controlled world having morality based on conscience of ideology always play great role. With the help of this ideology, a classic writer tries to make a clear cut distinction between word and meaning and presents it comprehensibly. In this context, German philosopher Hegel's expression might be remembered. He says "classical form in which idea and institution or the spiritual content and serious form completely balanced and pervade each other, in which the former is ceaselessly taken into the latter".

Word and somber expression of meanings, unity in plot and profundity are presented in classic industrial art. By the coordination of unlimited expression of feelings and aesthetics helps to reflect the value of classic art. So in view of this, we can say that Sâralâ Dâsa is a successful classic creator. Sâralâ Mahâbhârata is written in the form of a mythology and it is a great epic. It includes all the features of classic art; theme, chapter chapterisation, story line, portrayal of character, narrative technique and language etc. Keeping in view all these factors it cannot be denied that Sâralâ Mahâbhârata is a great classic creation.

Forms of structure & Subject Arrangement:-

A classic poet always tries to create a piece of literature by taking into account a great subject matter that is why the use of form and structure has been confined to certain rules and regulations. The same form and structure have also been reflected in Sâralâ epic. Since Sâralâ Mahâbhârata is written in palm leaf and based on a great subject matter, it is very difficult to divide it into a single part or division.

Hence, keeping in view the greatness of the subject matter and in order to separate one part from another, Sâralâ Dâsa divided it in eighteen parvas. By taking into account the origin, development and last condition of incidents he has divided the parvas into many

upa-parvas. It has created a major story and out of this many sub-stories have been created. Similarly in the field of subject arrangement, if we consider Sâralâ Mahâbhârata there are several subject matters presented but alternatively they all are moving towards the fulfillment of one goal. That is way Sâralâ Mahâbhârata is deep, meaningful and logical. The poet, in view of subject arrangement, tried to express originality in the field of story formation, decoration and presentation, which made his subject arrangement bright in integration of unprecedented arrangement.

Descriptive Style:-

Sâralâ Mahâbhârata is a great descriptive epic. Poet Sâralâ Dâsa by way of telling story to the audience has tried to reflect the culture, tradition and ideology of Odisha. So, if we look into the descriptive style of Mahabharata, we will find that, he presented himself as a speaker of a grand subject matter. That is why, the listener or reader never feels exhausted by reading this large and descriptive epic.

If we unfold any page of Sâralâ Mahâbhârata, the style of conversational approach of the poet can easily spell bound the readers. Though Sâralâ Mahâbhârata is a story based epic, it has been composed in conversational manner. Agasti Muni is the speaker in it and Baibasuta Manu is the listener. Subsequently, other speakers and listeners have also taken part in it. That is why, as per the question from listener, the original matter has not been established and on the other hand, new stories have been created. Further, in the pretention of question and answer it has tried to place the incident of past and future. If we consider the matter like this, then discipline is more visible in Sâralâ Mahâbhârata in its descriptive style rather than neutrality, regularity and continuity.

Usage of figures of speech:-

Use of figures of speech is considered as the virtue of aesthetics in epics. Poet Sâralâ Dâsa, in order to make his imagination more clearer, glorious and to glorify the beauty of literature, has used many figures of speech in his Mahabharata. In fact poet Sâralâ Dâsa received all these from both nature and common practical life, by using simile, metaphor, corroboration, hypothetical metaphor, description of nature, hyperbole in mistake of error etc. The poet has tried to present Mahabharata in a simple and lucid manner. So that, his epics has got to be graceful and heart touching. In Sâralâ Mahâbhârata with the use of figures of speech and analysis of supernaturality in mythology, the poet has succeeded in presenting the social and real life of contemporary Odisha.

English rendering:-

1. “As like filth set with body
So like fire was seen shining.” (Adiparva-2/883)
2. “Both the bodies worn out with blood and flesh
Both seen like the tree of twins.” (Madhya Parva-1/684)

3. “The way Uttara was talking before Birata
Hey Lord can the mountain pulverized by throwing of stone.
Can the sea be filled up, by putting sand (Birataparava-638)
4. “The way cloud formed at the dissolution of nature
In that way shower of arrow was started.” (Dronaparva-378)

Expression of emotion

Emotion is the soul of literature, an analysis how much beautiful and lively it is. If it is having no emotion then it cannot attract the listener and reader at all. The poet by the use of emotion of love, heroism, mirth, pathos, anger, terror, disgust, surprise, calmness and affection etc, made his Mahabharata a great creation of classic literature.

Sâralâ Mahâbhârata is a heroic epic. So expression of heroism is considered as a vital approach in this creation. In the Mahabharata, the poet describes different types of war, in which heroism is the main element. The description of war between Bhishma and Parsuram in Adiparva, Wrestling between Bheema and Jarasandha in Sabha parva, Bheema, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadev's war with different kings in Sabhaparva and in Kurushketra war of Pandav, Abheemanyu and Dhristadyumna against Bhishma, Drona, Karna, Salya, Aswathama along with Kauravs, clearly depicts the elements of heroism.

Like heroism, the emotion of love is also reflected in his Mahabharata. Through the description of Parasara and Satyabati, Hidimbika and Bheema, Subhadra, Harabati and Arjuna, Krushna and Sahajasundari, Kunti along with Surya, Dharma and Wind God etc, the poet has tried to reflect the emotion of love. On other hand, in the depiction of emotion of terror and disgust the writings of Sâralâ Dâsa have become very lively. War scenario of Kurushketra in Gada parva is not only fearful and disgusting but also very dreadful. Marriage ceremony of Shiva in Mahabharata is also a source of emotion of mirth. In Golok putra story the way the poet has presented the emotion of mirth, is incomparable.

English rendering:-

When reached midnight
Sleep was heavily weighed over the son of wind.
At the moment Bheema forgot all
He woke up and searched around the sleeping room.
Where did my word go
When searched for, he came across Sahadeba. (Adiparva-453)

Narration skill:-

As Sâralâ Mahâbhârata is a great descriptive epic the poet Sâralâ Dâsa, for the entertainment of the listeners, has tried to explain war, nature, beauty, marriage etc. in a skilful manner, by way of telling the story. That is why, in Sâralâ Mahâbhârata, the skill of narration is simple, lucid and charming at all places.

Since it is a heroic epic, the poet describes the art of war in his composition. The way he illustrates the wrestling, Mace (Gada) fight, Bow fight, Boxing and weapon war, it has established him as a war specialist. We can find the detailed discussion in the third chapter of this epic.

Like war description, the figure description by the poet is also very fascinating. Here the poet very skillfully accepted women characters as imaginary ones. For example, in groom selection ceremony –Swayambara- the description of Droupadi's beauty and in Madhya Parva the description of Chandrabati, Merusula daughter, Surekha the daughter of king Krutasekhar and Usha the daughter of Banasura etc. is mesmerizing. Here the poet has tried to present the beauty of such women flawlessly.

Even in description of figures of man, the poet has presented his proficiency. The description of the male characters of Pandu, Dhritarastra, Duryodhan, Byasa, Vishma, Drona, Karna, Yudhistira, Bheema, Arjuna, Sahadev, Abheemanyu, Laxman Kumar and Ekalavya etc in Mahabharata the poet has described the figures, skis, dress and ornament of such characters and has shown his uniqueness of poetic imagination.

Since the ancient time there has been a close relationship between a poet and nature. In Sâralâ Mahâbhârata nature is not used as an object, rather in many respects it is used as a subject of beauty and charm. In this epic, the rivers, mountains and forests have been described. Along with this, several legends, stories, incidents, God and Goddesses, holy places, society politics, astrology etc. have been beautifully described.

Dialogue and dramatization:-

In the Mahabharata, presentation of witty dialogue and high level of coordination among various characters by the poet has made his creation a great epic. Satyabati, Ambika and Ambalika, Kunti and Gandharee, Laxmi and Parbati, Bheema and Duryodhan, Kartikeswar and Chandradhwaja similarly Radha and Sahajasundari etc. by making conversation and abusing each other made his creation adorned with excellence.

English rendering:-

Radhika said hey bawd your lip
Looks like dejected and kissed.
Dutika said listen friend
Because of you I'm telling many words of flattery.
XXX XXX XXX
Radhika said hey bawd your body
It is wounded like nail scratch.
Bawd said, for a long time she bowed in his feet
He kicked me by telling not to go.
I was falling in face on the prickly tree
My body is wounded by the nail.

(Adiparva-528-29)

Skill in Science and Expertise of Sacred lore:-

Another feature of Sâralâ Mahâbhârata is the exhibition of skillfulness in science and expertise of sacred lore. In every sphere of Mahabharata, the epic poet termed himself as illiterate and ignorant, but only by the blessing of Bagdevi Goddess Sâralâ, he is able to create his great epic but in every part of his Mahâbhârata the great learning, creativity and skill of the poet is clearly reflected. In the *Mahâbhârata* origin of Kuru race, Guru Lokeswar and Patha sage genealogy, display of friendship between Arjuna and Shri Krushna, different path of Yogasan, different types of method of learning, historical incidents and geographical diagram of different countries, different path of astrology, nomenclature of hundred brothers of Duryodhan, narration of psychology of different characters, parva division, description of magical spell which were not present in the Sanskrit *Mahâbhârata* of Vyasa Deva but reflected in the glorious epic of the poet.

Aphorism or Ethical word:-

Sating of Wiseman are called aphorism. The main aim of mythology is to spread aphorism or ethical word to make the society disciplined. The poet Sâralâ Dâsa as a folk teacher based on his experience of life and society uses it in his creation. It manifests significance of life, the influence of great persons, special sign on Wiseman, the impact of truth in the, consequence of friendship of bad person and adverse person, demerits of anger, sign of good man and woman, the importance of truth in life, pathetic consequences of egos and bad consequences of illicit relationship with other wife etc are called ethical word. In the words of the poet-

English rendering:-

1. "If the wife does not tolerate the impulse of husband
Then how will conjugal life be possible between husband and wife"(Adiparva-26)
2. "Immoral wife and intolerant people
If you praise him, then all will be spoiled" (Madhyaparva-2/140)
3. "Those who are jealous and feel proud in this earth
They will be destroyed in the Almanac of Yamaraj" (Swargarohanaparva-66)

Hymn Resource:-

Sâralâ Dâsa's *Mahabharata* is a store house of hymns. These resources are abundant like the free gifts of god. In *Sâralâ Mahâbhârata* another significant aspect was incomparable resource of hymns. As it is assumed that without the blessing of God and Goddesses it would be impossible to create poetic power. In the assumption like great Greek poet Homer, it gave obeisance to Goddesses "Muse" Similarly the poet Sâralâ Dâsa in the beginning of the *Mahabharata* in the last if all parvas and on the basis of various concepts made a beautiful coordination among hymns. The main objective of the poet to place hymns in his epic is to explain the greatness of Gods and Goddesses, to exhibit his own devotion, to

create consciousness among the listeners and readers about the gods and goddesses. That is why the poet in his epics tried to explain the greatness of Sâralâ, Chandi, Durga, Ganesh, ShriKrushna, Balaram, Siva, Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra and Indra etc.

Metre Composition:-

The great feature of *Sâralâ Mahâbhârata* is metrical composition. The entire *Mahabharata* of poet Sâralâ Dâsa has been written in “Dandi Brutta”. Recite any verse and it is in “Dandi Brutta”. Some critics have argued that the poet Sâralâ Dâsa derived it from Sanskrit “Dandak” Bruta or Prakrta “Dandi” Bruta. But the rural people of Odisha use word in conversation or recite song while walking on the road. On this basis, it was assumed that Sâralâ Dâsa might have inherited from it. Hence “Dandi Brutta” was not a metre rather it is a style or trick of Sâralâ Dâsa. In this reference critic Jatindra Mahon Mohanty has said “in a metre (Dandi Brutta) that was remarkably ingenuous and original in its expensiveness and flexibility. In reading Sâralâ, we forget that we are reading the writing of a poet who lived 500 years ago.

His experiences become our experiences, and his joys and sorrows also become ours. That is how Sâralâ is unique.

The main feature of “Dandi Brutta” is that it consisted of two stanzas and inspite of inequality within alphabets there is a pause in the last stanza of alphabet. Despite each stanza consisted of fifteen alphabets another stanza may consist of eighteen alphabets. So metre based discipline cannot influence “Dandi Brutta”.

Poet Sâralâ Dâsa was the fore runner of “Dandi Brutta” the great medium of manifestation of thought in Odia literature. Since he has written *Mahabharata*, *Chandipurana*, *Bilanka Ramayan*, (*Bichitra Ramayan*) and *Laxmi Narayan Bachanika* in Dandi Brutta, the manifestation of thought has become very conducive and independent.

English rendering:-

1. The radiation of Tapati looks like fire
Gods left the place in fear. (Adiparva-14)
2. The husband of Kamalâ is like a figure of illusion
Lotus eyed came to torture me. (Madhyaparva-2/45)
3. The qualities of excess illusion, named Mâyâdhar
I give thousands of regards in the feet of ShriKrushna. (Dronaparva-125)

Language Element and its richness:-

Language is the medium of mood and expression. It has not only made it capable of description to understand but also made the speech of the poet clear, specific and prominent. In the field of classic literature, though the flow of subject matter is significantly meaningful, its language must be matured and strong. From this point of view, the language

of the poet Sâralâ Dâsa is unique and courageous. It is no exaggeration to assert that he was not only the architect of Odia Literature but also founder of Odia Language. Like Homer in Greek literature and Chaucer in English literature, in the field of Odia literature the name of Sâralâ Dâsa is memorable. “Chaucer” had freed English literature from the influence of French language and literature. Exactly, Sâralâ Dâsa gave a new life to Odia language by freeing it from the influence of Sanskrit language and literature.

By 15th Century A.D., Odia language had fully developed and matured. Poet Sâralâ Dâsa had tried to establish it in literary language through the creation of his *Mahâbhârata*. In this context, according to Dr. Bansidhar Mahanty, Sâralâ Dâsa’s language is genuine Odia language. This language was the contemporary rural Odia language. At that time, this language was fully developed and Sâralâ literature had made it prosperous.

From this point of view, through *Sâralâ Mahâbhârata*, we could see the integral and developed state of Odia language. In the field of word application we see Sâralâ Dâsa using three types of word namely - Tatsama, Tadbhaba and Desaja. In Tatsama words like Karatara, Kameni, Kutuhala, Krodha, Gopyana, Tailoka, Drujana, Nirjita, Pratakshya, Mahamuni, Samasya etc. were found. In Tadbhaba words like Aenla, Amabae, Gosamani, Sahada, Malasura, Amiya, Kanaya, Thana, Dhatikare, Munohi, Rahi, Sayala etc were found. In Desaja, words like Antudi, Ardeli, Katala, Janjala, Hade, Palama, Akata, Usata, Janjali, Tahataha, Peta, Bati, Murata, Sanja etc. were found.

In *Sâralâ Mahâbhârata* the description by Boudha Sidhacharya we find the use of certain words of “Charjya Padabali” namely Keruala, Ambhanta, Tumbhanta, Muku, Tuku, Rakhanta, Maranta, Achhante, Chahante, Sarisa, Marani, Dosa, Maiye, Mohio, Raijai, Ramai, Labhai, Lodai, Maranta etc. Similarly, we have found the use of certain ornamental words in *Sâralâ Mahâbhârata*. These are Kshetriya Kula Sandha, Jagajanamohini, Manara hialli, Andhari bije, Chokhai Turangama, Lalita Bhuralataki Kamadeba Dhanu, Kuchha Kumbha, Ulata Kadali jani Tahara Benij Janu, Jale Jesanaka Kridanti Rajahansa Panti, Tarjanti Garjanti Beni Padanti Uthanti etc. Some other words are Muhasa, Doroha, Mayana, Kanaya, Paku, Udanga, Kantayani, Rayani, Duti, Baheni, Amia, Abara, Kanaka, Nrapapati, Meha, Megha, Jasti, Rahi, Radhika, Sayala etc. Genuine Odia words-Anguli, Uchabacha, Tripanda, Tihudi, Barasa, Meda, Guani, Guguchia, Murata, Sankocha, Parimunda etc.

From Grammatical point of view he has systematically used the words. In the second affix he has used “Tuku” AND “Muku” by the application of Tu and Ku. In the fourth affix he created “Tukui” and “Mukui” by the use of Kai. By the imitation of Sanskrit and Prakrta language he has created Pibanti, Sikhanti, Sunasi, Dekhasi, Jaasi, etc. In conjunction Kisa, Jisa, Tisa, Jabatas, Tabata, Kebana etc. have also been used. In the form of pronoun in first person he used Munehi, Mohara, Ambha, Ambhanta etc. In second person he used Tu, Tuhi, Tohe etc. In third person he used Se, Semane. To indicate distance place he used Taha and to indicate near place he used Ae, Ye, Yeha. In numerical indication he used Duhein and Ubhaye. In feminine preposition Adityai. Birajai, Mahatmani, Gridhani, Debati,

Mruguni, Docharuni etc are used. For the composition of metre poet in creation places reduced sound namely Purohita- Prohita, Durakarna- Dukarna, Parabhaba- Prabhaba, Yudhistira- Jujhesti, Ichhakale- Ichhile etc.

If we consider the above points of view thoroughly the description of his *Mahabharata* Sâralâ Dâsa tried to transform the contemporary Odia language into literary form. Since from that time literary Odia language gained the status of clear, prosperous and well developed language. On that foundation in later period poet Panchha Sakha (Balaram Das, Jagannath Das, Achutananda Das, Jasobanta Das and Ananta Das) established the Odia language into reformed and standard language. But *Sâralâ Mahâbhârata* was considered as the source of inspiration for Odia language and literature. ■

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Manipur : A Sketch of Monstrosity

Original Odia: **Soubhagyabanta Maharana**
English rendering - **Dr. Snehaprava Das**

A street of Manipur in Mid-May
Teeming with uniformed policemen,
Over there, on the scorching street
The flaming heat of a woman's nude body
More intense than the blaze of the sun
overhead;
The tricky turns and moves in a nasty game
Played there, and the deliberate dumb look
In the eyes of the leaders,
Are sometimes clear, sometimes obscure;

It is a wonder that Mother Earth
Had not cleaved apart,
It is a wonder that the sobs
that racked the heart
Were held steady in the unshed tears
Under the cruel corners of stupefied eyes;

Has a metaphor of inhuman violence
Of lecherous passion and of helpless anguish
Faded into the bold picture
of a woman's private parts
Portrayed on a canvas of shameless savagery
Spread out between the earth and the sky?
Has it lost itself in a strange alley
of abomination
That hides the sacrilege of a sacred body
ravaged?

One is not sure if this is the last scene
of the last act

In this epic show enacted
on the street of Manipur,
The spectator turns into a creepy figure
of stone
While wondering if it was the beginning
or the end
As he watches in unblinking stony eyes
the brute passion of an axed time
poised between the flames and a female form;

And the simple, timeless tales love
and empathy
Together with the bloodthirstiness
of a humanity gone savage,
Hide in that one mysterious metaphor;

Tears brim in the eyes of Mother India

And the spectators stare in disbelief
At the horrifying show enacted in their front,
They stare at her tears congealing into blood,
At her tortured shame,
And are left disillusioned,
broken to the core;

May be the Glorious Lord above
too has turned
Into a mute spectator of the bizarre show
of disrobement;
Where is the wisdom in failing to fathom
The secret behind the administration's
indifference?
Where lies the wisdom in the act
Of flinging all morals and ideologies
into those brazen flames? ■

A Journey

Naresh Mandal
Bhadrak, Odisha

The sky dreams,
In its dream
A path descends
To touch the earth
Down below
Covering the endless distance
In a swift swirling flow;
The vacuous loneliness' of the space
Listens to the tale of the journey
In resigned silence;
In the fragrance of that fortitude
The tale transmutes
To a poetry of blood and tears
A forlorn song of serene solitude. ■

I am Palestine

Original Odia : **Dr. Manas Behera**
English rendering : **Dr. Chitta Ranjan Bhoi**

Searching identity for more than a century,
Being homeless in my own land and
Shattered by the attack of the imperialists,
Smashed I am, yet not dead
I am Palestine.

Since 1948 till today
Israel has brought me endless misery
But, my painful and bloody journey has
Neither stopped nor do I get tired
I am Palestine.

From Oslo accord to Camp David,
Imperialism has shared lots of dreams
Maps of conspiracy hatched in my body
To demolish me completely
But taking heart again, I am rebelling

I am Palestine.

I am the monarch of my land
But I am defeated in war after war
My territory is now shrinked
Still I am fighting
I am Palestine.

To expel me from my land
I am wrapped up with terrorist shroud,
When unwrapped being stifled
Experience rocket strike and
bombardment
Still I am alive
I am Palestine.

When my children fight for my rights
They term it as radicalism
When Six thousand rockets hit me
in six days
They say, it is not a war crime.
I am obsessed with their new definition
I am Palestine.

I am not Hamas, I am Palestine
I am an open prison in Gaza Strip
America teaches the lesson of self-defence
But I have no rights to self-defence
I am attacked time and again
But I resist
I am Palestine.

My hospitals are hit by rockets
Thousands of innocent kids die
I am not provided with food, water and
medicine
But Biden sends fighter planes to Israel
UN is a fiasco
Indeed, *intifada* (rebellion) is life for me
In the hip of dead bodies
The Israellee eagle has entombed

The dove of peace
But I am searching for peace
I am Palestine.

Look! Oh, the brokers of Imperialism
Procession in my favour worldwide
Tearing the darkness
Comes the light of the new Sun
To put an end to the massacre
I am on my feet today
I am Palestine. ■

A Spring Morning

Original Odia : **Dr. Narayan Panda**
English rendering - **Sapan Kumar Jena**

The pond
Full of water
Is as gravid as
The belly of
A parturient lady,
The lyrical song
Comes to ears
From Bathing Spot.

The marks of
Coloured feet
On the bathing stone,
Lots of gossips-
On Life and Love,
The dew drenched
Dome of lilies,
Someone has
Won over the heart of
The loving
Sister-in-law (Husband's Sister)

The hideous
Playful looks
Through the splashed water

Becomes the discordant
Music of Life ;
The fresh clouds
Move gleefully
In the breast of
The blue sky
In consonance with
The green paddy
In the wind
That blushes
Like a spinster

Time is –
As unmindful
As a spinster
In first love;
The beds of “*Kasatandi*”
On the banks of
The river and pond,
The princess
Of Spring
Rests alone
Under the
Shadowy waves,
The skylark sings
Off and on
In the wilds. ■

A Father Cries Too

Original Odia: **Narayan Chandra Dhal**
English rendering : **Gobinda Sahoo**

Does a father ever cry?
Who says a father cries never??
A father cries too.
That cry is not the normal whimper
of a child
Not of an innocent daughter
Nor wale of a stubborn son
It is not the emotional wailing of a bride
Bursting into tears

at departure after marriage
Nor even the sob
In the mother's veil.

The impassive eyes articulate
That a father is crying
His flaring nostrils
His quivering lips
The unvoiced words choked in his throat
The repeatedly padding towel on his face
The shaky earth under his feet
Repeatedly pronounce that
He is crying.

Sometimes his tears dribble
Mingled with raindrops
At times with drops of sweat ooze
Like a sigh vanishes in the air
Scratching the heart
His lamentation silences
For everyone's happiness
That cry hides its existence
Under the guise of firmness
and profundity
And is forever stifled. ■

Mother

Original Odia : **Prashanta Kumar Tarai**
English rendering: **Dr. Namita Laxmi Jagadeb**

Oh, my dear mother!
Ever since you leave for
your heavenly abode
I am left here alone, high and dry,
disconsolate
With a heavy aching heart and
a pair of eyes never ceasing to shed tears.
In the dead of night, sometimes
You wake me up and I
Sensing your presence around

Stay awake till daybreak.
My sunlit days, without you,
have turned dark nights;
no relief from misery is in sight,
neither a physician nor the fate is any help.
At times, as I gaze at your portrait
hanging on the wall
You step out live with blessings
flowing from invisible hands.

Do you know mother, this world
is deceptive, an exile in illusion?
I emptied my whole vessel laden with
precious stones and doled them
to gain your love,
but, failed to earn even a drop of it
Still my eyes are searching here, there
and everywhere.
Oh, my sweet mother!
I pine for you and your loving care,
Place your cornpassionate haands
On my head; don't take them away
Even for a moment. ■

That was a Wonderful Morning!

Original in Odia - **Baikunthanath Sahu**
English rendering - **Dr. Abanikanta Dash**

Did you see her this wonderful morning?
To whom you had given a promise
but couldn't keep it up.
You couldn't present her
even a memorable memento.
Nor did you build a dream house
though she waited for ages.

You had only carved out a few pictures
in the pages of your mind.

They were all narratives
of triumphs and defeats.
They were nothing but the merchandize
of joy and sorrow, tears and laughter.
Life's epic was filled with
the sense of heaven and hell
The supposed dual life went on hanging,
as if , today, it existed and tomorrow,
it didn't,
between possibility and anxiety.

After so many days,
in this wonderful morning,
somebody has come to this house
while answering to queries innumerable,
she only smiles.
From her smiles fall many flecs
of her fairness.
Someone rightly says: after so many years,
so many ages, somebody may come..
Or may not come.
Don't ask me anything, today. ■

Hues of Folks

K. Revathy
Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Eye gazes and smiles,
warm palm shakes and hugs,
Chitchatting and idle talks,
dishing and tattling,
Tongues that juddered sans verity,
Faces that only flicker on flattery,
Only to chew and ingest stories cooked.
A pure smile from one's heart
For no raison d'être, is the rarest gem!
Stooping to dominion
to be well-thought-out empowered -
In front of the truly self-respected!
In absurd tramping of moments –

is the so-called socializing
By and by greetings turn to grapple.
A pure smile from one's heart
For no raison d'être, is the rarest gem!

Unerringly from the reptilian mind –
When I is more than “you”,
When WE is more than “you all”,
When “*he and she*” is LESS and LESSER,
When “*they*” is the LEAST!
Firm grasps to retain the alleged amity
Spurs in desperation for an impetus and
PITY! Harmony only seems to be
in the hearth of fear!
A pure smile from one's heart
For no raison d'être, is the rarest gem!

Time ticks in the clock,
And days in the calendar,
Weeks and months and years too –
Hypocrites and hypocrisy rise inevitable
In the social dawn and dusk (desk)!
A pure smile from one's heart
For no raison d'être, is the rarest gem!

The radiant glow of self-reliance
Akin to sunshine, perhaps,
Be glimmered by the floating clouds
Only to scatter and disappear.
A pure smile from one's heart
For no raison d'être, is the rarest gem!

Treasured *recherché* are seldom true souls,
Whose silence is always the best
misapprehended!
Priceless and precious is the one
who values the self
Sans false identities, bowing only to
Divinity and the Divine in all!
A pure smile from one's heart
For no raison d'être, is the rarest gem! ■

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