

ROCK PEBBLES

September - 2021

Vol. XXV • No III

A special issue on

Gita Mehta

A Peer-Reviewed Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies

Our Guest - Referees

Prof. Basudeb Chakrabarti (retd), Kalyani University, W. B.

Prof. Bishnu Charan Dash, Assam University, Diphu campus

Prof. Hitesh D. Raviya, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda

Prof. K. Muthuraman, Annamalai University

Prof. Mukta Mahajan, North Maharashtra University

Prof. S. Chelliah, Madurai Kamaraj University

Prof. Kalpana Purohit, J N V University, Jodhpur

Prof. Prasanna Sree, Andhra University

Prof. Rosaline Jamir, N I T, Nagaland

Prof. Pradip Kumar Patra, Bodoland University

Prof. Nigamananda Das, Nagaland University

Prof. Mallikarjun Patil, Karnataka University

Prof. Aparajita Hazra, SKB University, Purulia

Prof. Tanu Gupta, Chandigarh University

Prof. Rebecca Haque, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

Dr. Rajesh V. Basiya, KSKV Kachchh University

Dr. Vandana Rajoriya, Dr HS Gour University, Sagar

Dr. Krushna Chandra Mishra, Rajiv Gandhi University, Itanagar

Dr. Bhagyashree Varma, University of Mumbai

Dr. Prasenjit Panda, Guru Ghasidas University, Bilaspur

Dr. Khem Raj Sharma, The Central University of Himachal Pradesh

Dr. Rosy Chamling, Sikkim University

Dr. Saugata Kumar Nath, Assam University, Silchar

Dr. Keshab Sigdel, Tribhuvan University, Nepal

Dr. S R Moosavinia, Shahid Chamran University, Iran

Prof. Nalini Shyam Kamil, Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith, Varanasi, U.P.

Prof. Rooble Verma, Vikram University, Ujjain, M.P.

ROCK PEBBLES

A Peer-Reviewed Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies

UGC - CARE listed vide Sl. No. 168, Gr. D

September 2021 Vol. XXV No. III

Chief-Editor

Rtn. Udaya N. Majhi, D. Litt

Board of Editors

Dr. R. Sheela Banu, Sri Gobinda Sahoo.
Dr. Chitta R. Bhoi, Dr. Abanikanta Dash
Dr. Shobha Sharma, Dr. Pradeep K. Debata

Managing Editor

Ms. Namita Sutar

Design & Layout

Sri Hemanta Kr. Patra. Jajpur Town
Print-Tech Offset Press, Bhubaneswar

Cover Photo

Gita Mehta (b. 1943)
Indian author

Correspondence Address

H.O : NARANPUR, Post: KODANDAPUR, Via: DEVIDWAR

Dist.: JAJPUR, ODISHA, INDIA, PIN Code-755007

e-mail : rockpebbles2007@rediffmail.com / rockpebbles2010@gmail.com

website : www.rockpebblesindia.com

Cell - 9437009135 / 9437449490, WhatsApp-9861012630 / 7978238911

about the Journal
ROCK PEBBLES
R.N.I. No: 48173/89
ISSN: 0975-0509, E-ISSN: 2230-8954
UGC-CARE No. 168 (Gr-D)
is published monthly.
Editorial office at - Naranpur,
Post: Kodandapur, Via: Devidwar
Dist - JAJPUR, Odisha, India - 755007
e-mail: rockpebbles2007@rediffmail.com
rockpebbles2010@gmail.com
website : www.rockpebblesindia.com

Subscription Fees

Annual - Rs. 1000/-
Lifetime - Rs. 10,000/-, (12 years)
Subscription fees should be deposited through
NEFT or online in the following SB Accounts of
ROCK PEBBLES:-

Canara Bank, Rambagh Branch, A/c No:
1676101011729, IFSC - CNRB0001676.

Bank of India, JAJPUR Town Branch A/c No.
512010110000396, IFSC - BKID0005120.

Indian Bank, Ankula Branch, A/c No:
6008953666, IFSC - IDIB000A080

Indian Overseas Bank, JAJPUR Town, A/c No:
262901000000067, IFSC - IOBA0002629

We also accept Bank Draft in favour of ROCK
PEBBLES payable at State Bank of India,
JAJPUR Town Branch, IFSC - SBIN 0000094.
We donot accept cheques. Foreign subscribers
are requested to remit subscription fees by
International Money order to the Managing
Editor. We receive research papers prepared as
per latest version of MLA guidelines. Deadlines
for submission of papers:- for January, February
& March issue - 1st January to 10th January. For
April, May, June issue - `1st April to 10th April.
For July August, Sept issue - 1st July to 10th
July. For October, November, December issue -
1st October to 10th October. On principle, we
don't publish any writer consecutively. A Literary
Journal has no funds of its own. Hence, all
contributors are requested to subscribe the
Journal for its survival. All rights are reserved
by the publisher. Nothing in this publication may
be reproduced without permission of the
publisher. The pages in Rock Pebbles are
forums for the authors, who write without
editorial interference. The Editors are grateful
for the opportunity to consider unsolicited
research papers. ■

Editor speaks.....

One of the lines of Percy Bysshe Shelley's poem "To a Skylark" reads "Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest though". This is also true for all genres of literature. In recent years litterateurs have been focusing more on the pangs and sufferings of people of different backgrounds rather than other emotions. Consequently numerous movements have come up resulting in new genres such as colonial, feminist, subaltern literature.

Sharankumar Limbale, a Marathi novelist, poet, critic and short story writer, was conferred with the prestigious Saraswati Samman, the highest recognition in the field of Indian literature, for the year 2020 for his 2018 Marathi novel *Sanatan*, which is an important social and historical document of the Dalit struggle.

Abdulrazak Gurnah 73-year-old Zanzibar-born writer has been awarded The Nobel Prize in Literature 2021 for his writings on the effects of colonialism and the fate of refugees. Almost all his works deal with the sufferings of the refugees. And he becomes the first Tanzanian and the fifth African to win the prestigious award. In 1994 his illustrious novel *Paradise* was shortlisted for the Booker prize."Gurnah consciously breaks with convention, upending the colonial perspective to highlight that of the indigenous populations. Thus, his novel *Desertion* (2005) about a love affair becomes a blunt contradiction to what he has called "the imperial romance," the Nobel Prize observed.

The present number is a special issue on Gita Mehta's literary contribution, containing eight selected articles out of numerous scholarly papers, presented during two national webinars on her fictional world held on 20th September and 25th October 2020.

Rock Pebbles family greets these creative writers and wishes all its contributors, readers and well-wishers a happy Dusshera.

-Chief Editor

CONTENTS

	Page
Editorial	ii
A Pragmatic Analysis of Deixis in Gita Mehta's <i>Karma Cola</i>	
Sumana Bandyopadhyay	05
The Song of the River Narmada: Music in Gita Mehta's <i>A River Sutra</i>	
Clement S. Lourdes	11
<i>A River Sutra</i> : The Diverse Experiences across India	
M. S. Wankhede	17
Revisioning Intellectualism, Power and Passion to reconstruct Life in D.H. Lawrence's <i>Women in Love</i>	
Mekala Rajan	23
The Fragmented Selves in Tony Morrison's <i>The Bluest Eye</i> , Arundhati Roy's <i>The God of Small Things</i> and Khaled Hosseini's <i>A Thousand Splendid Suns</i>	
Silima Nanda	31
The Footsteps of Invisible Things : Discovering Mystery Element in Sri Aurobindo's <i>Savitri</i>	
Ritam Upadhyay & Usha Jain	38
Miscegenated Totems and Misunderstood Talismans: Occidentomania in Gita Mehta's <i>Karma Cola: Marketing the Mystic East</i>	
Subhadeep Paul	45
Role of 'Mask' in Literature and in Daily Life	
Radhashyam Dey	51
Cathartic Effect in <i>A River Sutra</i> : An Inward Journey	
T. Imsunaro Ao & Rosaline Jamir	57
Eternity Freaks and the Bogus Gurus : A Study of Gita Mehta's <i>Karma Cola</i>	
RüületoVakha & Rosaline Jamir	63
Humo - A Cultural Glimpse of Western Odisha	
Rajendra Bhue	69
"Indianness" in Gita Mehta's <i>Snakes and Ladders</i> : from Being to Becoming	
Rosy Chamling	76
Gita Mehta's <i>River Sutra</i> - A Tale of Interconnectedness between Love and Renunciation	
Biswajit Mukherjee & Swati Nayek	84
Women in Vera's World: A Journey of Complexities	
Jaya Chetnani & Rouble Varma	92
Negotiating Tribal Culture: The Traditional Hunting Practices among the Lotha Nagas Libemo Kithan	99

Literary Reviewing of J.M. Coetzee's –Inner Workings (Literary Essays 2000-2005)	
P.C. Kambodia	113
Impact of Gender on Language Use	
Bindunath Jha	124
Feminist Thoughts in <i>Inside the Haveli</i>	
Shahaji Rajaram Karande	131
Influence of Eco-feminism on Indian Mythology with reference to Volga's <i>The Liberation of Sita : A Study</i>	
Papari Kakati	135
Narrative Technique in John le Carré's <i>The Constant Gardener</i>	
Ashima Pandey	143
Dalits Identity in the Social Order and Creative Writing	
Piyush Bala	150
Assertion through Annihilation: A Critical Reading of Simone de Beauvoir's <i>She Came to Stay</i>	
Ameer Ahmad Khan	157
From Traditional to Modern: An Analysis of Women in Mamta Kapur's Novels	
Gargee Chakraborty	165
Revisiting Bhima Bhoi and Gopabandhu	
Chittaranjan Bhoi	171
Sustainable Development through Education	
Simanchala Pradhan	176
The New Waves of Feminism and Doris Lessing as its Exponent	
Krishna Nand Yadav	186
Intertextuality and History-Fiction Interface in Richard Flanagan's <i>The Narrow Road to the Deep North</i>	
Darshana Goswami	190
Mulk Raj Anand's <i>Two Leaves and a Bud</i> and Rasna Barua's <i>Seuji Pator Kahini(The Partings) : A Postcolonial Critique</i>	
Anuradha Chaudhuri	197
Women in Tagore's Literature	
Shreyasi Chaki	206
Frontier Literature and Mark Twain	
Devarinti Sudhakar	112
Subscription Form	218
Long - Term Subscribers	30

A Pragmatic Analysis of Deixis in Gita Mehta's *Karma Cola*

Sumana Bandyopadhyay

The article is a deictic study of the conversations of twenty five spiritual figures from the novel *Karma Cola*. The real spiritual figures portrayed in the narrative are distinctly addressed as “the guru” eighteen times, and as sadhus, swami, and bhagwan are mostly unnamed. They are identified from the interpersonal contexts and references. Two of them are female (the Matriarch and Ma), and the rest are males. Deixis is verbal pointing or pointing by means of language. The linguistic forms of this pointing from the novel are realized in deictic expressions, deictic markers or deictic words. The study is based on these expressions, markers and words in the social contexts involving exchanges of utterances between the spiritual figures and their followers. The deictic expressions make the narrative cohesive, coherent and acceptable to the reader with the illusion of participating in the fictional events, places and times. The descriptive qualitative approach is adopted for the study.

Introduction

The style and narrative technique in *Karma Cola* is the use of terse language, quick sentences and interesting coinages. The role of the language is to express emotions and knowledge of nomadic life seekers, and the spiritual figures. Describing the traditions of an ancient and long lived society the language frequently refers to the speaker, the place and the time. This quality of language is identified using the theory of deixis in discourse analysis. The communications developed by the language with these makers have assisted the feel of non-verbal face-to-face communication. Built largely on conversations the context interprets the utterances. The connection between the discourse and the situations in which discourse is used is represented in *Karma Cola* in deictic terms. These are person deixis, space deixis, time deixis, social deixis, discourse deixis, gestural and symbolic deixis.

1. Person Deixis primarily engages the person or the first person, the addressee or the second person and other major participants in the speech act or the third person. In the narration, this is realized in speaker, addressee and referent as well as in the individual and multiple roles of the speakers. Let us take an example.

“The guru informs them [his followers], through the medium of a simultaneous translator, that God exists ...” (p. 97), *“Your watch is not accurate. Take it off and give it to me.” The devotee was staggered. “How did you do that? he asked the guru. “You really want to know?” said his Master. “ Yes, yes, Swami, I do.” exclaimed the boy. “Look at the inscriptions on the back,” counseled the Master. (p.7).*

In the first excerpt the speaker reaches the followers (audience) through a translator. The translator’s role is to send the message of the guru to his followers. The guru’s role is to reach the message of God to the people. In the second excerpt, the speaker or the guru is asking the addressee or the devotee to give him his watch at the time of utterance. Time was accurate but the watch was not. The speaker’s target was to impress the devotee.

Person deixis is an independent pragmatic framework where the speaker is distinct from the source of the utterance; the recipient is distinct from the target, the hearers are distinct from targets and addresses. In the following excerpt, the speaker or the guru is reading aloud a letter addressed to him. So he is distinct from the source. The source and the speaker are pertinent. The letter-writer or the recipient may or may not be present when the letter was being read and discussed, and is thus the recipient is distinct from the target. Being in a discussion, the audience or the hearers are distinct from the target.

*“This letter,” said God, “asks why **I** tell jokes at my discourse.” There was a rustle of anticipation. “Also, it asks, ‘Why do **you** never laugh at your own jokes?’ “ The guru smiled. The cue was taken. Laughter from the gathering. Then silence for the cosmic information. “Well, as to the first part of the question, I tell jokes because laughter is a great form of meditation. People have asked me why didn’t Christ tell jokes? Why didn’t Buddha laugh? But **they** did. These great incarnations knew all there is to know about laughter. They knew that life and death, it is all a big joke. So **I** tell you, go about laughing. Laugh all the time.” God swiveled in his chair. “As for why don’t **I** laugh at my own jokes, well ...,” and there was a meaningful pause. “**I**’ve heard them before.” (p.32)*

2. Space Deixis concerns with the specification of location or the space at the time of the speech act. This is marked in form of locative verbs and demonstratives. There are proximal spatial deixis and distal spatial deixis. Proximal spatial deixis is close to the speaker and distal spatial deixis can be close to the addressee. Space deixis is distal from the speakers location in coding time (C T) and proximal to the addressee location of receiving time (R T). In the excerpt there is proximal spatial deixis, close to the guru, who has uttered the following. In the other excerpt there is distal spatial deixis which is close to the addressee. This spatial deixis is non-verbal.

“Want Holy Hash?” the guru enquired conversationally. The elderly diplomat shrank back in his chair. From nowhere the guru produced a fistful of ash. He thrust this at the old man. “Here. Eat. Twice a day. you will feel well.” (p. 44) , “... populous gathering, who sit cross-legged and patient through the discourses on meditation and long for the Swami’s shakti – the direct transmission of cosmic energy from guru to devotee.” (p. 12)

According to Levison, reference time in space deixis is ‘movement towards the location of the speaker at the time of some other specified event’. This can be either at CT or during RT. As in the following example, reference time is during CT. *“Go toward your anger. After all, if a man is obsessed with violence, how will he have time for more important things?” (p. 34)*

3. Temporal Deixis functions to trace points or intervals on time axis using the moment of utterance as a reference point. The three major distinctions of deictic information are a) Past or before the time of speech, b) Present or the moment of actual speech, c) Future or after the time of speech act. Time deixis, concerns the encoding of the messages and spans up to the point the message was inscribed. This is referred as Coding time or CT and as receiving time or RT by Fillmore. The narrative represents both oral and textual CTs. Textual CT as in *“one guru wrote a long piece in an Indian magazine explaining his views on the Apocalypse...” (p.97)*. Temporal deixis makes ultimate references to the participant roles. According to Lyons, when the CT and RT occur at the same time, it is deictic simultaneity. The receiving time is identical with coding time. All the following excerpts on temporal deixis are examples of deictic simultaneity for the speaker and the hearer but it is the reverse for the writer and the reader.

i) Past or before the Coding Time- *“The Master has supernatural powers. I’ve seen him do literally hundreds of miracles. He’s always materializing things for people. Rings, watches, holy ash. You name it ...” (p. 43).*

ii) Present or the moment of Coding Time- *“As our eyes became accustomed to the gloom, we were able to see the guru more clearly. But he wasn’t looking at us. He had his hands folded serenely over his belly and was rolling his eyeballs.” (p. 50).* *“A guru who has an ashram in Western India with a large number of foreign followers, confided to a correspondent from Times magazine, “My followers have no time. So I give them instant salvation. I turn them into neo-sanyasis.” (p.96),*

iii) Future or after the Coding Time - *““But Swami,” ended the Countess, “my mantra is not working anymore.” “Oh dear,” said the Maharishi, and continued to smile. “Then we must give you another. Use the new mantra for four days, then let him know,””(p. 99)*

4. Social Deixis is the encoding of the social distinctions that are relative to the participant-roles. According to Fillmore, 1975, it is that aspect of sentences which reflect or are established or determined by the realities of the social situation in which the speech act occurs. Relational social deictic information is found in the female spiritual figures.

The following excerpt is an example of relational variety of the character “Ma”. The speaker has different social relationships from the same location. The relations that get expressed are speaker and by-stander (wave-back), speaker and addressee (spoke in the telephone) and speaker and setting.

“Sometimes Ma would remember to wave back. Waist deep in devotion Ma spoke into the telephone, juggling the ashram’s large fortune and dicey reputation, taking the role of the humble, uneducated Hindu woman with one caller; the arrogant spiritual leader with another; and the flirtatious woman of the world with a third.” (p. 139)

The narration does not represent honorific social deixis even though there are numerous characters in a variety of context. However there are ample examples of distinctions on authorized speakers and authorized recipients in the narration. *‘Religion is not for the poor.’* (p.62)

5. Discourse Deixis is encoding of the reference to portions of the discourse which contains the speech utterance. The deictic system in the face-to-face communications of the spiritual figures and their followers are realized in different types of contents. These are from astrodome, indoor football stadium, helicopter, ashram, a quarter of a mile up the road, in front of the marble slab, on the bank of the river Ganges at Banaras, in a remote village, in an expensive hotel, under a tree in a jungle, are the deictic centers for the speakers. Levison, 1983, states five parameters of deictic centers. These parameters from the excerpts are a) the central person or the guru, b) the central time, when the guru is addressing the audience, c) the central place, location of CT, d) the discourse centre, the point of the utterance at which the speaker is and e) the social status of the speaker, which is relative to the status of the addressers. Examples of deictic centers from the novel are:

“...Guru Maharaj Ji, ... once hired Houston Astrodome ... to spread his teachings.” (p.97), *“Yet another guru bolsters the faith of his followers in an indoor football stadium in Delhi by promising proof of the existence of God.”* (p. 97), *“The guru’s following over the last few years has become so extensive that he now has to give benediction from a helicopter.”* (p. 98)

The narrative also talks of shifts in deictic centers, from the spiritual figures to other participants of the events. This is deictic projection according to Lyons, and Shift in points of view, according to Fillmore. This is beyond the scope of this study. Two other examples of discourse deixis are ‘that’ and ‘this’. Both are anaphoric references of the domains already established in the discourse. The first speaker the matriarch of the ashram – an enthusiastic middle-aged Indian woman talking on the bad effects of anger and the second speaker is a sadhu from Banaras talking on ‘insouciant sex control’.

a) *“My child, you are an Indian. It is nothing new to us that a man must rid himself of his anger if he is to understand the truth. We know how anger blinds a man. **That** is fruitless energy.”* (p. 34), b) *“Learn **this** from India if you learn nothing else, my son. The flesh is*

the only battlefield. Wars are won by the soul. The mature man seeks to understand his nature until he understands Nature.” (p.54)

6. Gestural and Symbolic Deixis accounts the context when the addresser can see the addressee. These are deictic terms supported by the gesture of the speaker in a speech act. There is a physical monitoring of the speech event. Gestural deixis is interpreted with reference to audio-visual-tactile. Most of the conversations between the spiritual figures and the addressers conclude with gestural deixis. In the narrative, this comes from the writer while concluding on the information of the contexts. For example, “*The guru’s powers were sometimes limited to controlling the bodies of others, but not his own*”. (p. 51), “*the guru teaches these perceptions without understanding what they mean to his international disciples.*” (p. 152).

Symbolic deixis includes basic knowledge of the spatial-temporal parameters of speech events. Symbolic deixis do not take into account immediate and minute monitoring of speech act. The relevant parameters for deictic interpretation are established over a longer period of conversation/ discourse. The following two excerpts are examples of Symbolic deixis.

“The cameraman had focused mostly on the Swami’s knees and bedside table. But he managed a medium shot of the Swami sharing a couch with the smiling Bhagwan Rajneesh, king of the Tantra teachers. Both gurus were renowned for their cosmic vibrations. When the image of the teachers appeared, people shuddered with pleasure and stretched out their hands, straining to pull the energy off the screen and into themselves.” (p. 14)

“... the world’s self-destructive tendencies had been contained by the good vibrations emanating from him and his followers...” (p. 99)

With reference to the speaker’s position in the discourse, there are other instances of symbolic deixis. They are; possessing miraculous healing powers, materializing things for people, remarkable for enlightenment, enjoys the reputation of being the thinking man’s guru, has certain latitude for interpretation, possessor of strong shakti etc. Deixis in all the above types were powerful linguistic devices in the narration, engaging the emotions of the addressee, the by-stander and the reader. For the reader they give the illusion of being present in the context of the events.

Conclusion

The use of deictic expression in the text narrative of Karma Cola was analyzed from the view point of a detached outside observer, not belonging to the contextneither conceptualizing the participation in events in particular. The facts and data from the corpus knowledge that were discussed on the speaker and independent on the receiver were taken for analysis. With the objective of deictic analysis it can be concluded that deictic words and expression are dependent on the spiritual gurus in the narrative. ■

Works Cited

- Bandyopadhyay, S. ed. 2012. "Pragmatics". *Post Graduate English Language Teaching Study Material*. Kolkata: Netaji Subhas Open University.
- Briere, J. F. 1997. "Cultural Understanding through Cross-Cultural Analysis". *Pathways to Culture*. Ed.
- Paula R. Heusinkveld. USA: Intercultural Press. 561-568.
- Fillmore 1975. *Santa Cruz Lectures on Deixis, 1971*. Bloomington: Indiana University Linguistics Club.
- Gjergji, Sh. 2015. "A Pragmatic analysis of the use of types of deixis in poetry and novels of the author Ismail Kadare". *Academicus – International Scientific Journal* 12, 134-146.
- Levison, S. 1983. *Pragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lyons. 2002. *Linguistic Semantics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lyons. 1977. *Semantics*. Volume 2. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mehta, Gita. 2015. *Karma Cola*. Marketing the Mystic East. New Delhi: Penguin Books.
- Swan, Michael. 2016. "Discourse Markers in Speech". *Practical English Usage*. Fourth Edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Yule, George. 1997. *The Study of Language*. Second Edn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
-

Sumana Bandyopadhyay, Assistant Professor of English, *Netaji Subhas Open University*, Kolkata, West Bengal.

The Song of the River Narmada: Music in Gita Mehta's *A River Sutra*

Clement S. Lourdes

If music be the food of love, play on;
Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting,
The appetite may sicken, and so die.
That strain again! it had a dying fall:
O! it came o'er my ear like the sweet sound
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour.

(Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, 1.1.1-7)

Interdisciplinary research in literature and music has yielded fruitful results, especially in the recent years, attracting a significant number of scholars and students to this field of interest. Music and Poetry have been considered as Sister Arts and the methodologies for 'Musicology' can be extended to Fiction as well, if music plays an important role in it. Gita Mehta's *A River Sutra* is worthy of study in this aspect since it deals with text-music relationship while exploring the fragile longings of the human heart and the sacred power of the river.

Key Words: - Gita Mehta, *A River Sutra*, text-music relationship, River Narmada, Literature and Music, Musicology, instrumentalist, words and music.

Music has interested many famous authors to use it as a theme in their novels. *High Fidelity* by Nick Hornby, *Jazz* by Toni Morrison, *Coming through the Slaughter* by Michael Ondaatje, *Love in Vain: A Vision of Robert* by Alan Greenberg, *The Great Gatsby* by Scott Fitzgerald are a few novels which feature music either as subject matter or as background.

There are, of course, also longer fictional works with major musical elements. Five of many novels that come to our mind are Willa Cather's *The Song of the Lark*, Colette's *The Vagabond*, Nick Hornby's *High Fidelity*, Tom Perrotta's *The Wishbones* and Jonathan Franzen's *Freedom*. In Indian English Fiction, Music has a prominent place in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*. Rushdie's *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* and Vikram Seth's *An Equal Music*. As Beth Morrison observes:

“Music, art, and poetry/literature are often on similar paths in addressing a common impulse, though the timing might differ somewhat. These questions get at what people care about on an emotional level—but don’t know how to articulate. That is the role of the artist. Although I used Impressionism as an example, I could have used Realism or another movement. The arts influence each other and challenge each other to dig deeper. A visual artist listening to Debussy would surely conceive ideas, as might a painter reading Henry James” (Morrison).

In Indian Literature there is no scarcity of music. Starting from the ancient Tamil Literature *Tholkappiyam*, there are frequent references to music and *panns*. It mentions the various music pertaining to the five landscapes of the *Sangam* Literature. In *Sangam* Literature *Mathuraikkanci* refers to the singing *sevvazhipann* to invoke God during the time of childbirth of women.

In *A River Sutra* Gita Mehta’s interest in music is clearly seen in “The Teacher’s Story”, where the music teacher is getting lured by the blind boy’s song.

“I prostrate my head to the blade of Your sword
O, the wonder of my submission
O, the wonder of Your protection” (40)

The Music teacher is mesmerized by the divinely voice of the child and the narrator is quick to point out that “It was a sound Master Mohan had only heard in his dreams” (40). The teacher, after listening to the boy must have thought of teaching the nuances of music to him since he has found a gem, if properly polished, would get transformed into a precious stone. But if we listen to the song after reading the story, we would know that the boy’s death is getting foreshadowed in the very first song itself. “I prostrate my head to the blade of Your sword” foretells the would-be murder of the boy in the hands of the Great sahib. The boy at once becomes a prophet to predict his future and also a martyr to die for music.

It is the same musical voice of the boy that attracts the great sahib to fulfil his demonic purpose. Unable to free the boy from the clutches of his guardian, the great sahib bribes the music teacher’s wife who has already been fed up with the boy. Mohan accompanies the boy, rather reluctantly, to the palace of the rich man. The Sahib commands the boy to sing and beautiful songs breathe out from his mouth one by one. Mohan feels “himself being lifted into another dimension” (56), the state of a trance. He understands why the singers should not stop singing when someone is moved to dance by music because the sudden breakage of the dancer’s trance would instantly kill him.

The great sahib moves towards the boy and the instrumentalists are happy that the boy will be showered with gifts. The shadow of the sahib covers the boy as the rich man exclaims, “Such a voice is not human. What will happen to music if this is the standard by which God judges us?”(58). The cruel man cuts the throat of the boy out of sheer jealousy. The music teacher kills himself as he thinks that he is responsible for the death of the boy.

In the Executive's Story, the bureaucrat is bewitched by Rima, a plantation worker who has been blessed with an extraordinary voice to lure him. The Executive is so very much bewitched by the sweet voice of the girl that it keeps on ringing in his ears; Bring me my oil and my collyrium Sister, bring my mirror and the vermilion (83).

At last the woman uses the same song to possess him. She sings the same song outside his gates and the man follows her like a pet animal. He is bewitched by her charms and falls to the muddy ground. The woman exclaims: "You will never leave me now, no matter how far you go" (87). From that time onwards, he becomes a victim of schizophrenia, calls himself Rima and starts singing her songs.

This unidentified disease can be cured by the waters of Narmada: "Only that river has been given the power to cure him" (89). The goddess idol in front of the river has to be immersed into the water by the possessed one. Nitin Bose is taken to the spot where he stands like a bewildered ghost for some time. Then he takes the idol and immerses it in the river chanting all the time the unforgettable song in praise of Narmada: "Salutations in the morning and at night to thee, O Narmada, Defend me from the serpent's poison" (94).

Ultimately the man is cured and revives his lost mind. He even goes to the extent of writing an essay about the tribal practices for *Asia Review*. It is very interesting that the narrator ends the story by saying that though Nitin has gone out the Forest Bungalow, he leaves his legacy with the village children who continues to sing his song: "Bring my oil and my collyrium Sister, bring my mirror and the vermilion" (96).

The beauty of the river lies in the music. 'The Courtesan's Story' is a fine example in the novel. Raghul Singh, the notorious dacoit wins the heart of the courtesan after kidnapping her to his caves. The girl is wooed by several gifts by Raghul. But the precious gift he gives to her is a pair of anklet. The born dancer wears them and starts dancing. It is the unmistakable music of the anklet that unites the two hearts. When they get married they visit all the interesting places in the forest. The notable among them is their search of an unknown warrior sleeping somewhere in the jungle, with honey bees circling round his head. Anyone stung by these bees will attain immortality and Raghul tells his wife that he has attained immortality because he was once stung by these bees. His wife could only pray that she should be also be stung by the bees so that they can live in the jungle forever.

What one should note in this episode is the picture of the honey bees circling round the head of the warrior. The novelist listens to the music of nature and describes it beautifully whenever she gets an opportunity to do so. When the bees are mentioned, we are reminded of the gentle sound of bees buzzing among the flowers in the garden. It is one of the favorite sounds of any Nature lover. Every scene is set with a background music and it adds value to it.

In "The Musician's Story", the novelist exhausts all her knowledge in music through the way of narration. And it delights the readers as much as music delights them. The musical prose of Mehta adds vibration to the tale. As Rene Wellek observes, "I feel light-hearted and gay in hearing a minuet of Mozart, seeing a landscape by Watteau, and reading

an Anacreontic poem” (Welleck , 127).The Musician’s daughter at the outset tells the narrator how his father taught her the rare music of Nature which one hear only when one’s ears are attuned with it.She says:

“As a child I thought I could see things in the room shaking with the vibration although when I looked at them nothing moved. But sometimes I could hear the merest note from a string on his veena, a sound so fragile it disappeared into the air before I could hold it in my memory”(126).

The bureaucrat is told about the three distinct sounds in the word *Om*. The first sound of *Om* is the manifest world, the second sound of *Om* is the unmanifest world and the third sound of *Om* is the nonmanifest world. The Musician’s daughter has tremendous knowledge in music because her father did not teach her music in the usual way. The rare musician takes his daughter outside the house and asks her to listen to the music of nature:

“Listen to the bird singing. Do you hear the half notes and microtones pouring from their throats? If I practiced for ten lifetimes I could not reproduce that careless waterfall of sound and shh... listen closely” (131).

The gifted musician finds *Sa* in peacock’s cry, *Re* in calf’s calling, *Ga* in the bleating of goats, *Ma* in the cry of heron, *Pa* in the song of the nightingale, *Dha*, in the neighing of the horse, *Ni* in the elephant’s trumpet . The young learns from her guru that “each of the ragas was given six wives, six *raginisto* teach them love. Their children are the *putras*, and in this way music lives and multiplies” (133). The musician also makes his daughter understand how closely the ragas are linked with painting. He takes his daughter to the street where painters do their coloring. According to the musician each color represented a raga:

Sa is black, *re* –tawny, *ga*, gold, *ma*, white, *pa*, yellow, *dha*, indigo, *ni*, green.

Though the young girl is unable to comprehend the difficult lessons in music from her father, she understands the greatness of music. The musician, on his part, sees that music sinks into her psyche:

“After all, what is a raga? Five notes, seven. If you add some halftones, maybe twelve. It is only a skeleton of melody. And the veena is only two gourds attached by a piece of wood and a handful of wires. But when they are united, and you create a composition from their union, it must speak the language of the soul. You see, a raga has its own soul. Without its soul, its *rasa*, a raga is only a dead thing” (134).

The Musicians starts teaching his daughter the various nuances of music and makes her to play veena for hours together till blood trickles out of her deft hands. But she still fails to satisfy the music teacher, her father. His passion for music comes alive when he says,” A goddess presides over each of the ragas. If you truly meditate on a raga’s sacred teaching, its goddess will give you mastery over its melodies” (136).

The teaching continues with a condition. She must be prepared to live as a bride.

She is not a good looking person either. This has always been a grit concern to the musician. But now the issue is settled for good because the daughter promises her father that she would remain a spinster throughout her life. In a way she has been wedded to music.

A handsome boy comes to the house of the Musician desiring to be taught by him. The girl, after seeing the boy, feels as if “ten thousand honeybees had stung my heart at once” (140). The teacher is reluctant in tutoring the boy but he is very adamant. At last the teacher agrees to teach him but with one condition. The young student should agree to get married to his daughter. He agrees without seeing the girl. But the marriage does not take place since the boy goes to his native place and gets another engagement with a girl.

The musician’s daughter quickly learns that she is “the bride of music, not of a musician” (145).

The most interesting all the stories in the novel is “The Minstrel’s Story”. The suspense the novelist builds in the beginning of the story is retained till the end when it finally gets exploded through a line when the River Minstrel greets Professor Shankar. As in the previous stories, the novelist emphasis on music but with a difference, where a mysterious woman takes the role of the River Minstrel.

In the beginning of the story we find one Naga Babateaching a small girl, the songs of Sankaracharya in praise of Narmada at the entrance of a cave.

Messenger of Passing Time,
Sanctuary and Salvation,
You dissolve the fear of time.
O holy Narmada (149).

The young one who learns from her Guru is the adopted child of the Holy man. In the second part of the story one Professor Shankar comes with his research scholars to study Narmada. He was the former Head of the Department of Archeology but fed up with red tapism, he has resigned from the job. He is not a blind worshipper of Narmada as someone puts it, but he says, “I love this river. But worship is too strong a word” (170).

Professor Shankar wants a river Minstrel to know more about River Narmada. When the bureaucrat asks him if he wants to enjoy the songs of the river Minstrel, he dismisses he query and says: “Minstrels sing about gods and goddess. I am a man, and only understand songs about other men” (174).

The next morning a beautiful minstrel arrives at the Rest House and wants to see the Bureaucrat. She has a cymbals tied to her right hand. Even without introducing herself to the Bureaucrat, she starts singing:

The sages have said
Whoever praises you
At dawn, at dusk, at night

May in this human form
Acquired through the suffering of
So many rebirths
Approach with honor
The feet of Shiva Himself' (175).

She continues the sing one song after the other and the spectators are bewitched by it. With the accompaniment of the musical instrument, the songs become divinely.

Leaping antelopes
Chart your course.
Birds throng the sacred trees
Shading your village squares
Rose apples darken your water
Wild mangoes fall into your coiling current
Like flowers in a maiden's hair" (179).

As the songs gain their intensity, the young minstrel goes into a trance. When the Professor comes to see her, she is swaying with the instrument without recognizing anyone. At last she looks at the Professor and reaches him with folded hands, ignoring the presence of the bureaucrat who offers her money. Now a very strange thing happens. The River Minstrel touches the feet of Professor Shankar and raising her from the ground, he asks" Are you well, Uma? (Uma is actually the name given by Naga Baba to his adopted child). The minstrel answers, Yes, Naga Baba"!!(181).

The spectators and readers get their shock of their lives. Can the learned Professor be a Naga Baba after all? Professor Shankar clears his doubt by saying, "Don't you know the soul must travel through eighty four thousand births in order to become a man?"(182).

Thus the father and daughter are united at last, not as ordinary humans, but a reborn archeologist and transformed musician.

From Roland Barthes' theory of literary counterpart to Mikhail Bakhtin's analysis of philosophy in Dostoevsky's novels, the concept of musicality in literature has been a major subject for literary critics and theorists. And *A River Sutra* adds to it by paying handsome tribute to the musical world of literature. ■

Works Cited

Metha, Gita. *A River Sutra*, Gurgaon: Penguin Books, 2018. (All the page references to the text are from this edition).

Morrison, Beth, <http://www.bethmorrisonprojects.org>.

Welleck, Rene and Austin Warren, *Theory of Literature*, USA, Penguin Books, 1986.

Dr. Clement Lourdes, Prof. of English, Pondicherry University, Puducherry

A River Sutra: The Diverse Experiences across India

M. S. Wankhede

This paper has its focus on Gita Mehta's *A River Sutra*, a collection of stories published in 1993. Gita, born in a well-known Odia family, the daughter of late Biju Patnaik, an Indian independence activist and the Chief Minister in post-independence Odisha, earlier known as Orissa. Her younger brother, Naveen Patnaik, is crown as the Chief Minister of Odisha for the 5th time. Although Gita's name was there in the list for the award of the Padma Shri in 2019, she declined it for political reasons. In this book 16 chapters are there, out of them six chapters are: The Monk's Story, The Teacher's Story, The Executive's Story, The Courtesan's Story, The Musician's Story and The Minstrel's Story; the 16th chapter is entitled as The Song of the Narmada. All these stories are interrelated by geographical reference of the Narmada River and the Narmada River Valley. Her exclusive focus is on Indian culture and history as well as the Western observation of it; all her works reflect the insight she acquired through her journalistic and political background. This book got the greatest attention of all of Mehta's work, including *Karma Cola* (1979) and *Snakes and Ladders* (1979). The focus of this research paper is on Mehta's diverse experiences across India.

Key Words: Sutra, Narmada, holiness, spirituality, tribal,

A River Sutra, a collection of stories, is regarded as a novel published in 1993 by Random House of Toronto, Canada. All the stories in this book are integrated by the geographical reference: the Narmada River and the Narmada River Valley and in it there is the theme of diversity within Indian society. In the present book, *A River Sutra*, the aspects of Indian characters have been vigorously narrated. "I love this river. But worship is too strong a word" (1993:170). While going through all the stories in the book, it is considered an accurate representation of Indian Culture.

*"Bring your knowledge of mankind
And follow me.
I will lead you to the next Creation'" (1993:180).*

This book covers the culture of India, through its portrayal of music, religion, and major landmarks in the country. The whole story of *A River Sutra* covers the mid-to-late 20th century India as its focus is on the Narmada River in central India. The themes in this book are of love, the Narmada River, yearning, human heart, lust, and religion. Thus, *A River Sutra* presents the diverse familiarities across India itself. “I’m afraid I only care for the river’s immortality, not its holiness,” he said dryly (1993:170). The story is narrated with the perspective of a retired bureaucrat. The bureaucrat interacts with a number of travelers and inhabitants of the area as he intends to pass on these stories to the readers through a series of episodes.

A “sutra” is a “string” of motto on behavior and philosophy in the concern of Indian culture. The book, *A River Sutra*, presents detached stories about a variety of people through the Indian concept of a “sutra”. Literally, “sutra” is a thread, which can be allegorically considered creative writing. “After all, the Narmada is the holier river in India, as our host would be the first to tell us” (1993:170). The themes presented in the book are simply fictional. The thread links all the six tales through the idea of love, the holy site of the Narmada River, which is a place of worship and how the communities are interconnected. The author, Gita Mehta’s narrator in the book is a civil servant. The civil servant intends to meditate beside the sacred river.

*“O copper-colored water
Below a copper-colored sky
From Shiva’s penance you became water.
From water you became a woman
So beautifully that gods and ascetics
Their loins with desire
Abandoned their contemplations
To pursue you” (1993:176-77).*

The civil servant also expands the notion of the sutra’s sensible and condensed sayings into a series of linked moral tales. He comes into the contact of the bureaucrat from pilgrims who search the enlightenment, forgiveness or justification.

*“The sages meditating on your riverbanks say
You are twice-born,
Once from penance,
Once from love” (1993:178).*

Penance and love have been narrated. The story of a music teacher is narrated there. He has murdered the thing he loves, a girl pursued by kidnappers, and a city genre who thinks himself possessed by spirits. This is the most agreeable, harmonious way to learn about several aspects of Indian spirituality.

Six tales are there in the book. They are framed in the narrative style. An unnamed man in the story is retired from the government job after his wife’s death. Childless, he

decides to withdraw from the world by becoming the manager of a rest house on the bank of the Narmada River. In this position, he encounters various people who share their life stories with him, and sometimes they offer him pieces of wisdom. This quote explains the controversy depending on the thoughts of various persons. The quote explains:

“Maybe it’s only an old man’s foolishness, little brother. But if the Narmada was born from Shiva’s penance, then surely Uma was born of the Naga Baba’s penance. Tell me, what higher enlightenment could he acquire by leaving her” (1993:167).

The first story is “The Monk’s Story” is the story of the nameless man, who says. “Ritual means nothing if you do not know the longing that precedes it” (1993:10). Further he questions: “Can the love between a man and woman be contained in the flowers they exchange, or a coin contains a merchant’s love of wealth?” (1993:10). Ashok grows up as the son of a rich diamond merchant. He lives his luxurious life.

*“Then he changed you into river
To cool the lusts of holy men
And called you Narmada,
Soother of Desires” (1993:178).*

The belief and blind-belief seem to be presented in this quote. The young man goes across the world with his father’s business to help, which is the indication of equality and humanity. At last he understands the inequalities that fill other people’s lives with hunger and poverty. He understands that these men are inflicted by his own father who always mistreats the diamond miners working for him. This makes Ashok dissatisfied in his life. He then goes against his family’s wishes and becomes a strict follower of Jain principles. He tries to live his life according to the example of Bhagwan Mahavira. Mahavira’s practice of non-violence forms the core of religion. Finally Ashok ends his story by saying “I commenced departure from my father’s world” (1993:26). His father comes to fetch him but he rejects and utters:

Seeing me in the garments of a mendicant, he weeps again, I can offer him no consolation. I touch his feet as a son for the last time and enter the stadium (1993:26).

It is quite clear that Ashok got upset by the nature of his father and he became the monk to serve humanity. Finally, he listens the monks chanting:

You will be free from doubt.
You will be free from delusion.
You will be free from extremes.
You will promote stability.
You will protect life (1993:27).

Here it is very indicative that everything depends upon thinking. If anyone wants to be free

from any kinds of doubt, delusion, extremes there is the need to create stability. That is the source of protection of life.

The second story, “The Teacher’s Story,” that the nameless man hears from Tariq Mia, who is an old Muslim mullah and he has befriended several persons. In this story Master Mohan is a music teacher. He dreams of becoming a professional singer but does not succeed. He finds Imrat, a blind, profoundly musically gifted orphan. The orphan’s promise reminds Mohan of his own. So Master Mohan says, “To his delight, Imrat repeated the scale faultlessly” (1993:45). Mohan dedicates all his time to teach this boy and in return he feels the appreciation but his own family doesn’t appreciate him.

Master Mohan explained the significance of the raga, initiating Imrat into the mystery of world’s rebirth, when light disperses darkness and Vishnu rises from his slumbers to re-dream the universe (1993:45).

A tragic incident occurs. Imrat is murdered in front of his devoted teacher, Master Mohan. Then Mohan goes to the Narmada River to seek comfort from Tariq Mia. Although he gets comfort from Tariq Mia, Master Mohan goes to his home and commits suicide. This is very shocking incident.

“The Executive’s Story” is the third story in this book. The story has its focus on an idea of love. Such love is deeply rooted in the very simple sentence: “Life on the tea estates seemed a real man’s life” (1993:73). The anonymous man reads the diary of his colleague’s nephew, Nitin Bose who is a very wealthy tea estate manager. When he visits one of the tea plantations, Nitin falls in love with Rima, a tribal farmer woman. He assumes their affair is just a short business trip. But when Nitin returns home he is anxious for his passion on Rima.

My body knew the contours of her body, my hands the features of her face, but to my eyes she was an endless play of shadows, entering my bed in darkness when I was no longer capable of waiting for her so that always she surprised my senses (1993:82).

He dreams of her constantly. He wants to establish his sexuality with her. But this relationship is immoral. So he fails to confess either his feelings or his actions on Rima are really immoral. Ultimately, this subjugation makes Nitin almost insane. At last he finds solution on this matter. Nitin finally comes to know that Rima was married:

Rima wept as if her heart were breaking when I told her I was leaving. Gratified by her tears, I made love to her with an ardor that surprised me, so exhausted by my exertions I almost didn’t hear her ask, “Should I return to my husband? He works as a coolie at the railway depot in Agartala. Should I join him while you are gone?” (1993:84)

He expresses his feelings in his diary. By this action, Nitin releases himself from this burden and regains the peace of mind, which is the real source of calmness.

The next story in this book is “The Courtesan’s Story” that begins with: “Fifty years ago, in the days when there were still kingdoms in India, our small state of Shahbag was famed throughout India for its culture” (1993:105). In this story, it is viewed as a lower order of human beings. The Courtesan explains that many women like her have to be frivolously paid for entertainment they do for men. Her daughter was kidnapped some time ago by the criminal Rahul Singh. She was very beautiful and skillful daughter. She found that what happened with her daughter when she was kidnapped. Rahul kidnapped this young woman and he believed that they had already been married many times in their previous lives. It is the indication of blind belief. When the Courtesan’s daughter was forced to marry with Rahul, she lived with Rahul’s criminal gang. She even loves her husband. Then Rahul tried to leave his illegal activities with her. But he died in a shootout with the police. Now she realized that only option for her was to go back to the courtesan life. The reason behind it was clear that no one would marry her as she was the widow of violent criminal. This courtesan’s daughter finally killed herself.

The fifth story “The Musician’s Story” is a story of love that really inspires positive changes in life. But it deals with superficial attraction. The musician’s daughter is unattractive. She explains that her father was a famous raga player. She was told, “The first sound of creation was Om” (1993:135). Her father was very skilled and talented raga player. He was well-known in the region where they have been living. She then says, “I was only a child but my father wanted me to understand that music was the mathematics by which the universe would be comprehended” (1993:135). A young person wanted to learn the secrets of these ragas played by the musician. The young man became the musician’s trainee. He wanted to secure the musician’s support, so this young trainee promised to marry the musician’s daughter after completing his studies. When this young man learned everything that the musician taught him, he rejected the musician’s daughter and married some other girl. The musician’s daughter then explains that her father had advised what she should do. “He says I must understand that I am the bride of music, not of a musician” (1993:145).

“The Minstrel’s Story” is the last one in this text. This is narrated again by Tariq Mia. A few years ago, Tariq Mia met Naga Baba. Like many saints, this Naga Baba used to cover his skin with ash to look like Lord Shiva.

“I was thinking of the people I had encountered since I had come to the rest house, and Tariq Mia’s observation that they were like water flowing through lives to teach us something. Perhaps the old mullah was right. Perhaps destiny had brought me to the banks of the Narmada to understand the world” (1993:173).

These men called saints or Babas live decisively isolated survival so that they may experience spiritual solitude.

“Shiva brought forth this world and the mountain
Where he sits in meditation
Until the Destruction” (1993:179).

Hindu festival was celebrated with all-night festivities on the night of Shiva. Naga Baba helps a little girl named Uma to rescue her from being kidnapped and sold for prostitution purpose. After some years, it turns out that the man wasn't actually part of the ascetic community but he was an archeologist, Professor Shankar. His intention was to have focus on the study of over the Narmada River. In fact, this man wanted to drive out harmful superstitions as well as oppressive religious traditions. He was playing the role of the Naga Baba. He was quite aware of the men like Uma's father who would try to leave their young daughters in the brothel. In this context the quote of Sharankumar Limbale explains, “Now, like a kite whose string has snapped, she lived under the weight of terrible mental tension” (2010:40). In fact all these things are some kind of superstitions offered to the Lord Shiva that night. “The Song of the Narmada” is the last chapter in *A River Sutra*.

To conclude, *A River Sutra* very differently explains the diverse experiences across India in the religious matter. It is always observed that the religious scriptures strongly affect the mind-set of Indians. No one – male or female – wants to break the hegemony in the Indian society. Hence it can be clearly indicated that the religion with blind beliefs has brought inequality into the Indian society. In the text under study *A River Sutra* clearly indicates that the gender discrimination and oppression have been the old tradition in Indian context due to religious and gender hegemony. ■

Works Cited:

Mehta, Geeta (1993). *A River Sutra*. Penguin Random House India

Limbale, Sharankumar (2008). *The Outcaste* (Translated by Santosh Bhoomkar), Oxford University Press, New Delhi.

Dr. M. S. Wankhede, Associate Professor of English, Dhanwate National College, Nagpur, Maharashtra.

Revisioning Intellectualism, Power and Passion to reconstruct Life in D.H. Lawrence's *Women in Love*

Mekala Rajan

D.H. Lawrence intensely explores the fields of human intellect, emotions and actions in his novel *Women in Love*. Relationships that regulate life are ransacked in unexpected ways startle us. This novel exhibits the loveless life that is led in a listless fashion. The intelligent, well informed educated individuals lead a restless life. Birkin, Gerald, Ursula, Gudrun and Hermione remain insecure, rash, irrational and impulsive. Feminism and masculine values clash carelessly making them argumentative, aggressive and brutal. The basic human values that can balance and hone the male and female egos seem to have disappeared. Their vision is bleak. The dichotomy between the sexes is detrimental as an unbridgeable gulf is formed due their assumptions, ulterior motives and selfishness. Education does not help them balance, build and blossom helpfully, instead the validity and the sanctity of the institution of marriage is dampened and destroyed beyond recognition. The need to explore the cause for such conflicts leads one to introspect and analyze one's life. The intelligent people failed to employ emotional intelligence. This self-knowledge can steer the families towards recovery and reunion. It is also understood that love, tolerance, empathy, compassion, patience, self-control, co-operation, active listening, conflict management and so on are the life skills that are not adhered in the modern age. This leads to the destruction of the environmental ethics, distortion of values and eruption of lasting relationships. This powerful text through fresh images and shocking situations projects the dire need for peaceful living.

D.H.Lawrence also meditates on the hermaphrodite fallacy, the psyche and sexual perversion. Moreover, the post-war trauma and anti- feminist observations and reactions are also visible. It is thus envisaged that relatedness and regeneration are the twin goals one should aim at to relish life on earth.

Key Words:Pseudo reality, Feminism, Self-knowledge, Emotional Intelligence, Peaceful coexistence.

Acquiring life skills and exercising emotional intelligence is the need of the hour. Women in love is a display of intellect, passion and pain in all its bleakness. The novel is a network of unique insight that connects Nature, life, technique and energy “The quest for integration and wholeness, so central to Lawrence, involves the individual’s relationship not only with self, but also with the rest of creation” (Meyers 132). The very title *Women in Love* unravels and expounds various aspects of the characters that are linked and delinked, discovered and destroyed on having understood and misunderstood the concept of love. D.H. Lawrence has introduced individualistic intellectuals like Gerald, Birkin, Ursula, Gudrun and Hermione to reflect and respond to life in a raw, immature and impulsive way. They are guided by their will and are forever engaged in an inner struggle of the mind.

Sagar records that, Lawrence “goes on to associate this ‘death of life’ with ‘the perfect mechanizing of human life’ in modern industry” (69). Anxiety, stress and restlessness rule their lives and arrest the possibility of peace and happiness. This unrest rests as a shroud and soils the soul. This technique is neither reductive nor negative but re-articulates and regulates life by enabling us to receive the right direction and proper vision. The focus is “to heighten our sense of the complex interaction of language and literature with our experience”(Morris 33). Moreover, emotions are very important to life. “Emotions are life-lines to self-awareness and self-preservation that deeply connect us to ourselves and others, to nature and the cosmos” (Segal 3). Problems arise when emotional intelligence is not exercised. *Women in Love* stand as an excellent example of this lack of emotional understanding, emotional learning, emotional competence and emotional regulation. An awareness of all these supports emotional intelligence and eliminate anger, resentment and domestic violence. This study explores the areas of low self-esteem, intellectual pride, insecurity and highlights the need for emotional intelligence to redress and recover peace and happiness. This redemption is anticipated and Marsh observes that “in *Women in Love* a recurrent topic of conversation between the characters is the decline and disintegration of society, and how it can be redeemed” (115).

The intellect, will and energy that the characters possess are not channelized the right way. This forces them to vie with practicality, possibility and applicability. Logical arguments, debates and philosophy support their knowledge. This knowledge when activated discloses a terrible truth that dismantles the benefit of knowledge and dethrones wisdom. The palpating pursuit of love traps and imprisons the peaceful progress of the lovers. Love does not sustain, instead all the characters in love, suffer. This experience enforces a rebellious and aggressive approach, thereby destroying the very nature, texture and quality of love. “*Women in Love* is a novel which has the word ‘love’ in its title but little of it between its cover” (Eagleton 277). The falsity and ambiguity in love nourish the novel in all its newness. Lawrence has according to Salgado “liberated a vast area of human experience” (94).

The novel begins with a discussion on marriage and the sisters Ursula and Gudrun share their understanding and find that their views stand divided. Their individuality is firmly exercised at the very beginning of the text. Gudrun feels that she would need the “experience of having been married” (Lawrence 5) even before she gets married. Ursula is surprised and asks if it really ought to be so. Ursula is contemplative, trying to grasp life the way she has understood. She works in Willey Green grammar school. Gudrun is charming, smart and works in an art-school after having had her education in London. Birkin and Gerald are the two gentlemen who translate and change life for Ursula and Gudrun. Hermione Roddice is another accomplished woman in the Midlands and is involved in social work and reforms. The irony is that, the characters involved in the field of education were not engaged in lateral thinking and practical learning.”Hermione knew herself to be well-dressed; she knew herself to be the social equal, if not far the superior, of anyone she was likely to meet in Willey Green. She knew she was accepted in the world of culture and of intellect. All her life, she had sought to make herself invulnerable, unassailable, beyond reach of the world’s judgment” (Lawrence 14).

Hermione’s self-analysis and self-assessment have been reined and ruined by intellectual pride and arrogance. She wished to possess Rupert Birkin. Relationships in the novel are envisaged but never achieved. Her knowledge and her overbearing nature compelled her to possess him while he was firmly trying to get away from her. Her confidence here was an insufficiency and a kind of deficiency that she was blind to. Birkin felt that there was a kind of perverseness akin to that of a child in her that he longed to break away from. To Ursula, the very thought of Birkin ‘attracted’, ‘piqued’ and ‘annoyed’ her. The understanding between them was partial. “Her spirit was active, her life like a shoot that is growing steadily, but which has not yet come above ground” (Lawrence 51).

The uncertainty that unsettles the characters is further ascertained by the idea of death and murder. Very early in the novel we learn that Gerald Crich had accidentally killed his brother when he was very young. Later Birkin talks about the desire to have the gizzard slit and adds that “a murderee is a man who is murderable. And a man who is murderable is a man who in a profound, if hidden lust, desires to be murdered” (Lawrence 32). Birkin, instead of dismissing the past, magnanimously dissects and defines the nature of a murderer. This approach is least expected from a well-informed Inspector of Schools. This is followed by Diana’s and of the young doctor’s death at the water party, leading to Gerald’s death towards the end. This physical death is accompanied by the psychological and spiritual death in the rest of the characters in the text. Knowledge acquisition ought to be supported by knowledge management. Arguments can either enlighten or dampen situations. Most of the situations are aimed at insults and injury. Levenson feels that “injury was one of Lawrence’s great subjects and *Women in Love* is so full of it that it soon ceases to be incidental” (77).

Hermione argues that when one acquires knowledge one possesses everything. She states that when one learns about flowers one will acquire reasonable knowledge of the

flower but in the process would have overlooked the beauty and importance of the flower. Birkin retorts that she wishes to derive mental thrill out of knowledge. He resists her counter attack by stressing the fact that she wishes to replace thought by passion which is the worst and last form of intellectualism. He charges her of making her passion a lie and declares that it is not her passion at all but her will. He condemns her of possessing a 'bullying will'. "You have only your will and your conceit of consciousness, and your lust for power, to know" (Lawrence 41). Self – importance and egoism inflates the characters and make them restless. The values of equity, sustainability and sufficiency are smashed when Birkin records the fact that man has covered the earth with foulness.

The party at Breadalby remains as a reflection of modern life, echoing dissatisfaction and disturbance. The discussions rested more often on the political upheavals, if not on the sociological survey. Though interesting, they were anarchistic. It represented the accumulation of power and destruction. This reminds one of the world wars and the dislocations that dislodged many families. Lawrence has been sensitive to this fact as his images employed represent the physical and mental war. *Women in Love* is thus a battlefield of mixed emotions sans direction and discipline.

Nature acts as the comfort zone for Birkin to escape humiliation and death at the hands of Hermione. He felt that he required no one except Nature and his own self to experience peace. The inhuman act of hurling the lapis lazuli at Birkin makes him respond to the gentle, lovely, and delicate Nature that binds him. He found the old sanity of the world quite repulsive. "He rejoiced in the new-found world of his madness. It was so fresh and delicate and so satisfying" (Lawrence 111). Antony explains the problems of emotional and intellectual importance by indicating the fact that "sometimes emotions may override the intellectual system on account of their intensity and such circumstances may be harmful to humans" (79).

The inspector of schools, artists, instructors, business magnates and social reformers though educated have engaged in inhuman activities. Intellectualizing relationships, the concept of ultimate marriage, the machine mind and so on do record the power of the intellect but they remain as enemies of human development and growth. They display hypertrophy of mind and atrophy of heart. The will for chaos is established when we find Gerald's coercive handling of the mare. It implies that the mare, miners and women will be under his control and will remain as mere instruments. Another shocking image is the struggle with the rabbit. Here the masochistic and sadistic cruelty of Gerald and Gudrun expose the futile relationship and spiritual wounds. Birkin's stoning of the moon image is an attack on women's possessiveness and tyranny. The re-forming of the moon talks about the moon-principle of Nature and man's inadequacies. These usual and unspiritual knowledge that pollute the mind is voiced through the mute African Statuette at Hallidays. The desire for dominance is visible when Gudrun dances in front of the bullocks. Lawrence brings out the brutal animal behavior of the characters through animal images. "Lawrence leads into his story of human relationship and non-human relationship through relations with animals"

(Bell 102). Impulsive behavior and aggression are recorded when Hermione flings the Lapis Lazuli at Birkin. Educated individuals here exhibit unethical standards and emotional imbalance. Trilling finds “a great part of the society is irreparably lost: obstructed into non-physical, mechanical entities whose motive power is still recoil, revulsion, repulsion, hate and ultimately, blind destruction” (637).

Mechanical energy and machines that dominated the scientific world reduces the human in the human being. Palmer was a clever scientist, an electrician who wanted Ursula, but wished to go around with Gudrun. The market place is where they meet and decide to stroll on the streets and plan to go for a cinema. There were endless discussions, arguments, drivers who were calling, buzzing, “political wrangling that vibrated in the air” (Lawrence 120). Amidst this we find that Palmer hated men and did not care for men. They fascinated him in the mass like how machinery fascinated him. To him they were a new kind of machinery. This gives us a glimpse of the state of the society and the machine world that has controlled man’s natural feelings and the scope for friendships. The mechanized world has turned people immune to feelings, numb to situations and indifferent to relationships. This works secretly within us. “All had a secret sense of power, and of inexpressible destructiveness and of fatal half-heartedness, a sort of rottenness in the will” (Lawrence 121). Effective communication would have eased their situations and energized their repressed emotions and would have converted them into positive energy. Among the characters, fury and falsity surfaced in odd and aggressive ways at the most unexpected times. Ursula troubled deeply, declares that “I detest what I am outwardly. I loathe myself as a human being. Humanity is a huge aggregate lie” (Lawrence 130).

Mind turned out to be a mindless new-machine in operation that dominated Gerald’s actions. “The machine is the great Lawrentian symbol of separateness and deadness and its typical motion, that of turning wheels, the very model of meaningless, deadening activity, turned in on itself, with no reference to the rest of the universe” (Salgado 79). His will and desire for chaos had given birth to a new idea. He introduced the concept of mechanical equality to “accomplish a purpose irresistibly, inhumanly” (Lawrence 235). Gerald remained as the god of machines and his concerns were materialistic. Man, matter and mechanism mattered to Gerald and he felt he was doing something divine and supreme. This speculative philosophy suggested the breakdown of values and disintegration of families. Meaningless momentum in material life and futilities added to the insecurity in relationships. “There was a new world, a new order, a strict, terrible, inhuman, but satisfying in its very destructiveness”. (Lawrence 239) With this pride with which Gerald faced Gudrun, there existed abhorrent mysteries that thwarted and contravened.”This tracing of a psychic rhythm was in Lawrence’s view, a highly moral inquiry since it was an exploration of the individual’s deepest self” (Salgado 106).

Ursula isolated herself as she felt she was incapable of soulfulness. She had a profound grudge against the human being. The word ‘human’ for her was despicable and repugnant. She accused Birkin for being an egocentric and of his lack of enthusiasm. She

states that he wanted her only to serve him. “You don’t love me, you know. You don’t want to serve me. You only want yourself (Lawrence 259). He retaliates and instructs her to drop her assertive will and to let go. He talks about freedom and the star-equilibrium. Illogical elements are extensive and emptiness drains Ursula. Birkin experienced failure in mutual understanding with Ursula and felt bored. There remained a kind of inarticulate anger and humiliation and he felt weak and inferior in strength. There was neither assurance nor trust in the love that they shared and they were falling in and out of relationships. As far as Hermione is concerned, she couldn’t but feel rejected. Yet, she wanted to be universal and cynical at the same time. She did not trust the inner life and did not believe in the spiritual world. There was a vacuum, a sort of affectation. She was a priestess who had no belief or conviction. She had faith in the flesh and the devil. The lasting tree of knowledge withered and was replaced by mockery and cynicism. “Social realism along with loving relationships between men and women, are now abandoned for a proto-fascist veneration of power, ‘blood hierarchy’, racial purity, male bonding, charismatic leadership, the revival of ‘primitive’, ritual and mythology, and the brutal subjugation of women” (Eagleton 278).

Purity, goodness, holiness and concern have lapsed and what is left in the modern world is “the single impulse of knowledge in one sort, mindless, progressive knowledge through the senses, knowledge arrested and ending in the senses, mystic knowledge in disintegration and dissolution, knowledge such as the beetles have, which live purely within the world of corruption and cold dissolution (Lawrence 263).

Gerald in spite of his friendship with Gudrun felt he was perishing and learnt that marriage was a doom. It was damnation. Birkin was changeable yet unsure. Hermione declared that marriage mean’s suffering every hour of each day. Ursula was jealous, unreasonable, with powerful emotion and no mind. To Gudrun, relationship between a man and a woman was mean and rigid. Towards the end of the novel unexpectedly Loerke appears and Gerald disappears. Loerke, also an artist, was aware of the greatest power of adjustment and managed to penetrate deeper into the soul of Gudrun. Gerald’s pride, masterful will and physical strength failed in front of Loerke’s inner strength. Gerald failed to approach Gudrun mystically, imperceptibly and palpably whereas Loerke did it. Gerald thus defeated, finally permitted the snow to swallow him up. Singh has highlighted the significance of emotional intelligence as “persons high on emotional intelligence are poised, outgoing, committed to other people and worthy causes, sympathetic and caring, with a rich and fulfilling emotional life; they are comfortable with themselves, others and the social universe they inhabit” (3). Gerald failed to look into the possibilities of solving his problem and the world around that existed in all its glory. This limitation of vision severs his development.

God dispenses with man if he failed to develop the right way. Gerald refused to change and grow. The creative mystery could replace him with a finer being. This non-human mystery is infallible, fathomless, and inexhaustible.

“It could bring forth miracles, create utter new races and new species, in its own hour, new forms of consciousness, new forms of body new unity of being. To be a man was as nothing compared to the possibilities of the creative mystery. To have one’s pulse beating direct from the mystery, this was perfection, unutterable satisfaction” (Lawrence 497).

Birkin though married to Ursula is ultimately disappointed with the demise of Gerald. He talks about the eternal union with a man and an ultra-human relationship with women that are needful to sustain life. Ursula is disturbed and asks him the reason for such a union when the bonding of marriage exists between them. Birkin is not convinced instead confesses the need to compensate and complete his existence. Dissatisfaction devastates him.”The lack of emotional intelligence explains why people who, despite having a high IQ, have been such utter failure and disastrous in their personal and professional lives” (Singh 17). To be happy with what God has given calls for humility, understanding and fidelity. The values, if valued would have nullified the sophisticated intellect that looks for superfluity and selfish standards. Patience, sacrifice and a selfless attitude strengthens relationships and spreads peace and goodwill around. According to Segal “emotional awareness and know-how enable us to recover our lives and our health, preserve our families, build loving and lasting relationships, and succeed in our work (3). This has been understood and discussed by Lawrence in his last essay “The State of Funk”. He re-establishes the need for change that has to be implemented in life. “As a novelist, I feel it is the change inside the individual which is my real concern. The great social change interests me and troubles me, and I know we must have a more generous, more human system based on the life values and not on the money values” (Salgado 83). Lawrence has thus awakened us to the use of empathy, social skills, self-management, emotional learning ability and conflict management. This is the real need of the hour and it makes Lawrence a valuable visionary of rich concerns. Though dead, Lawrence refuses to die for his works are more relevant today and he continues to stir and strengthen us by the richness of the rare impact made all through. ■

Works Cited

Primary Source:

Lawrence DH. *Women in Love*. Bradshaw David ed. New York: OxfordUniversity Press, 1998. Print.

Secondary Source(s):

Antony John D. *Emotions in Counselling*. Tamil Nadu: Anugraha Publications,2005.

Bell Michael. *Literature, Modernism and Myth*. GB: Cambridge University Press,1997.

Eagleton Terry. *The English Novel “An Introduction”*. USA: Blackwell Publishing,2005.

Levenson Michael. *The Cambridge Companion to Modernism*.London:Cambridge University Press, 1999.

- Marsh Nicholas. *D H Lawrence "The Novels"*. London: Macmillan Press Ltd.,2000.
- Meyers Jeffrey ed. *The Legacy of D H Lawrence*. London: Macmillan Press Ltd.,1987.
- Morris Pam. *Literature and Feminism*. UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1993.
- Sagar Keith. *The Life of Lawrence*. London: Eyre Methuen Ltd., 1980.
- Salgado Gamini. *D H Lawrence*. Delhi: Pearson Edu. Pte. Ltd., 2003.
- Segal Jeanne. *Raising Your Emotional Intelligence*. Mumbai: Magna Publishing Co. Ltd., 2000.
- Singh Dalip. *Emotional Intelligence At Work "A Professional Guide"*. London:Sage Publications Ltd., 2001.
- Trilling Diana. *The Portable Lawrence*. USA: Viking Penguin Inc., 1947.
-

Dr. Mekala Rajan, Department of English, Madras Christian College, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

Long - Term Subscribers

..... Contd.

- 716) Dr. Bindunath Jha, Asst. Professor, Dept. of English, Janta Koshi College, Biraul, Bihar.
- 717) Dr. Sanjib Kumar Goswami, Head, Dept. of English, Kamrup College, Chamata, Assam.
- 718) Principal, Kamala Nehru Women's College, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- 719) Mr. Bhabani Shankar Behera, Asst. Professor of English, KISS Deemed University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- 720) Dr. Mausumi Nath, Asst. Professor, Dept. of Bengali, Lanka Mahavidyalaya, Lanka, Dist: Hojai, Assam.
- 721) Ms. Brajabasini Mishra, C/o Dr. K.C. Mishra, Dept. of English, Rajiv Gandhi University, Doimukh, Arunachal Pradesh.

The Fragmented Selves in Tony Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* and Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*

Silima Nanda

This article is a comparative study of women in the novels of Tony Morrison, Arundhati Roy and Khaled Hosseini: 'The Bluest Eye', 'The God of Small Things' and 'A Thousand Splendid Suns'. The objective of this study is to analyze how women in America, India or Afghanistan are humiliated, exploited and marginalized. Whereas Morrison narrates the Black women as victims caught between the cross fires of racism and sexism, Arundhati Roy as a postcolonial writer, attacks upon the social evils like casteism, gender discrimination etc. prevailing in the Indian subcontinent. Hosseini very realistically depicts the injustice and cruelty meted out to the Afghan womenfolk. In these three novels, the marginalized women are discriminated on the basis of both race and gender. The painful stories of Ammu, Pecola, Mariam and Laila reflect the novelists' concern for their silent resistance that illustrates their self destruction. The commonality between the Blacks in Africa, the Dalits in the Indian Subcontinent and the Afghan women in Afghanistan manifest that all of them are subjects of an ostracized society. They become the symbols of male exploitation. The novelists explore the psychological and sociological changes that the protagonists undergo resulting in their fragmented selves and narrate how they strive to resist and search for their identities.

Key Words: racism, sexism, gender, marginalized, exploited, gender, identity.

Introduction

The article is an in-depth study of the novels of Tony Morrison, Arundhati Roy and Khaled Hosseini; about how the women characters whether it is in America, India or Afghanistan are humiliated, exploited and marginalized. The aim of this study is to analyze the suppressed states of women in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*, Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* and Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* that result in their shattered selves. The three novels under review are comparable on various levels; they depict the grim social reality of conflict between the power and the powerless; patriarchy and the female gender who due to their caste, color and social position suffer serious consequences leading to depression and self-derision. The pain that each woman experiences is varied and diverse from that of others, yet is excruciatingly private and immensely universal at the same time

Of all African American authors writing today, Tony Morrison's work stands out because of its comprehensive and multidimensional approach to the black experience in white America. Like Nella Larsen, Zora Neal Hurston, Alice Walker and Gloriya Naylor, Morrison too significantly mirrored the social evils of racism, casteism and sexism. She portrayed the vulnerable status of women (blacks) depicting their suffering, humiliation and exploitation in her major novels: "The Bluest eye" "Sula" and "Beloved". The African women as portrayed in these three novels become victims of racism and sexual exploitation not only by the whites but also from their own men. Thus they become subjects of external as well as internal exploitation. In similar lines Arundhati Roy, the post colonial Indian novelist also narrated the glaring social evils of casteism and gender discrimination existing in the Indian society. As regards the Afghan women in Hosseini's novel, they are treated as slaves to the male folks. The perverse effects of the patriarchal society in the three nations infringe upon the freedom of women, making them subservient to the male world.

The Bluest Eye

The Bluest Eye is set during the post world war period when issues of ethnicity and class were central to American politics. Morrison proposes that readers look at the experience of a young girl who does not choose to participate in a sexual act, but is still ostracized from the community when the act is done to her. Pecola Breedlove is denied her childhood by experiencing the traumatic experiences of sexual and emotional abuse that pushes her to the edge of madness by the community which symbolises a small microcosm of the American society. As narrator the nine year old Claudia in Morrison's novel, remains the sensitive and silent witness to Pecola's tragedy. If we make a cross cultural study of the dalits, blacks and the downtrodden we find that in all these societies, the outcaste women are the marginalized ones, the second sex who desperately struggle to survive in the ruling male world. The novel clearly depicts the evil of racism through the African adolescent female. Pecola the eleven year old, poor and ugly black girl is passionate and obsessed to have blue eyes as she believes that they are the symbols of white beauty that would give her dignity and self respect. For Pecola, the blue eyes become a panacea for all her ills. She believes that having blue eyes means she can earn love, respect, goodness and acceptance in the society. She has the firm conviction that if she has blue eyes like the whites, then the hostile and hateful domestic environment of her home can also be reduced. Possibly, her parents would say: "Why, look at pretty-eyed Pecola. We mustn't do bad things in front of those pretty eyes" (Bluest: 34). Pecola is raped by her own drunkard and immoral father and beaten by her mother because they had been meted with the same ill-treatment by the whites. The girl fears she will be left alone again if she does not have the bluest eyes. The novel poignantly unfolds the psychological devastation of the young Afro-American girl, Pecola Breedlove who searches for love and acceptance but is finally denied everything. Pecola is injured psychologically by almost everyone she comes across. Her mother does not trust her, her father rapes her, her brother does not take

her with him, her classmates make fun of her, a shopkeeper does not notice her and her best friends, Claudia and Frieda, also start avoiding her. One can easily imagine the plight of this poor girl who has no one in this entire world to play with, except an imaginary friend. As a narrator Claudia tells us that three things that have greatly affected the gender are; being female, being black, and being a child. Pecola's story moves from pathos to tragedy and finally sinks into lunacy. Thus as a novelist Morrison deftly intertwines the dual themes of female oppression and racism in this novel.

In the novel we observe that Pecola is the victim of her parents' constant physical and verbal fighting. She experiences pain because "If those eyes of her's were different, that is to say, beautiful, she herself would be different (Morrison 62). Pecola's own mother repeatedly calls her ugly, she has a strong desire to change her eye colour from brown to blue; her thinking being that blue eyes correspond to a notion of white beauty and will make her pretty in the eyes of others. After delivering Pecola when the mother sees her she remarks: "Head full of pretty hair but Lord she was ugly" (Bluest: 98. When her mother Pauline was young, she would go to the movies alone, and 'Along with the idea of romantic love, she was introduced to another – physical beauty. Probably the most destructive ideas in the history of human thought' (Morrison 122). Later, living with her husband Cholly and their two children, Pauline not only disengages from the children, only feeling happy when she is working for the rich, white family and spending as much time away from her own home as possible. Pauline feels ashamed of her child, abuses her and attacks Pecola furiously when the girl accidentally spills a blueberry pie at the Fishers. When Pecola is busy doing dishes one day, Cholly the drunkard father rapes her but instead of protecting her daughter Pauline as mother, distrusts Pecola's incidence of sexual assault by her father. After a second rape that results in Pecola's pregnancy, Cholly flees the town, while Pecola succumbs to a mental breakdown. She is silenced as well: 'She spent her days...walking up and down, up and down, her head jerking to the beat of a drummer so distant only she could hear' (204). Pecola's hearing music that no one else does is an indication of her heading towards insanity after the experience of the rape. Thereafter, Pecola moves to the edge of the town with her mother and is never heard again, only occasionally seen searching through garbage.

Thus Pecola's prolonged exposure to domestic and communal violence, results in what Kai Erikson calls 'psychic erosion'. Pecola's self ' becomes so fragmented, that it conducts conversation with itself and with no one else" (Miner 1990:89). When Pecola goes to the candy store of Mr. Yacobowki, a white immigrant, he denies Pecola's self: "He does not see her, because for him there is nothing to see" (Bluest: 36). As is Pecola's state, likewise in 'Beloved' which -explores the physical, emotional, and spiritual devastation wrought by slavery, Sethe, also is treated as a subhuman and seems to be alienated from herself and filled with self-loathing. She sees the best part of herself as her children but her children also have volatile, unstable identities. Sethe fears that she will end her days in madness. Indeed, she does prove to be mad when she kills her own daughter. Sethe's act of

infanticide illuminates the perverse forces of the institution of slavery; where a mother best expresses her love for her children by murdering them and thus protecting them from further destruction wrought by slavery. Likewise in Morrison's another novel 'A Mercy', Sorrow becomes mentally unstable. She was found half drowned as an adolescent and then given to Jacob. She has an abominable existence and is looked down upon by the other members of her own community. While Pecola is ostracized and treated as the ugly duckling, Sorrow is viewed as a fallen woman, rootless, with a tarnished image struggling to survive in the alien environment filled with danger and disease.

Pecola marches towards insanity when she decides to metamorphose her fantasy into a reality by visiting Soaphead Church, a sort of pedophile magician who assures her to be granted with blue eyes, which Pecola truly believes would change her world. Soaphead convinces her that only Pecola can see and feel his magic blessing. At the end of the novel, Claudia realizes how both the community has failed the black girl and has actively contributed to her victimization. 'The Bluest Eye' thus handles a theme that is both universal and particular to the black female experience: "the desire for freedom from racial and sexual victimization; the search for self-definition and autonomy, for personal spiritual wholeness, the search for equitable male-female relationships, the need for love and friendship (Livingstone, p.33).

The God of Small Things

The God of Small Things the Booker winning novel written by Arundhati Roy is a telling account of the women's struggle for getting a respectable place in the society which is deliberately denied to them by the traditional norms of patriarchy. 'All the women characters of the novel like Ammu, Mammachi, Baby Kochamma, Margaratte Kochamma go through the horrors of gender discrimination and are marginalized and oppressed at the hands of patriarchy in the post colonial society of Kerala. Roy comments that "Fifty years after independence, India is still struggling with the legacy of colonialism, still flinching from the cultural insult (and) were still caught up in the business of "disproving" the white world's definition of us " (Roy,p.13)

Analysing the tragic tale of Ammu, we find that she has to face discrimination of being a female. Since her childhood college education is denied to her whereas it is liberally given to her brother Chacko by her parents who goes to Oxford to continue his further studies although his academic performances were disappointingly below average. She gets married to an Assistant Manager in a tea estate in Assam but soon after, she discovers that he is an alcoholic who ill-treats her and even exploits her sexually for his own job security by forcing her to satisfy the sexual urge of his boss. As a result of this unbearable torture, Ammu seeking refuge returns to her parental home in Ayemenem along with her twins Rahel and Estha. However, to her misfortune, she is remorselessly tortured physically and emotionally by her parents whereas Chacko is kindly treated by his parents. Her home thus turns out to be hell for her. All her family members feel that a stigma is attached with

Ammu as she has transgressed the boundaries of conventional marriage by going for love marriage that ends in divorce.

Ammu realises that now for her “there would be no more chances, only Ayemenem. A front verandah and a back verandah, A hot river and pickle factory, and in the background of constant, high, whining mewl of local disapproval” (TGST 43) The individual space is thus denied to her forever. The climax of Ammu’s crisis starts with the illicit relationship she develops with Velutha who is a low caste Paravan. Once the matter is brought to the limelight, Velutha is arrested on charges of rape, harassed and badly beaten by the police. Finally he is killed by the cops. Ammu tries her best to rescue him but she is in a way molested by the police and called a prostitute Inspector Matthews beats Ammu’s breast frequently with a stick and insults her thereby affecting her self-respect. The family members including her Mammachi have no sympathy for Ammu as they think that this lady has tarnished their family reputation.

Ammu’s wrecked marriage and her stigmatised existence makes her life so unbearable that she is compelled to leave the society, lead a solitary life and ultimately faces a premature death. “She died alone. With a noisy ceiling fan for the company and no Estha to lie at the back of her and talk to her. She was thirty-one. Not old, not young, but a viable, die –able age” (TGST 161).). The social conditions of the time reflect the evils of gender discrimination. Not only Ammu the other women in the novel like Mammachi, Baby Kochamma, Margaret Kochamma are also victims of oppression by the male characters. Like her mother the new generation Rahel, is also treated as an outsider by her own family members and this results in an alienation that affects her mentally and turns her insane. Her married life also ends in a divorce. Mammachi is another silent sufferer who from the first date of her marriage receives the atrocities of her husband and remains a puppet in the hands Pappachi. Margaret Kochamma, wife of Chacko and the mother of Sophie Mol is also a victim of gender discrimination who is ill-treated by her husband, Chacko and her life becomes horrible. Roy through this novel voices the miseries of women such as Ammu, Mamrnachi and Margaret who bear endless torture silently and lead their lives of fragmented selves. Thus all these women characters voice the untold agonies and the undeserved sufferings in the patriarchal world which they endure quietly and passively.

A Thousand Splendid Suns

As we come to Khaled Hosseini, we witness similar violence against women in the outstanding novel ‘*A Thousand Splendid Suns*’ where the two women Mariam and Laila undergo unbearable atrocities and inhumane suffering, which Hosseini states “has been matched by very few groups in recent world history”. Describing the domestic lives of these two women, Hosseini acquaints his readers with the harsh facets of the Afghan society which prevailed with ruthless patriarchal dominion. Through his narrative the novelist endeavors to provide voice to the afghan women by bringing their sufferings

to the fore. The novel encompasses a time span of nearly 40 years; from the 1960s to 2001. The first woman Mariam is the illegitimate child of Jalil from his housemaid Nana whom he throws away from his house. Mariam and her mother Nana suffer severe humiliation at the hands of Jalil. As Mariam grows up she is forcibly married to Rasheed, much senior to her in years, a ruthless and insensitive man who sexually assaults his wife with the least concern towards the pain and injury he is inflicting on her. She is inhumanly treated – the reason being that she fails to produce a male child. Mariam suffers six consecutive miscarriages which she bears silently agreeing with Hosseini that “there is only one skill a woman like you and me needs in life.....only one skill and that is *tahmul*-endure”.(pp.17-18) Rasheed compels Mariam to wear a burqa and insults her, makes fun of her “walking past her like she was nothing but a house cat.”(pp.71)

Mariam adapts to Rasheed’s shifting moods and his volatile temperament, on occasions he would resolve with punches, slaps, kicks and sometimes try to make amends with polluted apologies and sometimes not”. Though Mariam tries her best to submit to his demands, still Rasheed is so hard hearted that in one particular grating scene, he finds fault with the rice Mariam has prepared and forces her to chew the pebbles and leaves her to spit blood with two broken molars; so that she would know how much he has suffered: “he shoved two pebbles...sneer” (p.94). The so-called protector makes her life hell. Mariam silently endures. The other woman of the novel is Laila who hails from a middleclass, well-to-do family background. She represents the woman of the transitional phase where she is exposed to the modern values of Afghan culture and society. Her parents are shot dead by the Taliban and she herself had to be hospitalized due to the attack of a stray missile. In such a situation, Rasheed extends care and custody to Mariam and he also marries her. However like Mariam she is no exception – but becomes a victim to his ugly assaults. Mariam suffers terrible mental agony after her marriage. The frequent wife battering and sexual assaults become components of the lifestyle of these two women. In the beginning, when Mariam steps as the newlywed wife of Rasheed Mariam feels jealous and finds it difficult to accept her as companion, but gradually the bond of suffering bring them closer and both of them become the best of the friends. Mariam turns to be the second mother to Mariam’s daughter Aziza.

The women portrayed in Hosseini’s novel ‘A Thousand Splendid Suns’ are thus not simply the victims of patriarchal set up but they are also greatly oppressed by the Mujahidin terror, despotic Afghan culture, Taliban antipathy and above all gender apartheid. The patriarchal society of Afghanistan enforces the concept of ‘Ideal Womanhood’ where women are expected to cultivate ideals laid down by the male folk which ultimately turn these women as voiceless recipients of the male dominion.

Conclusion

The grim stories of Ammu, Pecola, Mariam and Laila bespeak their suppressed crises and this reflects the authors’ concern for the gender oppression that is enforced

on them through their lifestyle and culture which is specific not to a singular region or country but is universal. In these novels the women become the victims of domestic violence and patriarchy. They have no fault of their own other than the only truth they share, that they are the marginalized ones. If the subaltern is a female, she cannot be heard at all because she exists in absolute silence “The subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow.”(Spivak 28). The novelists explore the shattered psyche, self disintegration of the traumatized women characters that are caged in their racist traps and bear the burden of oppressive ones. The bond of suffering groups the women of these three novels into one category who according to Spivak’s viewpoint in his famous essay, ‘Can the Subaltern speak?’ are the ‘subalterns’ who cannot have a history of their own and cannot have their voice for their entire life in the exploitative socio cultural milieu of the respective countries.

Works Cited:

- Bose, Brinda. 2006 “In Desire and in Death: Eroticism as politics in Arundhati Roy’s “The God of Small Things.” Arundhati Roy: Critical Perspectives. Ed. Murari Prasad . New Delhi Pen craft International , Print.
- Davis, Cynthia A. 1990. “Self, Society and Myth in Toni Morrison’s Fiction”. Bloom, H. (ed.): 7-25.
- Erikson, Kai. 1995.”Notes on Trauma and Community”. In Caruth,C.(ed.):183-199.
- Gloria Wade-Gayles, *No crystal Stair: visions of Race and Sex in Black Women’s Fiction* New York: pilgrim Progress, P.81.
- Goyal J , B.S. 2015 Dr. *Toni Morrison: The Bluest Eye*. Delhi: Surjeet Publications. Print.
- mCkAy, Nellie Y. (ed.) 1988. *Critical Essays on Toni Morrison*. Boston: G. K. Hall & Co
- Judith H. Livingstone , 1993 “ Black Women ‘s Lives, Black Women ‘s Voices” p.33
- Miner, Madonne M. 1990. “Lady No Longer Sings the Blues: Rape, Madness, and Silence in *The Bluest Eye*”. In Bloom, H. (ed.): 85-100.
- Morrison, Toni. I 970 “The Bluest Eye”, New York: Rinehart and Winston. print
- Paulo Friere, L972 *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. England: Pelican Books. Print.
- Roy, Arundhati. 200 I *Power Politics*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge Mass: South End Press), p.13.
- Roy, Arundhati. 1997 ‘ The God of Small Things”. London: Penguin Books, Print.
- Spivak, Gayatri. “Can the Subaltern Speak?” *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Eds. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg. London: Macmillan, 1988. Print

Dr. Silima Nanda Deputy Director, IGNOU Regional Evaluation centre, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

The Footsteps of Invisible Things : Discovering Mystery Element in Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri*

Ritam Upadhyay

Usha Jain

Mystery has always caught human mind more than any other phenomenon in life and consequently so in literature. Life itself is full of surprises and foreknowledge is not everyman's possession. But this uncertainty though prodigal at most of the ends, can not overshadow the courage in man who has been daring the Unknown since his arrival in the terrestrial assemblage. Mostly this is the reason behind all that he has achieved so far.

The present paper is an attempt to discuss 'mystery element' in the epic 'Savitri' written by Sri Aurobindo. Sri Aurobindo is a well known name among the leading Indian writings in English; a great yogi for whom poetry was 'a means of ascension'. In this sublime journey of consciousness he reveals the mysteries not only of the yet unknown other worlds but the world within. These revelations are spontaneous occurrences in his works. His sonnets and longer poems too represent this nature and when great epic Savitri is taken into account, one comes across numberless waves in an oceanic surge.

The discussion is on all the five essential elements of mystery i.e. the characters, the setting, the plot, the problem and the solution apart from contextual search for the element. The chief aim is to present a study concentrating on the ample and apt use of the element and all its aspects in the epic.

Key Words: mystery, Yoga, spirituality, consciousness, realisation, transformation.

The world with its awe striking newness keeps man engaged in exploration of the mystery called 'Creation'. Being a part of the whole game he explores, discovers, finds, realizes and reveals the gatherings in different ways. He is a scientist, he is a philosopher, he is an artist and also a poet and consequently all his fields provide him with an expression

to represent his findings, be it an invention, a new theory, an artwork or a verse. In each of such attempt something of the great mystery is revealed, some veils are lifted and some layers are opened.

Man of words have profusely used this play of ‘what next’ curiosity in their works both in prose and poetry equally. Mystery fictions, short stories, adventurous travelogues and personal anecdotes have abundantly entertained the readers mainly for the past century. This has more often created a notion for prose being a natural domain for mystery and as poetry lays its hand upon emotions for inspiration pacing in smooth steps there are not many strong examples of mystery element prominently present except a few.

Philosophy and literature are intertwined fields of human mind and element of mystery in this association has been a very early engagement of all the leading thinkers and creators. This particular aspect of unknown road didn’t spare any writer from its spell. This became a tool in hands of the masters not only for entertaining the readers but for revealing the secrets for the seeker. Unlike the common category of ‘mystery’, some poets through the ages have caught hold of its subtlety very receptively and with individual poetic expression regardless of time and space brought to light many unapproachable facets of ‘The Mystery’ that reveal the unseen face of ‘Truth’-

The poet is a magician who hardly knows the secret of his own spell; even the part taken by the consciously critical or constructive mind is less intellectual than intuitive; he creates by an afflatus of spiritual power of which his mind is the channel and instrument and the appreciation of it in himself and others comes not by an intellectual judgment but by a spiritual feeling. (The Future Poetry 289)

Sri Aurobindo, the seer, in his critical essays on literature especially poetry, thus defines in *The Future Poetry* the alchemist power of a true poet while elaborating upon ‘The Word and the Spirit’. This revelation becomes self evident when the epic *Savitri* is approached. Along with the other philosophical and literary writings *Savitri* represents the most revelatory answers to the queries and questions regarding existence, creation, life and other related topics. All major and minor things of the Creation- animate and inanimate- unanimously find their place in its all inclusive embrace.

Here the concentration is on the element of ‘Mystery’ that has found a prominent place in the whole setup of the epic, though the aim of the poet is much higher beyond its deliberate application. The element can be discussed simultaneously on two different grounds in context of *Savitri*. First on the basic characteristics of Mystery i.e. characters, setting, plot, problem and solution, and secondly on a larger ground of subtle realities that can be labeled as philosophical yet is of greater importance. Before this exploration takes place the immensity of the work and sublimity of the content should be kept in mind. ‘*Savitri the Legend and the Symbol*’ is grand in every manner, right from its unique theme to the unusual length in sum of twenty four thousand lines. The characters in the epic

belong to the worlds visible and invisible. The terrestrial life and the luminous planes of subtle worlds create a combined setting to enhance the mystery. The plot opens with a strange mystery that moving through the paradoxes let the characters enter in an enriching and befitting pace. The problem is not bound to the protagonist alone, each question related to existence upon earth is included. The solution is given at many stages creating a harmony of the contraries and paradoxes towards the final destiny.

The mystery that is related to the characterization of the epic is unique in itself. Their names and identity of the earthly surface is one dimension while each of them is a symbolic representative of a subtler truth. The words of the poet can help the cognition of the true beings behind the characters-

Satyavan is the soul carrying the divine truth of being within itself but descended into the grip of death and ignorance; Savitri is the Divine Word, daughter of the Sun, goddess of the supreme Truth who comes down and is born to save; Aswapati, the Lord of the Horse, her human father, is the Lord of Tapasya, the concentrated energy of spiritual endeavour that helps us to rise from the mortal to the immortal planes; Dyumatsena, Lord of the Shining Hosts, father of Satyavan, is the Divine Mind here fallen blind, losing its celestial kingdom of vision, and through that loss its kingdom of glory. (Author's Note on *Savitri*)

And in the same note his closing statement brings an awareness in the reader towards his use of characterization not as symbols alone 'but incarnations or emanations of living and conscious Forces' with scope of building a living contact with them and having glimpses of the higher planes that these forces belong to. Ashwapati, the king is a yogi and follower of the path of Tapasya journeys through the worlds gathering the wisdom. Book II, The Book of Traveller of the Worlds, with largest number of cantos belongs to his adventure of consciousness is ipso facto Sri Aurobindo's own yogic experiences depicted autobiographically. He climbs the rungs of subtle planes towards the Knowledge and finally in his vision of the World-Mother he receives the boon of her power taking birth in answer to his prayer. The king is not satisfied with the grants that concern his life alone; he wants this grace to descend for the whole earth. His is an all embracing heart that beats in compassion for all the agony of existence and asks for a solution that can be realised upon earth.

His heart's demand had grown immeasurable:
His single freedom could not satisfy,
Her light, her bliss he asked for earth and men. (*Savitri* 315)

To begin with this enigma that begins in Book I as *the Yoga of the King: The Yoga of Soul's Release* opens the layers of '*the Secret Knowledge*', something that even scientists are referring to in their striving towards understanding of this riddle called creation. Some lines from the poem can express it better- *In the unfolding process of the Self/ Sometimes the inexpressible Mystery/ Elects a human vessel of descent.* (47), and further this vessel comes across all that is poured into it as revelations - *Always we bear in us a magic key/*

Concealed in life's hermetic envelope.(48). Here this 'we' is a promising adverb that immediately encourages the involvement of the reader from mere witness to an active participant of the play.

The beginning of the epic is *The Symbol Dawn*, the canto that narrates the day that is stamped for the death of Satyavan, - the actual happening takes place much later in Book VIII, Book of Death, Canto III, but here it also tells of the mystery '*Something that wished but knew not how to be*' (1). The opening line itself awakes a mystical sense in the reader, '*It was the hour before the gods awake*'(1), the Brahma Muhurta of Vedic description opens its eye in the reader but there is something more for the imagination to stretch its wings not only into the space of Mystique air but even in the moments waiting for the gods to open their celestial eyes.

The journey of Ashwapati is a multidimensional movement in the subtle worlds and through him the reader climbs '*The World Stair*'; is transported to '*The Kingdom of Subtle Matters*'; comes to know the ins and outs of the great Secret called 'Life'; witnesses its Glory and Fall; meets its Godheads controlling different planes; experiences the oneness as the character realizes *the World Soul*; arriving to the *Heaven's Ideal* explores certain levels of mind and on higher rung embarks upon *the Greater Knowledge*.

There is a truth to know, a work to do;
Her play is real; a Mystery he fulfils:
There is a plan in the Mother's deep world-whim,
A purpose in her vast and random game. (73)

and

For this he left his white infinity
And laid on the spirit the burden of the flesh,
That Godhead's seed might flower in mindless Space. (73)

Now, these expressions solve the riddle posing 'Why' in front of every seeker, in the following lines the seemingly unending conundrum begins to lighten its heavy load. Mind, the highest term for man finds itself like an infant at the bottom of a stair yet undiscovered. Sri Aurobindo has explained this state as the very beginning of the return journey. Putting aside the ego that bars the intellect with reason and shuts the doors for intuitive rays to enter into the dark, man can wake up to the new light accepting the great challenge. Ashwapati, represents the energy and aspiration which is inherent in creation. He, awakened and conscious, leads humanity to the point from where the horizon becomes clear for the steps ahead.

The protagonist is a woman, the princess of Madra, daughter of king Ashwapati and wife of Satyavan, the Shalvan prince, son of exiled king Dyumatsena. The portrayal of Savitri is an epitome of true womanhood. Here begins the second part of the epic *The Book of Birth and Quest*. Canto I *The Birth and Childhood of the Flame* and Canto II *The Growth*

of the Flame by the titles suggest the greatness she is born with. 'Spring' the king adorning earth with his beauty proclaims the arrival of the princess,

'All Nature was at beauty's festival.
In this high signal moment of the gods
Answering earth's yearning and her cry for bliss,
A greatness from our other countries came.' (352-3)

'Our other countries' in the above expression widens our boundaries from earth to universe and cosmic realities. Flame itself is symbolic of aspiration that burns constantly in the human psychic. A body of flesh, a vital full of desires, a mind that dreams of controlling the stars and a soul that yearns to meet the Beloved; all together prepare a being that wakes in his inner being and sees a greater light; wants to break free from the misery that ruthlessly kills all his innocent wishes; death, the dark power cuts short his journey towards his goal. The mystery increases that this aspiration grows in intensity in proportion to the defeats in the battle of powers that dominate his determination to win. The early receiving of Truth in the dawn of humanity singing of the highest aspirations ask for Truth against all Falsehood, which is Unknown, the Ignorance; for Light against Darkness, which is Tamas, the Inconscient; for Immortality against Death, which is oblivion. The same spirit is resumed in the epic in form of Savitri, the sanction of the Divine for Victory. She is Love incarnate, armoured with the strength of the soul, fights for the Right that the earth deserves. There is no other example in the history of legends to stand parallel to this character. As we find her at the hour of death '*What prayer she breathed her soul and Durga knew*'. (569), she emerges like a heart of the Secret in all her might waiting to act.

A mediating ray had touched the earth
Bridging the gulf between man's mind and God's;
Its brightness linked our transience to the Unknown. (353)

Geographically a large set up of all variations of nature's abundance in forests and hills is seen along with the palace where Savitri is brought up and as occult or spiritual visions Savitri also has the other worlds and planes as grows a character within. Ashwapati in his Tapasya travels the unknown worlds in the *Pursuit of the Unknowable* and Savitri in the preparation for the moment visits the worlds enlarging her being and cementing her will without any outer expression of it. She carries out the will of her father venturing into distant lands chooses Satyavan, her soul mate. On her return, Narada, the Seer, foresees the doom and on much insistence of the queen reveals the curse that Savitri would face after one year. Queen, mother would naturally ask, *Or must fire always test the great of soul?* And plead, *Once let unwounded pass a mortal life*. At this point the determination and iron will of feminine power in Savitri stands unmoved for the decision taken, "*Once my heart chose and chooses not again./The word I have spoken can never be erased./It is written in the record book of God*. (432) Savitri, the Divine Word is fighter and her might definitely dazzles an ordinary mind for she is one of such warriors as described in the following lines:

Earth is the chosen place of mightiest souls;
Earth is the heroic spirit's battlefield,
The forge where the Archmason shapes his works. (687)

It is she who *hast chosen to share earth's struggle and fate/ And leaned in pity over earth-bound men*, (698) for she is conscious of her work upon earth and would not shrink from battle. Here the mystification of the Problem is posed so skillfully and comprehensively that it encircles all the riddles of the world in it. *The Word of Fate* and *The Way of Fate and the Problem of Pain* in Book VI present the real life problems of all the levels, of past and of present. Further in progression of the year the Yoga of Savitri intensifies and bearing the burden of the foreknowledge she plunges within in search of the soul, she meets triple-soul-forces and beyond them finds her soul followed by Nirvana and discovers the All-Negating Absolute but passing these experiences she comes to The Discovery of the Cosmic Spirit and the Cosmic Consciousness.

She is prepared within and the day arrives. After Satyavan's death in the forest she journeys in the Black Void, the Eternal Night and hears the Voice of the Darkness. Here begins the mystery of double twilight- one is The Dream Twilight of the Ideal and the other is The Dream Twilight of the Earthly Real and in between them is the Gospel of the Death and vanity of the Ideal which is followed by a debate of Savitri, the Love and Death, the dark power. Death with all his might wants to prove that life is food for death and earth's laws will remain what they are, says,

'Accept the brief light that falls upon thy days;
Take what thou canst of Life's permitted joy;.(620)

He asks Savitri to return and suffer the grief she is allotted but she is like Durga, born of the divine powers brought together and assigned the task to change the destiny of the earth. She answers not only to defend her aspiration but also to show the Death god his true face,

'O Death, thou speakest truth but truth that slays,
I answer to thee with the Truth that saves.'(621)
A mute Delight regards Time's countless works:
To house God's joy in things Space gave wide room,
To house God's joy in self our souls were born.(630)

Finally with the Truth in her heart she unveils his dark mask and transforms the face of Death into his real self that is God the Beauty, the Delight, the Love, the Freedom and Immortality.

Man is born from light, perpetually struggles in darkness; son of god is given crown of thorn in return for his unconditional love; those who choose a righteous path, suffer the most, either a cross or a cup of poison hemlock drops the curtain. But the most amazing thing is the unquenchable courage and enthusiasm that does not let the struggle end and

neither escapes the warrior. Many questions take birth as this impenetrability increases. At each step man encounters a new 'why' which is though thought-provoking, yet remains unanswered as mind cannot gauge the reason in its present state. It needs to climb many more hills to arrive at the summit.

Savitri the epic answers it all for this has come from the levels of intuitive wisdom. Sri Aurobindo created this epic drawing the theme from a short tale occurring in Mahabharata but from a totally new perception which itself is a mystery he solved by herculean task of connecting himself to the Overmind plane for inspiration. What could be the reason for such a labour can be an exclamation for those who have not yet received the touch of the alchemy it is. *Savitri* proves itself at every level, as poetry, as philosophy, as revelation, as inspiration and vision of the evolutionary march of humanity and as solution of the Mystery called God and His creation. On *Savitri's* return to earth with Satyavan she is seen with such utterance by those who felt the change and the same can be expected of the readers towards the epic:

If this is she of whom the world has heard,
Wonder no more at any happy change.
Each easy miracle of felicity
Of her transmuting heart the alchemy is.(723)

Works Cited:

SriAurobindo. CWSA. *Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol*. Puducherry: SABDA, Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, 1997, Print.

SriAurobindo. CWSA. *The Future Poetry*. Puducherry: SABDA, Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, 1997, Print.

Ms. Ritam Upadhyay, Research Scholar, DAVV, Indore, Madhya Pradesh

Dr. Usha Jain, Prof. & Head, Dept. of English GACC, DAVV, Indore, Madhya Pradesh.

Miscegenated Totems and Misunderstood Talismans: Occidentomania in Gita Mehta's *Karma Cola*: *Marketing the Mystic East*

Subhadeep Paul

In *Karma Cola: Marketing the Mystic East*, Gita Mehta validates that position on a critically and contextually pragmatic take on the complex interstice between the East and the West, whenever and wherever an interactive felicity occurs between the two spatio-cultural categories. Mehta discards the conventional notion of a stringent classification of the two entities in black and white terms. Mehta re-examines the verity of both sacredness and sacrilege in the context of her contemporary milieu. This paper shows why and how *Karma Cola* cannot be simplified as a conceited NRI castigation of the native position of blind commercialisation of spirituality. Instead, it is a critical re-examination of the very premises of the discovery of Truth and re-sanitising holiness and profanity from their existential situation of being hopelessly muddled up. In that sense, *Karma Cola* offers a critical rescue from the conventional cross-cultural allegory trap.

Key Words: sacred, profane, mysticism, orient, occident, culture

“Everyone suspected that whatever America wanted America got. Why not Nirvana?” (Mehta, 6).

-The Kirkus Review points out that Gita Mehta's *Karma Cola* is fundamentally posited on the thesis “that East-West exchange is doomed to misunderstanding, that the Oriental can't see the parts and the Occidental can't see the whole”¹ (N. Pag). The postulation is that the writer of this non-fictional work, makes easy generalisations of the respective coteries of the East and the West and fails to account for the multi-layered grey shades that exist between the two campsites. However, a closer introspection reveals that Mehta's principal agenda is to deconstruct the stereotypical cultural constructs that constitutes this very iconographic symbology. Proceeding thereby, Mehta re-examines the verity of both sacredness and sacrilege in the purview of her contemporaneity. *Karma Cola*, therefore,

cannot be simplified as a conceited NRI castigation of the native position of blind commercialisation of spirituality. Instead, it is a critical re-examination of the very premises of the discovery of Truth and re-sanitising holiness and profanity from their existential situation of being hopelessly muddled up.

Mehta develops her argumentation on the conventional premise that India, as a subcontinental entity, has always been viewed as a land of seers in the popular Western imagination, which is why the craze for gurus, having psychic capacities and capable of providing enlightenment, has always been a dominant allure for the West. The modern cult of self-styled godmen emerged as an updation of the archetypal 'gurukul' model of Vedic instruction. However, while the gurukul model was premised on a casteist and selective shishya-training during the adolescent brahmacharya period, the mainstay of the godmen were to pull the materially surfeit but existentially awry adults from the West. Mehta uses the modal vehicle of caustic satire but employed in thematrix of genial entertainment tohighlight her main position.

Mehta deconstructs the idea of the mystical East that has been the indispensable fount on which celebrated fictional works like V.S Naipaul's *The Mystic Masseur* and R.K. Narayan's *The Guide* are based. Mehta elucidates on the praxis that mysticism, from the vantage point of a proto-colonial takeover, does not necessarily entail spiritual profundity or occult prowess, as is conventionally understood by the West. Instead, it actually lands up being a muddled misreading of ancient spiritual tradition of India, in the minds of occidentals. Mehta punctures the grandiose notion that there are enlightened gurus all over the fabled subcontinent, who can ostentatiously deliver the perfect package of enlightenment, enchantment and emancipation to these occidentals and therefore offer them the missing 'sutra' or clue for their happiness – something which the Western civilization, propelled and pivoted on the surfeit of materialism, failed to provide.

Mehta also diagnoses the datum that the counter-culture movement of the sixties', popularly known in India as the hippie movement, was majorly responsible for this culture-spiritual projection. There was a massive immigration of these foreigners, especially the hippies, from the West (especially America and England) onto the Indian soil, which in turn became a representative East-West interface of postcolonial India, given events like the interface of The Beatles' members and the sitar maestro PanditRavi Shankar or the popular hit of the cult Bollywood movie *Hare Rama Hare Krishna*. While Mehta satirises the gullibility of these westerners who had established their colonial exoticism on the fount of verisimilitude, she also exposes the fake spiritual posers who promote this spiritual tourism in a streamlined manner. Occidentomania is taken the fullest advantage of, by those whom Mehta describes as the 'jet stream gurus', apart from the hard-core reality that even the spiritual quest in agenda is far from being genuine. It is actually, as Mehta describes, "global escapism masquerading as spiritual hunger" (N. Pag). The matter of receiving the benediction of the sagacious sadhus, becomes a travesty of the original psychic quest itself because ironically, the mystic East, as it became in totality, was not simply a bastardisation

of the quintessential Western perception but rather more synonymous of the imperial Subject itself, from which it had ‘othered’ itself so vehemently. In Mehta’s own words, this becomes a situational irony and mockery of whatever genuine spiritual repository was of India’s claim in the very first place: [T]he mystic East, given half a chance, could teach the West a thing or two about materialism” (Ibid).

The casualties of such transcendent vacation oftentimes lead to dangerous extremes and even fatalities. These new age nomads had to be handed down a commodified version of the anticipated ‘moksha’, whereas in reality, what basically transpires is a heady cocktail of ‘kama’ and ‘artha’. In the bid for this covetousness and aggrandisement, absurd promises and ludicrous claims are made. Mehta doesn’t dismiss the latent human desire for spiritual redemption itself. But she categorically lambasts the contexts that lead to a total collapse of rationality, which often advocates temporal indulgences vaunted as the touchstone to eternity.

In fact, these self-styled gurus, their foundations and their serio-comical antics are tailored as escapades made possible so that occidentals do not get intimidated by the Oriental path of karmic rigour and penance and instead for the easy path of propitiation of the guru’s unquestioned diktat. R.K. Narayan’s *The Guide* shows how the gullible character Velan becomes a blind disciple of Raju, the poseur-Swami, with the saving grace of an ambiguity that probably Raju’s final prayer and penance for rains to save the drought-hit land was genuine, unless his careergraph lead us to remain suspicious and consider even this ultimate act one of his many nefarious ruses. In fact Raju becomes a prototype of the quintessential average hypocritical Indian national, whose very double standards are a prototypical norm of his daily living. As a matter of fact, the novel shows how even the B.B.C. comes to document this feat of prolonged fasting because the miracle-quotient adds tremendous weightage to the news-worthiness of the story. Gunjan Joshi in her essay ‘Of Gods and Godmen: A Literary Perspective’² opines that similar to the monk in Geoffrey Chaucer’s *The Canterbury Tales*, serio-comical frivolities are ample in similar characterisations of his Indian counterparts, be it in Indian Writing in English or the Bhasa-Sahityas. G.V. Desani’s *All About H. Hatterr* projects the Eurasian protagonist Hindustanwala Hatterr who meets seven different gurus with varying specialisations in his search for spiritual enlightenment. The irony lies in the fact that unlike Hermann Hesse’s eponymous protagonist in the novel *Siddhartha*, who has a different epiphanic realisation with each second party response, Desani’s protagonist gets progressively disillusioned with each successive encounter with so-called spiritualists. While Siddhartha turns inward in his quest, Hatterr looks at the outside world, hoping for an awakening but in vain. If Biju in Kiran Desai’s novel *The Inheritance of Loss* is mugged by native political goons and marauders while returning from America, Desani’s Hatterr is literally hypnotised into disrobing by the ‘Sage of Wilderness’ and his well-built right-hand disciple. This is because these charlatans were Lucknow-based dealers in old cloth. In trying to obtain news about the sage’s ‘tapasya’, Hatterr has to forfeit far more than ‘dakshina’ and barely gets to protect his modesty with a dirty towel bearing “the orange textile imprint of India’s G.I.P. Railway” (52). Rohinton

Mistry's *A Fine Balance* portrays the character of Bal Baba accepts hair as his alms because, being a barber in the past, it is the most easily saleable commodity known to him. Khushwant Singh's novel *Burial at the Sea* depicts a female guru riding a tiger (perhaps founded on the iconography of the Hindu goddess Mata Sherawali), with the intent of evoking a sense of insurgence against patriarchy.

Mehta's *Karma Cola*, despite being non-fictional, is replete with storial content. The occidentals are offered easy alternatives to a lifetime of prayer, penance and performance. For instance, the idea of reincarnation and recycling become veritably synonymous, thereby making spiritual targets appear as achievable. Mehta heightens the ludicrity of this entire exercise because ultimately, in the majority of cases, the ashramites were guided by wheeler-dealers. In *The Mahabharata*, Lord Krishna symbolically represents the conscience who guides the chariot (human body), intended for Arjuna (the embodied soul), and driven by four steeds (Time, Predestination, the Immanent Will and the individual's Freewill, and also the four 'chittas' of human intellect). Quite naturally, Mehta's acerbic satire becomes all the more pungent in this work because the alien soul-questers, whatever be their nationality, find themselves at the receiving end of delusion and exploitation by those very people who claim to be victimised by the orientalist attitudes of Whites everywhere.

What is interesting in this context is that India became, for several reasons, the spiritual El Dorado that was projected as the healing succour to occidental modern anxieties. Americans, Brits, Australians, the French, the Swiss, the Germans, the Canadians, Italians, the Swiss and various Scandanavian nationals – all cherished the singular goal of the inexplicable ecstasy that is experienced when the mortal individual comes in contact with the cosmic energy, albeit the mediation of the guru as the go-between.

What is evident from the very opening quotation of this paper, is the very pronouncement of an occidental arrogance that everything can be predicated on a capitalist purchasing power and, correspondingly, that everything has an asking price. This means that the corporeal is measured in corporal terms. The quintessential Western arrogance, in general terms, has been fanned by most Eastern gurus, with much fanfare, gaslighting and hyperventilation in the process of authenticating their respective claims, no matter however bizarre. The West has been, especially after the World Wars, pontificated on its identity as qualified by a spiritual desertification that demanded a much-needed recompense – something that the fabled East, in particular the land of magic, mystery and spices (India) could provide. It is a different thing that the self-styled godmen, who were all vying for the spirituality market, found in the hippies a certain wide-eyed enthusiasm, coupled with a metaphysical depravity and ethical misperception that made them soft targets. These godmen became quasi entrepreneurs much before economic liberalisation and globalisation arrived at India. After the nineties and well into the new millennium, these gurus have even entered the big league of the corporate world, thriving on promos of 'desification' and an assurance of reconnect with ancient Indic roots. What began with a proposed market for the

disillusioned ‘outsiders’, has now become an intra-state enterprise, where the gullible native subjects are the projected consumers of the FMCG merchandise and the spirituality market production. The term that Carol Upadhyia of the National Institute of Advanced Studies uses is ‘fast food packaged spirituality’³ which have been formatted into readymade service packages for busy professionals from time-scanty industries, such as the I.T. sector of India’s Silicon Valley. There is progressive specialisation, even among proponents of this segment, which Meera Nanda points out in her book *The God Market: How Globalisation is Making India More Hindu*. According to Nanda, spiritual seekers “shop around” (N.Pag) for their desired gurus, who claim to create miracles or expound Vedic wisdom or promise healing through yoga, meditation and alternative medicine, coupled with new-age techniques of astrology/tarot, vastu/feng shui, reiki, pranic healing, aromatherapy etc. The Modern karmic universe is not predicated on the actions of one’s freewill but on decisive choices one makes through indulgence and purchasing power. However, Edna Fernandes opines that although neoliberal economic policies might have worked to the advantage of the God market in India, one cannot posit “a fixed causal link between globalisation and the rise of Hindu nationalism”⁴ (Fernandes, N.Pag) because there are several political and historical factors that Nanda possibly overlooks. In fact, the God market was already quite strong since the pre-globalisation eras, with the spiritualists getting several incentives and concessions to their advantage.

V.R.N. Prasad in his essay ‘The Incredible Godmen and the Indian Literary Renaissance’⁵ rightly opines that what has “rightly attracted widespread disgust and disapprobation” (Prasad 319) is the average charlatan’s attempt “to imitate and echo the genuine eschatology, parading specious trickery as the gospel truth” (Ibid). Prasad toes the line of Gita Mehta, when he critiques “[t]his ersatz packaging of instant nirvana” welded into “the glitter of Madison Avenue hype” (Ibid). This malaise is also succinctly pointed out by Corrado Micheli, who praises Mehta for depicting the irony that the Occidental is blissfully unaware of – which is that unless narcissism be annihilated, true wisdom never dawns on the individual and this wisdom is neither Oriental nor Occidental but universal. So instead of an easily digestible Vedic or Upanishadic palate of Oriental knowledge repertoire, the Westerners in question receive the worst kinds of conmanship from the cosmetic gurus they idolise. This orientalist exoticisation results in a disguised ‘occidentomania’, where not only do the westerners turn maniacal for the consumption of Oriental spiritual merchandise but also whet up the appetite of the non-West to exploit the westerners by satisfying their stylistical expectations from the East, which again is ingrained in their very political unconscious. When ‘occidentomania’ is truly abandoned, the enthusiasm for native and traditional forums is usually revived, especially for the native populaces themselves. However, in this case, as Mehta points out, the affluence of the West is courted, resulting in a crass ‘occidentomania’, which dehumanises the Occident as much as it does the Orient. Kelly Devine Thomas rightly points out (with reference to Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit’s book *Occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of its Enemies*) that the

idea of the West that “at best has civilization but it has no culture”⁶ (N. Pag) is stereotypically acknowledged as much in the West, as it is in the East. However, Mehta’s zealous focus on the devious cultists might lead the naïve reader to fall in an allegory trap – as pointed out by Guy Du Bose in the following lines: “Although this arguably makes for a more interesting and comical narrative, the unsuspecting reader may draw the unwarranted conclusion that all Western devotees in India are suffering from a form of mental malady”⁷ (Bose 60). Mehta has also been charged of promoting expatriate biases, although one cannot but applaud her subtle take of the most esoteric travesties committed in the name of spirituality and proving in the manner of E.M. Forster in *The Passage to India* that despite the countless ‘Indias’ that we might conjure or create, the ‘Real India’ will always elude us, so long as we do not conscientiously abdicate the evident fabrications that run in its name. ■

Works Cited:

- Bose, Guy Du. “Gurus Are Many... True Seekers Rare.” *Yoga Journal*. 34, Sep. 1980, p.60.
- Joshi, Gunjan. “Of Gods and Godmen – A Literary Perspective.” *Bookaholicanonymous* (A Reading Blog). Nov 17, 2018. <bookaholicanonymous.com>.
- Deshmane, A. “Selling Spirituality” in ‘The Nation.’ *Frontline*, Sep 27, 2017. N.Pag. <<https://frontline.thehindu.com/the-nation/selling-spirituality/article9870620.ec>>.
- Fernandes, Edna. “The God Market: How Globalisation is Making India More Hindu by Meera Nanda.” *New Humanist*. Feb 18, 2010. N.Pag. <<https://newhumanist.org.uk>>.
- Karma Cola – By Gita Mehta’, *Kirkus*. <<https://www.kirkusreviews.com>>.
- Prasad, V.R.N. “The Incredible Godmen and the Indian Literary Renaissance.” *Sydney Studies in Religion*, 1994. p.319. <<http://www.openjournals.library.sydney.edu.au>>.
- Thomas, Kelly Devine. “Historical Studies - Occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of Its Enemies.” *The Institute Letter Spring 2007* (the Institute for Advanced Study). N.Pag. <<https://www.ias.edu/ideas/2007/occidentalism-west>>.
-

Dr. Subhadeep Paul, Assistant Professor, Department of English, School of Literature, Language & Cultural Studies, Bankura University, West Bengal.

Role of ‘Mask’ in Literature and in Daily Life

Radhashyam Dey

This COVID19 situation has made the term mask widely known and has made mask a necessity of life. Use of mask has a long history. Mask in ancient Greek theatre was a necessary tool. The Greek term for mask is persona and was a significant element in the worship of Dionysus at Athens. It was widely used in ceremonial rites and celebrations. In fact, masks have been used almost universally to represent characters in theatrical performances. Masks allowed dramatists to believably portray female characters, because women were not allowed to perform on stage. Robert Cohen considers that mask is one of the seventh components of theatre—the first six being Aristotle’s elements of plot, character, thought, diction, melody and spectacle. However, the most significant role of the mask was that of transformation: an ordinary man could go beyond his real identity and become a mythological hero or a lusty satyr, a foolish old man or a beautiful young woman, a god or a slave. It was considered a costume piece and then made itself more present until it became well known and a world wide symbol.

Key Words: mask, ceremonial, theatrical performances, portray, dramatic device, transformation

Introduction:

Mask is a means of disguise or concealment usually worn over or in the face to hide the identity of a person and to give an identity that the wearer of it wants to give. This essential characteristic of hiding personalities or moods is common to all mask-wearers. As a theatre device masks have been used throughout the world in all periods since the Stone Age and have been as varied in appearance as in their use and symbolism. Theatrical performances are a visual literature of a transient, momentary kind. It is most impressive because it can be seen as a reality; it expends itself by its very revelation. The mask participates as a more enduring element, since its form is physical. Masks are usually worn on the face, although they may also be positioned for effect elsewhere on the wearer’s body.

The mask as a device for theatre first emerged in Western civilization from the religious practices of ancient Greece. In the worship of Dionysus, god of fecundity and the harvest, the communicants’ attempt to impersonate the deity by donning goatskins and by imbibing wine

eventually developed into the sophistication of masking. When a literature of worship appeared, a disguise, which consisted of a white linen mask hung over the face, a device supposedly initiated by Thespis, a 6th-century-BCE poet who is credited with originating tragedy, enabled the leaders of the ceremony to make the god manifest. Thus symbolically identified, the communicant was inspired to speak in the first person, thereby giving birth to the art of drama. In Greek drama, masks were useful devices that allowed actors to play several different characters, including those of different genders. The masks could be seen throughout the large amphitheatres in a way a face could not and were stylized so as to project the soul and emotions of the character. Stock characters were identified via masks, so that anyone in the audience could easily comprehend who was a villain, lover or king.

The symbol of drama, the exaggerated faces of joy and sorrow are a direct descendant of Greek theatre masks. The use of masks is said to originate from the worship of the god Dionysus, who is always portrayed wearing a mask and whose sometimes violent cult of wine and celebration gives rise to exaggeration, delight and despair. The two masks were always understood as both separate representations of the two most common forms of theatre, but also intrinsically linked in their representation of the human condition. A play can take its audience through a variety of emotions, often from one extreme to the other, and the millennia-old comedy/tragedy masks are still relevant as the depiction of that journey.

In Greece the progress from ritual to ritual-drama was continued in highly formalized theatrical representations. Masks used in these productions became elaborate headpieces made of leather or painted canvas and depicted an extensive variety of personalities, ages, ranks, and occupations. Moreover, their use made it possible for the Greek actors—who were limited by convention to three speakers for each tragedy—to impersonate a number of different characters during the play simply by changing masks and costumes. Details from frescoes, mosaics, vase paintings, and fragments of stone sculpture that have survived to the present day provide most of what is known of the appearance of these ancient theatrical masks. The tendency of the early Greek and Roman artists to idealize their subjects throws doubt, however, upon the accuracy of these reproductions. In fact, some authorities maintain that the masks of the ancient theatre were crude affairs with little aesthetic appeal.

Mask was used in the worship of Dionysus and in ceremonial rites. Most of the evidence comes from only a few vase paintings of the 5th century BC, such as one showing a mask of the god suspended from a tree with decorated robe hanging below it and dancing and the Pronomos vase, which depicts actors preparing for a Satyr play. No physical evidence remains available to us, as the masks were made of organic materials and not considered permanent objects, ultimately being dedicated to the altar of Dionysus after performances. Nevertheless, the mask is known to have been used since the time of Aeschylus and considered to be one of the iconic conventions of classical Greek theatre.

Illustrations of theatrical masks from 5th century display helmet-like mask, covering the entire face and head, with holes for the eyes and a small aperture for the mouth, as well

as an integrated wig. It is interesting to note that these paintings never show actual masks on the actors in performance; they are most often shown being handled by the actors before or after a performance, that liminal space between the audience and the stage, between myth and reality. This demonstrates the way in which the mask was to ‘melt’ into the face and allow the actor to vanish into the role. Effectively, the mask transformed the actor as much as memorization of the text. Therefore, performance in ancient Greece did not distinguish the masked actor from the theatrical character.

The mask-makers were called *skeuopoios* or “maker of the properties,” thus suggesting that their role encompassed multiple duties and tasks. The masks were most likely made out of light weight, organic materials like stiffened linen, leather, wood, or cork, with the wig consisting of human or animal hair. Due to the visual restrictions imposed by these masks, it was imperative that the actors hear in order to orientate and balance themselves.

In a large open-air theatre, like the Theatre of Dionysus in Athens, the classical masks were able to bring the characters’ face closer to the audience, especially since they had intensely over-exaggerated facial features and expressions. They enabled an actor to appear and reappear in several different roles, thus preventing the audience from identifying the actor to one specific character. Their variations help the audience to distinguish sex, age, and social status, in addition to revealing a change in a particular character’s appearance, i.e. Oedipus after blinding himself. Unique masks were also created for specific characters and events in a play, such as The Furies in Aeschylus’ *Eumenides* and Pentheus and Cadmus in Euripides’ *The Bacchae*. Worn by the chorus, the masks created a sense of unity and uniformity, while representing a multi-voiced persona or single organism and simultaneously encouraged interdependency and a heightened sensitivity between each individual of the group.

In order to play female roles, since the actors were always men, they were wearing a “*prosterneda*” (in front of the chest, to imitate female breasts) and “*progastreda*” in front of the belly. The actors used to put on ordinary shoes, such as loose fitting boots and laced boots. In some scholars’ opinion, the actors used shoes with high heels (“*kothornoi*”). We cannot be sure about that, because we do not have clear evidence from the pottery. In the later years (2nd century BC), it is sure that these shoes with high heels (“*kothornoi*”) have been introduced.

Some authors have argued that use of costume in Athenian tragedy was standardized for the genre. This is said to have consisted of a full-length or short tunic, a cloak and soft leather boots, and may have been derived from the robes of Dionysian priests or invented by Aeschylus. Brockett, however, disputes this, arguing that the evidence we have is based on archaeological remains, some few references in the texts, and the writings of later authors. As far as the vase paintings are concerned, most of these are dated later than the 5th Century BCE and their relationship with theatrical practice is unclear. One of the earliest examples is a red-figure vase painting c. 500-490 BCE that shows a tragic chorus invoking a ghost, on a crater (bowl) in the Antikenmuseum in Basle.

The use of mask in ancient Greek theatre portrays their origin from the ancient Dionysian cult. Thespis was the first writer who used a mask in Theatre. The member of the actors used different types of masks to play more roles. The actors were all men. The mask was therefore necessary to let them play the female roles. The question of whether women, really participated in theatre and had their role is the subject of debate. It is believed that the women were excluded from the theatres in classical times and women played the part of goddess in the Minoan culture. Plato in his *Republic III*, clarified:

There is one kind of poetry and tale telling which works wholly through imitation, as you remarked, tragedy and comedy, and another which employs the recital of the poet himself, best exemplified, I presume, it dithyramb, and there is again that which employs both, in epic poetry and in many other places.

The roles of women in Greek drama are all roles conceived by men because all the ancient Greek playwrights were men. They turned to the women in their lives as models, because all the women in the plays were frequent and important. Women participated heavily in religion so it is possible that they participated fully in the theatre. But they were excluded from the festival where the dramas that have come down to us were performed. In the Minoan culture women were chosen to act out the role of the Goddess.

Plato allows a different interpretation of the ancient theatre with the following quote:

Do not imagine, then, that we will ever thus lightly allow you to set up your stage beside us in the marketplace, and give permission to those imported actors of yours, with their dulcet tones and their voices louder than ours, to harangue women and children and the whole populace, and to say not the same things as we say about the same institution, but, on the contrary, thing that are, for the most part, just the opposite.

Here Plato suggests that dramas were commonly performed outside of the festival of Dionysus in the marketplace. The tragedians took their plays to the roads of different towns to make more money.

In the Middle Ages, masks were used in the mystery plays of the 12th to 16th century. In plays dramatizing portions of the Bible, grotesques of all sorts, such as devils, demons, dragons, and personifications of the seven deadly sins, were brought to stage life by the use of masks. Constructed of papier-mâché, the masks of the mystery plays were evidently marvels of ingenuity and craftsmanship, being made to articulate and to belch fire and smoke from hidden contrivances. But again, no reliable pictorial record has survived. Masks used in connection with present-day carnivals and Mardi Gras and those of folk demons and characters still used by central Europeans, such as the Perchten masks of Alpine Austria, are most likely the inheritors of the tradition of medieval masks.

In Greek comedy the masking of the head and dressing of the body was essential to effect a full transformation of the actor into a comic character. The body mask was as important as the head in its power to transform the actor into a different persona, suggesting that the comic characters' bodies were as significant as their heads in producing meaning and not a simple costume accessory. In attempting to understand the function of the comic mask and body in ancient performance, this paper considers the similarities between the distorted bodies through a careful examination of a series of vase paintings and terracotta figurines. In doing so, it aims to show that the Aristophanic mask would not have been perceived by the audience as fixed to echo pre-determined meanings but changeable in accordance with the wider performance context. The spectators would thus have had the freedom to 'recreate' the characters anew, allowing their imagination to flourish in line with the participatory nature of the event and playful nature of the dramatic parts.

Masks can also be used as a dramatic tool, e.g. lowering the masks shows reflection, raising the mask shows a challenge or superiority. The Greeks called these physical stances *schemata* (forms). Silent masks were used to great effect, particularly on child actors, expressing powerlessness, bewilderment, vulnerability, etc. The use of masks enabled the three speaking actors to portray up to eight or nine characters, through multiple role-playing. The same character, could therefore be played by different actors, and transitions within a character would be portrayed by the use of different masks.

The morphological elements of the mask are with few exceptions derived from natural forms. Masks with human features are classified as anthropomorphic and those with animal characteristics as the biomorphic. In some instances the mask form is a replication of natural features or is quite realistic, and in other instances it is an abstraction. Masks usually represent supernatural beings, ancestors, and fanciful or imagined figures, and they can also be portraits. The localization of a particular spirit in a specific mask must be considered a highly significant reason for its existence. In masks worn for socially significant rituals, the change in identity of the wearer for that of the mask is vital, for if the spirit represented does not reside in the image of the mask, the ritual petitions, supplications, and offerings made to it would be ineffectual and meaningless. The mask, therefore, most often functions as a means of contact with various spirit powers, thereby protecting against the unknown forces of the universe by prevailing upon their potential beneficence in all matters related to life.

The masks most familiar to us are those representing comedy and tragedy, but there seen to have been masks representing a wide variety of emotions. In tragedy, regardless of the emotion portrayed, the mask preserved a kind of nobility of feature. In comedy, masks were often grotesque and ridiculous. There is a theory held by some modern historians of Greek theatre that the mouthpiece of the mask served as a kind of megaphone to amplify the speech of the actor. In and outdoor theatre before the days of electronic sound equipment, such amplification might certainly have been welcome. Another function of the mask was to add aesthetic distance, removing rather effectively the actor from the real of everyday

life, giving him and his actions a significance which they might otherwise not have. This is especially true in tragedy. The tragic actor also wore high-soled boots which gave him an impressive height. The comic actor was often excessively padded and ridiculously padded, made to seem more foolish rather than a real person.

The costuming of the actors was, too formalised rather than realistic. Because the audience sat relatively far from the stage, the actors wore masks which represented various facial expressions. Masks are also familiar as pieces of kit associated with practical functions, usually protective. There has been a proliferation of such masks recently but there is a long history of protective armour and even medical mask to ward off plague. Ritual and theatrical masks themselves can be considered to be practical, and protective masks in a sports context in particular are often designed to enhance the appearance of the wearers. So the aesthetic effects of masks to represent the female characters can readily be evaluated as art objects. But this evaluation is based on elements very different from those appraised within the mask's own culture. This is partly because the total artistic qualities of a mask derive both from its exterior forms and from its meaning and function within its cultural context. There exist, however, in all cultures criteria for determining the quality of objects as art. These criteria differ from one culture to another, and they may be known only from investigations carried out within the varying cultures. ■

Works Cited:

- Bruce, Heiden. *Tragic Rhetoric: An Interpretation of Sophocles' Trachiniae*. New York and Bern. 1989.
- Carter, D. M. "The Demos in Greek Tragedy". *The Cambridge Classical Journal*. 2015, pp. 47–94.
- Cohen, Robert. *Theatre*. Palo Alto. Mayfield Publishing Company. 1981, p. 33.
- Frendo, Mario. "Ancient Greek Tragedy as Performance: the Literature–Performance Problematic". *New Theatre Quarterly*. February 2019. **35** (1): 19–32.
- Hart, M.L. *The Art of Ancient Greek Theatre*. Los Angeles: Getty Publications. 2010, p. 9.
- Michellini, A.N. *Euripides and the Tragic Tradition*. Madison. University of Wisconsin Press. 2006.
- Oates, W. & O'Neil, E. *The Complete Greek Drama*. New York: Random House. 1998. pp. 14-17.
- Plato. *Book III, 344c. Plato Republic*. Indianapolis: Hackett. 2004.
- Scodel, R. *An Introduction to Greek Tragedy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2011. p. 33.

Dr. Radhashyam Dey, Asst. Prof. of English, Yogoda Satsanga Mahavidyalaya, Jagannathpur, Dhurwa, Ranchi, Jharkhand.

Cathartic Effect in *A River Sutra*: An Inward Journey

T. Imsunaro Ao

Rosaline Jamir

Gita Mehta's novel *A River Sutra* presents the river Narmada as a timeless source of Indian spirituality. The pulsating life and character of the novel centres on India's holiest river, the Narmada. It is a place where wounded souls, broken spirits and minds ridden with fear and desolation find release in its waters. It has a cathartic effect on the meandering souls in the novel. Catharsis is a state of spiritual cleansing as the Greeks would call it. It is also a state of letting go of your anxiousness and stress as well as the renewal of the spirit. In *A River Sutra*, characters embark on uncharted voyages against the oppressive cycle of nature. An inward journey in the novel provides access to higher levels of consciousness. Delving into deeper truths enables the characters to grapple with what is real and what is important. Readers find themselves so engulfed in it due to a captivating and engaging narrative. This paper purports to show how strategically it engages the mind with religious interpretations and psychoanalytic perspectives, thus opening up critical lines of enquiry.

Key Words: Catharsis, uncharted voyages, religious interpretations, psychoanalytic perspectives.

Gita Mehta is a well-known writer, documentary filmmaker and a journalist. Her novel *A River Sutra* is woven around a saga of interlinked stories. The novel is situated on India's holiest river, the Narmada - "The river is among our holiest pilgrimage sites, worshipped as the daughter of the God Shiva (River Sutra: 1). River Narmada is also associated with the religious faiths and beliefs of Indian people. Further reading leads us to realize that it becomes a source of redemption and salvation for the people. These simple narratives carry the readers through a careful arrangement of interlocking didactic tales whose characters are "an unlikely assortment of paradoxes, tensions and confusions, with each one attempting to discover and interiorize the truth of his being in his own unique way. (Nair: 149)

As we see the story unfold, we see the characters setting out to find truth within them. The monk in "The Monk's Story" renounces the materialistic life to gain renunciation. It is based on the principles of Renunciation in life by stripping oneself of all worldly comforts and attachments. The Monk's decision is based on the philosophy of love, as suffering in life is essential for the attainment of salvation. Attainment of salvation is the path to finding truth within his inner consciousness. In the other characters like Master

Mohan, the Courtesan's daughter, Nitin Bose, Uma and the Musician's daughter, the nature of truth becomes even more complex. The complexity lends itself to more confusion and tension but it finally finds its sweet release in the holy waters of Narmada. River Narmada provides a kind of therapy that is healing, refreshing and life-giving.

This is perhaps a therapy that might lead the characters in the novel towards a kind of Catharsis. This paper will venture to probe into the region of Psychoanalysis and examine psychological problems as rooted in the unconscious mind. Psychoanalysis is defined as a type of therapy that aims to release pent up or repressed emotions and memories or to lead the client to Catharsis or healing (McLeod 2014). In other words, the goal of psychoanalysis is to bring what exists at the unconscious or subconscious level up to consciousness. The trajectory in the novel also points towards the subconscious and the unconscious mind.

This study leads me to examine a warped up character like Nitin Bose. "The Executive's story" speaks about Nitin Bose, a young executive, who works in a tea company in Calcutta. He was thrown into an abyss of darkness and confusion. We see an interplay of his subconscious and unconscious mind which affects his conscious level. Stories about serpent women as enchantresses and sorceresses make a deep imprint on his subconscious mind. The demarcation between reality and subconscious level is so thin that it fades away as darkness envelopes him." But when she left my bed I was already asleep, dreaming I still held a creature half serpent in my arms..." (River Sutra:81). Another level of consciousness renders Nitin Bose as a man devoid of all logical reasoning when he encounters this snake woman. This passionate state of mind regulates his consciousness. He is thrown into a violent mental and emotional agitation and wants a solution. The symptoms that are manifested here are considered to be caused by latent disturbances. Nitin Bose pours his fear, his inner dark secrets into his diary. This is perhaps a form of cathartic therapy which helps to cleanse and heal the evils embedded in the mind. River Narmada is capable of dispelling such evil effects embedded deep down in the subconscious mind.

River Sutra is at the crossroads of sacred and profane journeys. All types of people walks through the space of the Rest house such as pilgrims, government officials, scholars, Vano tribal women, Muslim clerics, Hindu ascetics and petty criminals. The Manager of the Rest house is embroiled in the very complex nature of the stories and he in a way undergoes a spiritual journey which explores the inner recesses of his mind. These stories make the Manager question his own religious beliefs. He too undergoes some kind of purging of his inner self with the unfolding of every saga.

The Narrator gets deeply embroiled in the stories and in the characters he encounters. He tries to understand life through questioning. He sees only the surface level, hence fails to understand human nature. Compared to the Narrator, Tariq Mia is more like a philosopher who is a gifted storyteller and he fully understands the frailties of a human mind. Tariq Mia appropriately says this to the Narrator "How can you say you have given up the world when you know so little of it? (River Sutra: 33). We recognize moments where the Narrator who

is also the Manager of the Guest house fails to turn down the external noise and turn up the inner wisdom. The rhythm of pulsating life and energy which he seems to have given up continues to pre-occupy his unconscious mind. He is easily influenced by other people's desires, choices and opinions. Amidst all these external voices & noises, his thought pattern lacks a coherent vision of life.

To dispel the thoughts and memories of such disturbing voices, the Narrator visits Tariq Mia and is told another story. The writer chooses to tell the story of Master Mohan through Tariq Mia who is also a witness of this event. Master Mohan in "The Teacher's story" is a music teacher with unfulfilled desire of being a famous singer. "Whatever you touch is cursed; whatever you are given you lose." (River Sutra:36) Such abuses were hurled at Master Mohan by his wife. This pierced him like a knife and such insults were buried deep down in his unconscious mind. Lonely and rejected, Master Mohan's mind reverberated with music and singing. Inwardly he heard it being played over and over again in his head. An involuntary motion like coughing was a "nervous reaction to his family's ability to silence the music he heard in his own head." (River Sutra:38) A form of inward communication within him grew louder as the spoken form of language was curtailed by his family members. Music provided him comfort. He took flights of fancy into the world of music. This was made possible when he meets an orphan boy Imrat. He feels that Imrat is his own self, therefore he takes him under his tutelage. Unfortunately Imrat's murder leads him towards a path of madness and he comes to the banks of the river Narmada in search of solace and peace. The cruel death of Imrat sounded not only a death knell to his music and singing but he felt his life ebbing away.

This paper will examine the concept of the Cathartic effect Narmada has on troubled souls. The Executive Nitin Bose, the Jain Monk and the Naga Baba, the Courtesan's daughter, Uma the river minstrel, all were rescued by the holiness of the river. The river becomes a symbol of the immortality of life and has a huge capacity to give love. River Narmada is presented as an eternal source of the flow of life.

Turtles and river dolphins find refuge in your waters
Alighting herons play upon your tranquil surface.
Fish and crocodiles are gathered in your embrace
O holy Narmada.
Bards and ascetics sing your wonders.
Gamblers, Cheats and dancers praise you
We all find refuge in your embrace
O holy Narmada (River Sutra: 181)

The novel is centred on the banks of the river Narmada, which many people claim to be a manifestation of the Goddess. Hinduism sees it as one of the seven most sacred rivers in India. "It is said that Shiva, Creator and Destroyer of Worlds, was in an ascetic trance so strenuous that rivulets of perspiration began flowing from his body down the hills. The

stream took on the form of a woman - the most dangerous of her kind: a beautiful virgin innocently tempting even ascetic to pursue her inflaming their lust by appearing at one moment as a lightly dancing girl, at another as a romantic dreamer, at yet another as a seductress loose-limbed with the lassitude of desire. Her inventive variations so amused Shiva that he named her Narmada, the Delightful One, blessing her with the words "You shall be forever holy, forever inexhaustible." Then he gave her in marriage to the ocean, Lord of Rivers, most lustrous of all her suitors. (River Sutra:5-6)

The study also leads us to analyse the redemptive and cathartic power of River Narmada in "The Courtesan's story". We can sense River Narmada as the reconnecting element between our materialistic life and the spiritual world in this story. It is a tale of the love between a Courtesan's daughter and a dacoit. After the initial refusal and denial, the girl surrenders herself to Rahul Singh, a dacoit and falls in love with him. When Rahul Singh dies of an injury through an ambush with the police, the girl ends her life in the Narmada. She is gathered into her bosom. This in a way redeems and purges her. Her mother too releases her quietly and peacefully to the healing power of River Narmada. The mother was happy "her daughter had died in the Narmada because she would be purified of all her sins." (River Sutra:122) It seems to be quite befitting and natural that when the world fails to give shelter, River Narmada takes her into her bosom. The criminal offense of suicide is often ignored if the offender is trying to kill himself/herself in the waters of Narmada. The river minstrel sings - "You remove the stains of evil

You release the wheel of suffering
You lift the burdens of the world
O holy Narmada." (River Sutra: 180)

The Narmada River purifies the soul of people, who are swindled and deceived by cunning human nature and materialistic love. Epileptics, depressives and other unfortunates rush to her banks (Kachappilly:377). The Nawab of Shahbag in "The Courtesan's story" inwardly contemplates that "Bathing in the waters of the Jamuna purifies a man in seven days, in the waters of the Saraswati in three, in the waters of the Ganges in one, but the Narmada purifies with a single sight of her waters." (River Sutra:105)

Next, we see Mehta's portrayal of the musician's daughter in "The Musician's story". She presents an unloved, unwanted soul who eventually experiences a spiritual cleansing in the River Narmada. In "The Musician's Story" a young musician comes to Mahadeo as a pilgrim. This trip is a part of her musical education. Her physical ugliness is a contrast and hides the beauty of her music which is one of the arts gifted by Shiva to mankind:

"There was no art until Shiva danced the Creation"... Music lay asleep inside a motionless rhythm - deep as water, black as darkness, weightless as air. Then Shiva shook his drum. Everything started to tremble with the longing to exist. The universe erupted into being, as Shiva danced. The six mighty ragas, the pillars of all music, were born from the

expressions on Shiva's face, and through their vibrations the universe was brought into existence. (River Sutra:132-133)

Her Father who is the music teacher bargains a deal with a young music learner. The young musician fails to see a beautiful heart and a talented musician. He rejects her because of her ugliness. From that time onwards, the very sound of music turned 'hateful' to her ears. The daughter no longer wished to play, for her heart had been broken, and she felt as if her father had not protected her. She had been transformed into a longing Parvati. She longed to be a wife, like Parvati, and to find love but felt cursed for her wish had been denied. Her father convinces her that beauty is just skin deep and that it is so transient.

The young musician embarks on an inward journey. A silent distraught pilgrimage in search of healing, to be purged of her longing and desire for marriage and human companionship. True meditation will release her of all anxiousness and pain and will renew her spirits as well. This journey alone will enable her to become a ragini to every raga, a bride of music and not a bride to a musician. But, Will this inner journey of personal self-discovery lead the young musician to a life filled with love, peace and self-empowerment? To her question- Do you think this river has such power? The Narrator is overwhelmed and cannot give her a befitting response. The Manager was troubled by this story for he felt such pity for the girl, he could not find a solution to her feelings.

The beauty of the Narmada makes it a perfect retreat for anyone like me wishing to withdraw from the world. But how can it exorcise a lover's grief?" (River Sutra:146) the narrator asks Tariq Mia. To explain if the Narmada river has such curing power or not, Tariq Mia narrates "The Minstrel's story" to the narrator. The story is "a recreation of the myth of Siva and Narmada." The importance of the relationship of the Narmada River with the people who surround the banks is demonstrated through the story of Naga Baba and his disciple Uma. "The Minstrel's Story" is a bond of the spiritual love of a Naga Baba for a brothel girl. In the beginning she is just used and an abused child, who does not even have an identity. "The customers chose the name "Chand" they said my skin is as soft as moonlight" (River Sutra:161). She is taken by the Naga Baba far away into the dense jungle and finally across the River Narmada. She was treated only as a commodity to be used and abused but here she is given an identity and her humanity is restored. She gains a new life and respectability. She is also taught that Narmada is her home and mother. Mehta depicts River Narmada as a mother who always welcomes her children to relieve them from mental and physical sorrow and emotional pain.

"The Narmada claims all girls as hers. Tonight you become a daughter of the Narmada." (River Sutra:163) As soon as she dips in the holy river, she emerges as a new individual. She is now a child of the river. The Naga Baba teaches Uma to read and write and sing in praise of Narmada, thus making her a river minstrel. Uma undergoes the inward journey of self-analysis and self-realization. After fostering Uma for some years, the Naga Baba leaves her to follow the next stage of enlightenment.

All these stories converge at one point, that the River Narmada is an enduring source of life and hence immortal. The one common denominator in all these stories is that River Narmada provides a kind of therapy that is healing, refreshing and life-giving.

Each tale is aimed at exploring the tragic reality of life, the story of the human heart and presents choices, which lends to its complex make-up. We seek outside of ourselves for our answers, instead of taking the time to go within and listen, inquire, and explore our own truth.' The novel highlights an engaging inner dialogue through which Gita Mehta expresses the psychology of the human mind.

Manimekalai in her article "Man's Eternal Quest for Significance in Gita Mehta's *A River Sutra and Raj*" expresses that "The author has imbibed all its essence and thoroughly discusses the relevance of it in order to understand the inner self." (p 235) Through *A River Sutra*, Gita Mehta has successfully made inroads to the inner recesses of the conscious and subconscious mind. While we may be quite knowledgeable about the world outside of us, we have failed to come to terms with our inner world. This paper has made an attempt to show that it is in having a cathartic experience that characters can be healed and cured. This aspect in the novel engages the mind and the inquiry process requires constant questioning and analyzing of our beliefs and thought patterns. Thus the psychoanalytic approach is expressed as the undercurrent of the novel. ■

Works Cited:

- Kachappilly, Lissy. "River: A Cultural Construct in Gita Mehta's *A River Sutra*." *International Journal of English Language* Vol 6, Issue 10, October 2018, p 377
- Manimekalai, G "Man's Eternal Quest for Significance in Gita Mehta's *A River Sutra and Raj*: Language in India www.languageindia.com ISSN 1930-2490, Vol 17: 12 December 2017, p 235
- Mehta, Gita. *A River Sutra*. New Delhi. Penguin books, 1993.
- Nair, Rama. "The Myth of Redemption in Gita Mehta's '*A River Sutra*' *Indian Women Novelists*, Set 111, Vol 4. Edited by R.K Dhawan. New Delhi. Prestige books, 1995.
- McLeod, S.A. (2019). *Psychoanalysis*. SimplyPsychology. <https://www.simplypsychology.org/psychoanalysis.html>
- Nair, Rama. "The Myth of Redemption in Gita Mehta's '*A River Sutra*' *Indian Women Novelists*, Set 111, Vol 4. Edited by R.K Dhawan. New Delhi. Prestige books, 1995.
- Verma, Charu. "A River Sutra: Changing Spectrum of Subconscious." *Creative Forum*. 1-2 (Jan-Dec 1997): 105-111. Print

Dr. Rosaline Jamir, Prof of English, Dept. of Humanities, NIT, Nagaland.
T. Imsunaro, Research Scholar of English, NIT, Nagaland.

Eternity Freaks and the Bogus Gurus : A Study of Gita Mehta's *Karma Cola*

RüületoVakha

Rosaline Jamir

Gita Mehta's *Karma Cola* brings to light the commercially moronic romance of the West and the East on the spiritual plane. As the caption of the novel states 'Marketing the Mystic East', the book is based on the mushrooming of spiritual marketing in the second half of the last century, leading to bizarre and grimly but often humorous situations as a result of this interaction. When the West, rocking and rolling, spearheaded by none other than the Beatles, in the karmic obsession of their generation came looking for spiritual guidance in the East; the East— most suitably represented by India in the book— took the opportunity with both hands and the result is an uncanny exploitation of minds, spiritual values and cultural ethos on both sides. The give-and-take adage, the metaphorical bartering of everything in this world, is realized in the most ridiculous of ways and the revelations one after the other throughout the novel, forces the reader to question, on the one hand, how in the name of spiritualism, a freak looking for immortality is driven to extreme delusion and illusions and how, on the other hand, the much-sought-after-guru can twist the blind disciple to his whims and fancies and never be doubted! This paper, by making a comparative study of the East-West spiritual connection, examines how Mehta, through her witty, straightforward and rather unforgiving reportage, brings to light the absurdity of a world inhabited by spiritually gullible devotees and exploited by equally greedy and insensitive materialist-hungry gurus, all in the name of karma.

Key Words: Spiritualism, materialism,immortality, mysticism,East-Westinteraction, karma,gurus, devotees

TheEast-West Spiritual Interaction

Imagine an upturned world where the bored and tired materialist is looking for

spiritualism, and the age old spiritualist is attracted by neo-materialism; the wan hope-materialist is hungering for some delusive spirituality, and the bony spiritualist is looking at fattening himself for once; the materialist is trying to leave behind all that he is, and the spiritualist is craving for what he never should be; the materialist is pinning to catch a breath of soul-satisfaction crying for his piece of immortality, and the spiritualist is salivating at riches, sex and drugs! And we are in *Karma Cola* – the world of eternity freaks and equally freaky gurus. The hippies with all the charms and confusions of their generation, rock and rolling suddenly decide that there is a place where their missing links, desires and mystic hungers can be satisfied all in a package and make their way toward the East. What follows next is the subject of Mehta's keen observation and cutting experience, a baring reportage through thick and thin of all that happened in the Indian subcontinent.

'Karma', in the dictionary, has two primary definitions. One, "The sum total of a person's actions, which determines the person's next incarnation in Samsara, the cycle of death and rebirth." Two, "A force or law of nature which causes one to reap what one sows; destiny; fate." On a more elaborated approach, loosely defined from the perspective of Hinduism, karma has three main theories. Firstly, cause and effect – This is to mean the widely accepted view of action and reaction for everything that we do in this world, not just limited to the present life but to see even the present state as a result of one's past; ultimately, every deed is strummed into action and reaction with the resultant effect of good or bad respectively. Secondly, karma and ethicization – This means every action and intent has a consequence. Nothing goes just for itself or by itself but is followed by a consequence. This concept can be roughly broken down to a life of reward and/or punishment depending on one's actions and intentions. Thirdly, rebirth – This is where the concept of reincarnation is emphasized. Questions of death and rebirth, decay and recycle etc. are dealt upon from a very sacred and comprehensive manner. In the present novel under consideration, emphasis is focused on the third concept because the lure of immortality, of instant rebirth, is what chiefly drives the Western devotees to flood the East, especially India. Worlds apart from Christian theories but seemingly more attractive and instantaneous, topped by the practical devices of the bogus gurus to meet their distorted versions and explanations, the karmic flood of the West to the East at once not surprisingly becomes wholesale, only to find and end in an abuse of the very thing they came searching for.

Cola on the other hand, simply put, is a carbonated soft drink with its origin in the West, a drink that gradually established its firm place in the world of beverages. The novel takes on the idea of cola as something novel, foreign and modern, thereby summing it up as a taste of the luxurious West and their lifestyle. The novel was also written of an era when the giant company, Coca Cola, perhaps representative of soft drinks to a large population in the world, was making its introduction as a popular western beverage and gradually becoming accessible to the common man of India in the 60s. Thus, the coming of the western pilgrim looking for karma with a bottle of cola in his hand, and greeted by the karmic gurus looking for a split of his wealth, ready to fish his cola pockets, at once forms an unmistakable picture

of the East-West spiritual interaction and all the mystic bartering that took place, right from the very title of the book and throughout.

The Pilgrims and the Gurus

Popularly, in the past, the West when not out to colonize, visited India proclaiming the Gospel and putting up all efforts to spread the Good News of Christianity. But suddenly this angle is overturned – the rock and roll West flood India looking for karma and the gurus go into overdrive. And for the sake of blind immortality, or some sort of rebirth at any cost, the meeting becomes a paradoxical collusion of the ready to deceive and the willing to be deceived, a bizarre situation where the maxim ‘opposites attract’ ridiculously unfolds.

In his poem “Enterprise” Nissim Ezekiel chides,

When, finally, we reached the place
We hardly knew why we were there,
The trip had darkened every face,
Our deeds were neither great nor rare.
Home is where we have to gather grace.

One cannot help hearing the underlining tone of this poem throughout the novel. How on earth, in this life, is the notion created that the where one is born has the wrong gods, or cannot find God? And in order to find peace must take a trip to another corner of the world? The hippie-pilgrims hungering to spiritually unwind their weary lives under some instant karmic power looked toward the mystic East for an answer. What they found in the process or at the end of all this pilgrimage is a mere void, bartered by the gurus, robbed, exploited and even murdered in the name of karma and immortality. The guru with a meditation, a posture for everything and anything and everyone, begins to make wholesale spiritual marketing; devising make-believe miracles, not to cure or save, but to deceive the hexed devotee and fill his pockets to the maximum. A sort of underworld spiritualism begins to prosper where the guru can throw all his tricks, commit crimes and be worshipped, and for all the aura surrounding his notorious acts become a deity. Salvation, instant salvation, on a trip, a posture or simply a donation sounds too good to be true but human gullibility is not limited to anywhere and the West get exposed; and the East get to exploit them, using their abandoned spirituality to play at their vanity and make a mockery of all their material progress. It is not altogether preposterous to say here that a sort of unintentional reprisal for all the exploitation suffered at their hands in the colonial era ensued. The irony comes full circle when the West, looking for immortality, came puffing and desperate, but once landing in the East, is made to find mortality rather attractive for the sake of instant rebirth. The Dutch millionaire apparently committing suicide in his supposed ‘Hindu-mindedness’ stars up sickeningly for this role (chap XI). The audacity of the gurus to trick and dictate the highs and lows of this karma crazy generation is no merit but unbelievably interesting. How did they do it – these gurus – is anyone’s guess! But the seeming rapid competition among themselves to outdo each other in this spiritual business and the number

of devotees that kept growing by the day are proof of their unquestioned success.

The rush of the pilgrims, looking to experience some kind of ‘far from the madding crowd’ and into the realm of spiritualism, helplessly learn that they have only landed in a world of materialist-hungry gurus ready to pounce on them and only latterly realize that they

“should never have trusted gurus who wore Adidas shoes.” (Intro. vii)

It is interesting to see how beautifully this line also exposes the infidelity of the proclaimed guru. The shoes, indicative of branded and expensive goods points on the irony of the guru jogging in luxury and in the same breath sermonizing on spirituality and simplicity! The devotee and the guru are in the wrong place, but whereas the pilgrim came looking for spiritualism and will be sorely disappointed; the guru looking at the wealth of the devotee, ironically enough makes material gains because of his spiritual fame and authority. The guru’s trick is to gift gods who welcome you to be crazy, beach in madness and indulge in endless sex and drugs, all bordered on immortality thereafter. A gift of gods sans moral, distorted and abused, and displayed only as erotic decorations on wall paintings and statues. It is a gift to enjoy your god under the guru’s possessed rules and justifications, stealthily device your own portal to immortality, and swoon away in drugs and sex for the time being. Thus, lost in a world of gods and guru-worship, trapped in ashram chants and yogic poses, the devotee has hardly any chance of leaving and when worse comes to worst ends up desperately looking for an escape.

The angle of the pathetic situation where knowledge is used for power, and one’s naivety and ignorance however advanced is exploited by the other, however remote when the opportunity presents, is also clearly visible in this interaction. The West with all the tag of unequalled sophistication and advancement came purring for mysticism and the comparatively undeveloped rustic mystic took the opportunity with both hands. The guru in his hermitage suddenly realizes that he can roll these ladies and gentlemen in the name of his myriad gods, make them his puppets and play them until they are bopped and robbed. Unfortunately knowledge abuse comes to play time and again irrespective of where humanity has progressed or stands at any given point of time! Will the West resort to the same trick should the East go looking for karma in the west?

The Side Effects of the Interaction

While the gurus, engulfed in their greed, spread their mysticism, superstitions and religions to deceive one and all, the side effects of this maneuvering also come full force. As true as karma holds, the concept of action and reaction is ironically but fittingly displayed in the course of this interaction as well. The gurus’ tactics backfire and reverberate to the destruction of the serene and mystic land that was once India. The god seekers here had come not so much for religion but more in the hope of claiming immortality by any means! As depicted in the book, with the coming of the hippies, scores of Indian beaches and

villages smoked up in drugs and immorality, oblivious of the long term consequences. Its sacred rivers and places get contaminated and fumbled to purify itself again long after this interaction is over. While the guru was trying to make easy money by the day, it is no wonder the hippie came with his own disease and infected a good chunk of India, making the mystic land change direction and headlong fall for his tempting rock and roll culture. The West who were apparently made fools of gods, unwittingly set a trail of destruction and madness themselves and the East is never the same again. For whereas on the one hand, the wonder of the Indians at the spiritual gullibility of the West is undeniable, equally undeniable is the fact that these same wondering Indians were also harming their own culture beyond recovery. Take the example of Goa and its reality rumored European beaches. At first glance the gurus, baffled at their industriousness, seem to be enjoying some fun at the expense of the West, but on second view, it is clear the equation gets reversed and worse, for the hippies came and went but the places they trotted are never the same again. Thus, the spiritual follies and paradoxes that got unleashed when karma met cola and vice versa, the fires and backfires and unmistakable misinterpretations on both sides, all point to a conclusion of both sides losing and learning it only too late! The novel has this to say for the devotee:

When the guru counsels his Western devotees to meditate on their dual sexuality, they frequently interpret his words as a command to become homosexual.

For the guru:

He does not know that most of his disciples are less concerned with the meaning than with the game. (chap X)

In passing, it is also pertinent to see a sordid Edenic interpretation unfold from this spiritual flirtation. The West lands in the East believing it to be karma paradise but instead finds it infested by forbidden fruits and taken over by serpents in the form of fake gurus! Suddenly H.G Wells' wonder in his essay "Benares" at the superstition of the Hindus is reversed. Is not India the 'solar eclipse' to all the western pilgrims flocking it for a miracle!

Conclusion

If there is a writing style to be called rock and roll style – it has to be the narrative of this novel! Mehta, well learned, unflinchingly observant, squeezingly detached and straightforward takes us through a vibrantly satirical journey of mix and matches. As can be seen, frequently there are incidents where others may try to ignore, turn a blind eye, or wash one's hands and forget everything, but Mehta doesn't – she is bent on reporting! Often quite poetic and wavy, at other times blunt and to the point without a hint of euphemism, the book rolls back and forth between the East and the West portraying the mystic marketing and all that rose and fell out of this East-West spiritual romance gone wrong. A world where the delusional have come looking for spiritualism like an obsession, and the have-nots welcomed them looking for bread and a little more, preying to embellish themselves in the

opportunity provided. In a meeting of such opposing freaks, with such paradoxically addictive goals, what exchange can take place, what is there to exchange but the book has it all. ■

Works Cited:

Bande, Usha. *Gita Mehta: Writing Home/Creating Homeland*. Jaipur: Rawat Publications. 2009

Banger, Ruchi. *Cultural Configuration in the Novels of Gita Mehta and Githa Hariharan*. New Delhi: Authors Press. 2018

Choudhury, Bibhash (ed.) *Anthology of Poetry*. Kolkata: Macmillan India Limited. 2005

Mehta, Gita. *Karma Cola: Marketing the Mystic East*. New Delhi: Penguin Books. 2015

Sarma, Gautam (ed.) *Anthology of Prose and Short Stories*. Kolkata: Macmillan India Limited. 2005

Dr. Rosaline Jamir, Prof. of English, Dept. of Humanities, NIT, Nagaland.

Rüületo Vakha, Research Scholar in English, NIT, Nagaland.

Humo - A Cultural Glimpse of Western Odisha

Rajendra Bhue

India, a single nation with its manifold culture, is credited to have ‘unity in diversity’. The exotic land of western Odisha is endowed with its- unique folklore tradition. It serves as the entrance to the bewitching zone of the artistic glory of Odisha. Reckoned as the epicentre of an affluent culture with a high status, its art and culture is an exclusive design of dance, music, values and beliefs, crafts and skills. It has a rich convention of games not confined to skilled sportsmen but belonging to every household as an amusement. The modern age of technology has not been able to depreciate its value; on the contrary it has hundreds of games performed by people of all ages. Traditional folk songs and games of western Odisha have an enduring impact on culture and festivity. This paper discusses how the famous folk game of western Odisha ‘Humobauli’, a playful song performed by young, unmarried girls, enriches the society. The paper probes at a deeper level in trying to analyse and access the significance of folklore in western Odisha under the impact of modern technology and materialistic world of gadgets.

Key Words: *Exotic, Folklore, amusement, Humobauli, playful song*

INTRODUCTION

The inception of folklore can be traced from the dawn of civilization. It was only after the appearance of the folklorist that it got the status of a special branch of learning. ‘Folklore, like all other product of man’s artistic endeavour, is an ideological manifestation of human creativity. Folklore includes all myths, legend, folktales, ballads, riddles proverbs and superstitions.’ (Dundes, 1989). Odisha is a land of folklore, traditions and culture. Folk painting on walls, Patta Chitra (painting on cloth), Bandha Kala (weaving design on cloth), Odishi music, dance, sculpture and artistic carvings have bestowed upon it the privilege of a land of exquisite arts. Western Odisha is a storehouse of folklore. This location is rich in folk songs, folk dance, folk music, folk arts, folk game etc. Humo is a famous folk game of western Odisha. This game is found only in western Odisha. Though it is no longer played in the location now but it has not completely ruined, people of the location still sing the Humo song. Western Odisha was an underdeveloped area; maximum people of this area

were illiterate or semi-literate. This game was started for amusement and to spend the leisure hours in glee.

The Odia folklore bears allegiance to the English Scholar John Beams for the collection of study materials of this great treasure. His article “Folklore of Orissa” in Indian Antiquary, 1872 in which he gives reason of isolation of the land from the exterior world. His inspiration helped native scholars work on the subject. Fakir Mohan Senapati who was his companion and a pioneer novelist made use of popular folk materials in his writings.

The present study is indebted to the works of G.S. Ghurye (1893-1983), an Indian Professor of Sociology. According to him “the princely rulers were highly antagonistic to modernity”. Their survival depends a lot on continuing and strengthening the tradition.

Dhirendranath Majumdar, a renowned anthropologist involved in the field of ethnographic tradition and culture says:

‘The past must be understood, in the context of the present, and the present will stabilise the future if it can find its fulfilment in the moorings of the past. There was no golden age; there can be none in the future. Life is simply a process of adjustment’.

OBJECTIVES

The present study is a modest attempt to examine the marginalised communities in Western Odisha which has been undertaken with the following objectives:

- 1) To explore the folkloristic patterns of western Odisha with special emphasis on ‘Humo bauli’
- 2) To access the current status of the traditional western Odisha’s folklore in the age of growing technology.

CULTURE AND HUMO

Culture includes a group’s skills, wisdoms, experiences, knowledge, religion, aesthetics, concept of universe and material objects. It includes the ideas, customs and social behaviour of a particular group of people or society. Culture carries the social picture. The eleven districts of Odisha viz. Bargarh, Bolangir, Kalahandi, Sonepur, Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Deogarh, Kandhamal, Boudh and Athamallick block of Dhenkanal district belong to Western part of Odisha. This huge area is geographically, historically, linguistically, culturally as well as verbal and non-verbal folklorist tradition different from the other part of Odisha. This area is well known for its tribal and folk culture. The language of this area is Sambalpuri-Koshli. This location has a unique and rich cultural heritage. Western Odisha has a wonderful tradition of games which can be played by both skilled or sport person and non skilled person during their free time. Humo is one of among them. Humo is played by women players. Especially in the month of October (Dussehra) the unmarried women and girls of the village play the Humo game in the full moon light of the

evening. As they are women and it is evening time, they select the village street as their playground. Women in two groups face each other and sing with slow stepping to and fro till their song is finished. There is no limit of group members. From this game they can know many things about life and socialization.

The game “Humo” is named after the song name ‘Humo’. It has a classical tone but according to the singers’ wish they may change the tone. Some say classical tone of Humobauli is GADAMALIA and some compare it with ‘Sajani song’, ‘Sahachari song’ or ‘Raja song’ of Odisha. This song may be sung in the tone of Abhimanyu Samanta Singhar’s BIDAGDHA CHINTAMANI’S “Radha bimbadhari” tone, but the western Odisha’s people add ‘bauli’ in the song. The word bauli means friend. The players call each other bauli. So it is called “Humo bauli” song. In Balangir and Sonapur districts the game is known as “Humonana”. They sing –

“ Humonananana desa baulire humonananana desa

Nakhau napiu guapanasa ,najau tumara desa baulire...”.

Means we will not eat your food (Betel and jackfruit) and will not go to your village. Our place is the best for us.

Humo is different from the competitive games. It is only played for entertainment, enjoying the leisure time and learning of social knowledge as well as making friendship. It promotes the social unity.

HUMO AS A CULTURAL EXPRESSION OF WESTERN ODISHA

As an important part of culture, the traditional game Humo reflects the day to day life like wedding fare of daughter, bride gift of daughter, preparing food items, collecting firewood and other food products and herbals from forest, trading of agricultural products, different traditional working culture and festivity of concern social community. Humo depicts the cultural profile of Western Odisha. It is not only for physical and mental strength, it is also meant for mass entertainment. Performance of Humo bauli creates bridge of unity among the people of the village. The players learn successful application of skill and imitative knowledge from this game and that knowledge crosses the border of generations. The presence of mind and creativity of players are also developed. Humobauli promotes both mental and physical exercises. As it is a mass game, women and girls gather at a particular place of the village street and through their song they express their feelings, experiences, emotions, knowledge etc. They also express their problems and solutions, domestic violence, gender discrimination occurring around them. As in the patriarchal society women have no freedom to express themselves directly like men, they express themselves differently, that is through folklore and Humo is a genre of folklore. It represents many voices of the society. It is the marker of many “identities”. It is like an educational institution where the players learn friendship, co-operation, behaviour, cooking procedures, adjustment approaches in father-in-law’s house etc. Players of this game get a familiar idea about their agricultural

practice, food habits, culture and tradition, social rules and regulations and they communicate this knowledge from one individual to other and in this way it crosses the boundary of generations.

HUMO AS A PLATFORM OF EDUCATION

Humo is the real platform of indigenous knowledge. It is the right place where women can know about practical life education. Western knowledge may improve the behaviour of a person but the traditional knowledge is the fundamental knowledge which is most necessary to be acquired.

Players of Humo of western Odisha learn friendship, socialization, unity, co-operation, discipline, sacrifice, social rules and regulations, how to cook, how to behave as a girl and as a bride, how to adjust in the patriarchal society, how to manage husband's house as it is a new place for them, how to make a house and perform house hold activities etc .

Humo creates a strong sense of unity and mutual understanding between the performers of concern society. Though the playgroups are not fixed, they meet frequently and play the game. This unity is not just a playgroup's unit, it continues for lifelong which helps them for leading a smooth and peaceful social life.

In Humo one group comments, asks questions, gives remark about their group's nature or express about social culture, women destiny, gender issues in society etc. to other group, accordingly other group has to reply through Humo song, it needs a difficult mental work and creativity. The Humo song is the experience and experiment of women that deals with "life art".

SOME HUMO SONGS OF WESTERN ODISHA

Humo reflects the social picture. It carries culture and tradition of the community. Marriage is a social system of every community. At the time of daughter's farewell to her husband's house, fathers have to give something which are valuable for her. That gift enhances the prestige of daughter in her husband's village. We can know about the bride gift from the Humo song –

Two drops butter on dish oh my friend
I am your elder daughter
So give me nose ring accordingly.

Meaning-The bride says to her father that she is his eldest daughter, so father should give the bride gift according to social tradition, and his social status, so that people will not criticize her. In Western Odisha "nose" symbolizes the social prestige. There is a saying in this location 'Naka neba' means losing of social prestige.

The old and mature women warn the immature unmarried girl who is going to lose her virginity due to her uncontrolled desire and indiscipline. As she newly enters into the adult stage there are chances to slip her foot.

Eagle is flying across the fertile land oh my friend
You decorate your body with various flowers
That flower will take your caste
The birds flew oh my friend
Who gave you wig?
You decorate your hairs
Horse crossed near the pond
Who gave you soap?
You make the pond's water dirty.
Flax plant is near pond oh my friend
You make boyfriend to a goldsmith
So you wear ornaments.

Meaning-

If a woman decorates her body, it may hamper her, the experienced lady warns to unmarried lady. Male may give hair wig and other cosmetics to women; they should not receive that in unmarried time. If a woman finds soap as a gift she bathes in a pond for a long time and if she makes her a goldsmith as her boy friend, then she gets a lot of ornaments. The mature woman says to immature that, taking soap and ornaments from male during unmarried time is a matter of degradation of prestige.

Women make joke with women in Humo
Drum stick tree's top is full of dust oh my friend
Why you are looking sick?
Perhaps you are missing your husband.

Meaning-

Women make joke with their friends that; they remember to their husband so they become thin day by day.

We can find the reflection of history in Humo viz..
Drum stick tree's top is insect affected oh my friend
Britishers make their house under drum stick tree
And enjoying chicken oh my friend
The bicycle has two wheels oh my friend
Hands are lightening and guns are on their arms
Perhaps they are from town.

Meaning-

The Britishers are very cruel. They stay near village and misbehave to village women if they find them lonely. They enjoy their life by eating chicken also they have watches on their hands and guns on shoulders. Perhaps they are from town. As the common people did not dare to say against Britishers, they were expressing their bitterness through folklore.

Wearing watch at that time was a matter of prestige. Common people hated them and they had fear for them too.

We can know the gender discrimination from Humo-
The new rice half mana oh my friend
The girls ate calf ear
Boys will eat betel

We can see gender discrimination in western Odishan society. Humo reflects that. Girls are treated as inferior to boys. Eating of calf ear in Hindu society is a criticism. But eating of beetle is a matter of prestige.

Every stanza of the song bears a message. Through the song women can express their feelings, love, emotion, sorrow and happiness. Every song needs a special analysis. Here I have selected a few songs but a large number of Humo songs which bear knowledge, motivation, life art, etc. can be found in the region. I have visited Ichhapader village of Bargarh district of western Odisha and collected near about fifty Humo songs from women representing themselves through Humo. They do not enjoy equal status in the society. They cannot enjoy the freedom to speech like men for which they expose themselves through folklore.

PROBLEMS OF THE STUDY

Science and technology, education, mass media have a great influence on humo of Western Odisha. Women do not like to come out of the four walls of their house. They engage themselves on television or mobile. As the simplicity of the people is fading recurrently, women do not feel secure to come outside at evening. Educated girls think it valueless and look it in inferior eyes. The interested women are not allowed to come outside from home due to the gender discrimination. So the game Humo bauli is fading from western society.

CONCLUSION

Humo contributes mutual understanding and peaceful behaviour to the society and culture. It is a significant part of the cultural heritage of Western Odisha. It should be documented, protected and promoted. It does not require any financial investments and resources but it can contribute to better inter-cultural understanding and mutual tolerance. ■

Glossary-

Mana -250gm, a pot in which we can measure rice, wheat etc.

Works Cited:

Andrew, W.M.J, Jr, "Some Function of Ayamara Games and Play". In Studies in the Anthropology of play: Papers in Memory of B. Allan Tindal, ed Phillips Stevens, Jr., New York :Leisure Press, 1977.

Barooah, P. P *Traditional Indian Games*, New Delhi : Golgotia Publishing company , vol. 84.

Das, Binod. S. (Ed). *Glimpses of Orissa*, Calcutta, 1986.

Dundes, Alan, *The Study of Folklore*, New York : Prentice –Hall , 1965.

Mishra, Mahendra. 1989, *Paschima Odishara Loka Sanskruti*. Cuttack: Friends' Publishers, 1996.

Pasayai,C.(Ed), *Paschima Odisara Lokageeta*, Folklore foundation, Bhubaneswar, 2008.

Pradhani J., *Kalahandira Loka krida*, Bhawanipatana: Zilla Sakhyarata Samiti, Bhawanipatana.

Mr. Rajendra Bhue, Lecturer in English, B.N.M.A. College, Paliabindha, Tihidi, Dist. Bhadrak, Odisha.

“Indianness” in Gita Mehta’s *Snakes and Ladders*: from Being to Becoming

Rosy Chamling

It has been observed that the origin of the genre of Indian Writing in English follows two historical trajectories- one that treated it as an ontologically independent tradition of writing as evident in the early writings of the nineteenth century; and the other which distinctly treated literature as a discursive product. To the first belonged writers like Raja Rammohun Roy, Henry Derozio, Toru Dutt, Manmohun Ghosh, Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, Sarojini Naidu and others who have used the trope of a unifying nationalist consciousness. However, in the course of national consciousness upliftment taking the form of political activism some of them like Michael Madhusudan Dutt and Bankimchandra Chatterjee abandoned writing in English in favour of their mother tongue, Bengali. It was the second trajectory that gained momentum during the post-independent phase with the writings of our three grandmasters of Indian Writing in English: Raja Roa, R.K. Narayan and Mulk Raj Anand. Their writings in English had a distinctly Indian tone with its peculiar Indian nuances and expressions. It is now that the greatest challenge of Indian writing in English was to be faced: in its ability to accommodate both the diversity of experiences and expressions in a language that is not actually theirs. The Indian novel in English became a recognizable form only from the 1930s onwards, particularly after the publication of Raja Roa’s *Kanthapura* (1938). *Kanthapura* was path-breaking because of its experimental use in the English language and narrative form of the ‘*sthalapurana*’ integrating myth and history, realism and fabulation: “If we are to take ‘Indianness’ as a specific literary response arising at the intersection of thematic material and literary sensibility, we might say *Kanthapura* is a nationalistic novel that attempts at evolving an ‘Indian’ way of creatively articulating a social experience” (Raveendran, p. 39). R.K Narayan’s *Waiting for the Mahatma* (1955) also deals with the impact of Gandhian thought upon an individual person Sriram; while Mulk Raj Anand’s trilogy in the third volume of *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942) also has a reference to the Indian national movement. Although they were writing in

English these three grandmasters had a strong regional flavour; both Raja Rao and R. K. Narayan's distinctly South Indian regional tone while Mulk Raj Anand's Punjabi flavour too is unmissable. All these writers do have an individual agenda of raising national consciousness through projections of the Indian national movement along with other pan Indian issues of caste, faith, religion but with a distinctly localized regional flavour. Most of the writers writing in English belonging to this generation foregrounded the idea of a unified composite India until the arrival of Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* in 1981 which garnered international visibility having won the Booker Prize the same year. The metropolitan and suburban divide becomes prominent particularly after the 1980s as these authors grappled with the problem of writing in a language that is not his and for an audience who did not normally speak or think in English. (*The Twice Born Fiction*, 160). This 'anxiety of Indianness' is correctly articulated by Meenakshi Mukherjee: "He is generally dealing with non-English speaking people in non-English speaking situations. He has to overcome the difficulty of conveying through English the vast range of expressions and observations whose natural vehicle is an Indian language. And yet literal translation is not always the answer because he has to make sure that the translated idioms or images do not go against the grain of the English language" (*The Twice Born Fiction*, 161).

During this phase we see Indian English writing as a phenomenon that is unsure of its own identity and status. The paradigm shift comes in the 1980s which has been more strengthened by the presence of writers like Upamanyu Chatterjee, Vikram Seth, Shashi Tharoor, Gita Mehta and others. What is common amongst these writers is their comfort in the use of the English language and an "Indian" aesthetic that defies regionalism and narrow provincialism. Despite carrying the burden of elitism, English has been the language of upper mobility and these metropolitan writers have unabashedly used the English language to express an 'Indianness' that is urbane expecting both international readership and acclaim. In 1989 Timothy Brennan proposed a new category of novelists—"the third world cosmopolitans"—who were globally visible and were considered as authentic voices of the third world. This group of third world writers included Rushdie and Bharati Mukherjee from India, one because they were writing in English and also because they received a favourable reception in the International literary scene. If the earlier Indian writers writing in English wished to be rooted in the cultural heritage of India, this group of writers wished for global assimilation. These writers were not taken too kindly by all. Alongside facing the pressures of global market, they were also charged with catering to the western aesthetic sensibility.

Commenting on the rise of this new group of urban elite Aijaz Ahmad says: "for whom only the literary document produced in English is a national document. All else is regional, hence minor and forgettable, so that English emerges in their imagination not as one of the Indian languages which it undoubtedly is, but as the language of literary sophistication and bourgeois utility" (*In Theory*, 75). Despite such views, this group of writers included Gita Mehta write in English from a privileged position to articulate an 'Indianness' for a new generation of readers who are comfortable with the English language.

Meenakshi Mukherjee has made a pertinent observation that there is a group of elitist writers who with their privileged cultural class and elitist education are more comfortable writing in English. She says:

“Finally, I arrive at a point to recognize that this is a twentieth century phenomenon emerging from a particular class of the urban elite. This is a descriptive statement, not an evaluation. This is to some extent true of all creative writing in English in India, because it is self-evident that proficiency in the language is determined by the cultural class and, incidentally, levels of economic affluence. This might seem like a truism based on a disproportionate emphasis on the linguistic medium employed and a devaluation of its content, but it is actually not so because of the position of empowerment that English occupies in postcolonial India...To ignore this dimension of cultural class in their perception of life and processing of experience will be to wilfully anaesthetize and universalize” them.”¹

Gita Mehta (b. 1943) is a prolific Indian writer in English with works like *Karma Cola* (1979); *Raj* (1993); *A River Sutra* (1993); *Snakes and Ladders* (1997); and *Eternal Ganesha* (2006). Much of her works deal with the east-west encounter: if *Karma Cola* dealt with a pretentious Guru; and *Raj* was a historical sage exposing the sham of princely class in colonial India; *River Sutra* is a hypnotic tale about a pilgrim’s progress; *Snakes and Ladders* gives us a picture of contemporary India. *Snakes and Ladders* is a collection of essays using the snapshot technique of presenting historical anecdotes and wry observations on contemporary India. Defending her technique in her interview with Wendy Smith she asserts “...there’s that certain tension and contradiction of immense sophistication and almost pre-medieval way of life. I thought the only way I could describe that collision was anecdotally, by taking snapshots, as it were”; adding further, “I am a camera and the reader can see through my eyes.”² The title *Snakes and Ladders* is suggestive of the ups and downs in the course of the history of post-colonial India. Gita Mehta knew the difficulty of expressing the complexity of India and she seems to be aware of this difficulty of grappling with what India is and the ‘Indianness’ that was she attempting to capture. Her misgivings are expressed in the very opening line of the book, “...I am not sure what India is” (*Snakes and Ladders*, 18). It was only while driving through the jungles in Eastern India and when she happened to see a wooden plaque nailed to a tree with the words written on it that arrested her mind to contemplate on India: “WELCOME TO INDIA- LAND OF HOARY ANTIQUITE AND FABULUS CONTRAST” (18). Her attempt to define India is evident in the following lines: “Certainly it is not a nation with a diamond-hard convictions of national identity which inspire many other countries.... Rather, it is several civilizations in separate stages of development, co-existing despite their contradictions” (19).

Many critics have lashed out at Gita Mehta saying her diasporic status has allowed her to depict the ‘Indian’ experiences to suit the palate of the western audiences. Born in a

family of political leaders and moving around in a circle of affluence and privilege, it is also natural to feel that her positionality will restrict her view of the real India. She is the daughter of Biju Patnaik, a freedom fighter and a former chief minister of Odisha. She is also the sister of the present chief minister of Odisha Naveen Patnaik. She is married to Ajay Singh Mehta, a former president of Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of Random House, New York. Shuttling between New York, London and New Delhi, it is true that Gita Mehta had access to the upper echelons of society. The economic liberalization and globalization have reconfigured artistic sensibility which has resulted in a global tendency to privilege heterogeneity and difference in cultural matters. Most of these writers lose out on the regional flavour for they know that the diversity of India cannot be expressed through one particular region. To posit the idea of a unified India particularly after Independence can be a falsifying act. Gita Mehta belongs to a generation of writers who have articulated the decline of the British colonial empire and at the same time they articulate an 'Indianness' that is difficult to define and comprehend.

Snakes and Ladders traces India's Fifty years of journey since independence. The following excerpt from Gita Mehta's 'Foreword' is indicative of the enormous trials and tribulations during the course of this journey : "Living through our first half-century of nationhood has been a roller-coaster ride, the highs so sudden we have become light-headed with exhilaration, the lows too deep to even contemplate solution, as if the game of snakes and ladders had been invented to illustrate our attempts to move an ancient land towards modern enlightenment without jettisoning from our past that which is valuable and unique" (viii). To equate the historical journey of India with the ancient game of snakes and ladders³ includes both a picture of juvenility and sheer chance while actually the governance of a newly independent country should have been based on clearly focussed strategy. It is most easy to discern a similarity between Gita Mehta's work with Nirad C. Chaudhuri's *A Passage to England* (1959) or to V.S. Naipul's *An Area of Darkness* (1964), especially in their love to the West. But what marks Gita Mehta different for the mentioned hard-core Anglicist writers is the fact that her writings are not a revulsion towards India but a frank portrayal of India through her analysis of India's political history, political leaders, national culture, crafts and science; and how it has had an impact upon the lives of ordinary individuals. As evident from the title itself the book *Snakes and Ladders* traces the ups and downs of Indian history in the first half century of national history. Her confusion is apparent in the last paragraph of the foreword: "Perhaps historians can make sense of India's early years of freedom, I find myself able only to see fragments of a century in which worlds and times are colliding with a velocity that defies comprehension. These essays are an attempt to explain something of modern India to myself. I hope others may also see in them facets of an extraordinary world spinning through an extraordinary time" (*Snakes and Ladders*, p. vii). Talking of the Indian history Gita Mehta in her opening chapter gives a picture of the freedom movement from 1943 to 1947; and then observing how the real freedom fighters have been relegated to the margins post-independence. Much of the sorry state of India is

because of the uninvolvedness of its citizens towards elections and public affairs and giving power to the wrong people. If it was the Britishers who exploited Indians before Independence, post-independent it was the political leaders and their brokers who have continued to exploit the common people through the many divisions. Through their divisive politics, Indians are divided in terms of race, caste, language, custom, and most importantly on the ground on religion. Unfortunately she rues every Indian is first a Hindu, or a Muslim or a Christian or a Sikh or a Parsi and only then he is an Indian. Perhaps her close proximity to the influential political powers, Gita Mehta is able to give the readers a commentary on political affairs. She observes if Gandhiji promoted villages and agrarian way of economy considering that the majority of Indians lived in villages, but immediately after independence the first Prime Minister of the country focussed on industrial growth. She next praises Lal Bahadur Shastri for launching the 'green revolution' and is strongly critical of Mrs. Indira Gandhi's autocratic regime by making a reference to the promulgation of national emergency and curtailing the rights of people. Indira Gandhi was found guilty in 1975 by the court of law and a new Janta Party government under Morarji Desai wrested power, albeit for a short time. After Mrs. Gandhi's failure when her son Rajiv Gandhi gained political power Gita Mehta gives a detailed description of the India'86 propaganda attempting to make India visible across the globe through the IT revolution. Commenting upon this reckless industrialization, Gita Mehta observes "This precise paradox-craft and machine, an ancient culture or contemporary progress haunts India today" (53). She adds, "A large school of Indian thought believes the spinning wheel or the *Chakra* in the centre of the Indian flag is symptomatic of all that is backward in India. Symbols once useful in expelling a foreign empire and its exploitation are now dangerous anachronisms in a country where...wealth must come from increasing and more efficient mechanization" (53). In spite of the emergence of modern technology, millions of Indian craftsmen in India are still dependent on their crafts for their living: "If twenty three million craftsmen depend on India's culture for their living, India's very culture depends on giving them a living" (56). The illusion of progressive India is shattered when Gita Mehta depicts the image of an old villager outside his mud and stone house: "lying on his perennial string bed, a bullock or two tethered in the background, near an Indian car parked under the shade of a tree. The farmer himself will be drawing on his hookah and talking into a cellular telephone..." (81). The image of India that one can glean from her portrayal is one of contradiction; India is a land of blind faith with practice of child marriage, blind idolatry and Sati⁴. In one particular incident she talks of how a western onlooker is scandalized by this blind faith but she says "This is India. We worship our air-conditioners and computers and cash registers and bullock carts-is an annual ritual called weapon worship" (80). The chapter titled "The Old Ways" focuses on the traditional Indian knowledge of Ayurveda, Yoga, Mantras and Vastushastras. This modern practice of traditional knowledge was being pursued "to help mankind find the poise and balance necessary for stillness...to "release energy"" (208). This amalgamation of ancient practice in modern living signifies the inherent connection of the past with the present and the present shall have over the future.

Through all of this, Gita Mehta was trying to show how the destiny of India was more a matter of chance just as in the ancient game of snakes and ladders. She rues that one major reason why India failed to make a steady and uniform progress was because Indian political history was greatly determined by vote banks governed by caste and religion. She critically observes that Indian voters do not care much for principles and performance while exercising their voting rights. She scathingly criticizes the political slogan of poverty eradication 'garibi hatao' in the politics of 1960s and 1970s. On the one hand if India was trying to project itself as open to the change caused by globalization and technology, it also displayed a psyche of Indians fractured by issues of untouchability and caste system which is deeply embedded in the psyche of the Indians. She gives an example of the displacement of the Bhat community of Rajputana who were once the reciters of the royal genealogy now reduced to rag pickers: "Once our recitations commenced a royal coronation. Now look at my child's face. We teach him the historical poems. Otherwise they will be forgotten. And he shouts them aloud to frighten the vultures away while he looks for rags" (*Snakes and Ladders*, p. 49). Gita Mehta also focuses on the newly rich urban middle class and the entry of western companies in India which she finds it contrary to the ideal of simplicity and austerity of early Indian nationalists. It is in the fourth part of the book where she focuses on Indian literature art, cinema and culture. What is apparent from her presentation about the India is a land that suffered due to the lack of vision political misuse of power and nepotism.

No doubt there are a several factual errors in the book. For example, she mentions the spinning wheel in the National Flag, the 1942 Bengal famine is one year earlier, the capture of Tibet by China is nine years later and she has wrongly mentioned the location of Tashkent in Russia. Many critics attribute these errors to her haste in getting this book published to coincide with the golden jubilee of Indian Independence. Despite these flaws, Mehta depicts the many images of communal harmony in India. She describes a tree in Bombay which houses on one side "a white plaster Christian cross. On another is a small image of the elephant-headed Ganesha, the Hindu God of protection. On the third side is a small concrete altar on which worshippers place the Koran when they pray to Allah" (*Snakes and Ladders*, 24). Mehta also documents the journey of women both during the pre-independent period by sharing the personal story of her mother who was a freedom fighter despite being raised in *purdah* she read classical Sanskrit and recited Persian quatrains. Kept away from the contemporary British culture, it was after her marriage that her father taught her ballroom dancing, bridge and bicycling. In the post-independent era, Mehta documents how women have continued to show their resilience by mentioning how "... the poorest women in Ahmadabad pooled the meagre sums they earned... and started their own co-operative bank" (*Snakes and Ladders*, 43). These self-employed women had founded an association called Self Employed Women's Association. Despite being strongly critical of the declaration of national emergency called during the tenure of Smt. Indira Gandhi, Gita Mehta is honest enough to appreciate how Smt. Indira Gandhi was the second women in the world to be sworn as the Prime Minister twice. Thus, to equate her work with all things dark and gloomy

in India would also be prejudiced. She was privileged to have an access to opportunities and lifestyles that very few of us would have but she uses this privilege to study the contrast between what could have been achieved and what is achieved. India and 'Indianness' is surely not an imaginative space or an insular aesthetic but one that is constantly evolving.

The nationalists built up their argument from the remnants of Orientalism which glorified the ancient Indian culture giving birth to nomenclatures like 'hybridity', 'colonial mimicry', 'in-betweenness' etc. Partha Chatterjee drew attention to this phenomenon in the early 1980s about this paradox of nationalism being "a prisoner of colonial intellectual fashion". This is a stance which would always perceive to see India as a cultural artefact and 'Indianness' as derivative of this frigid state. For the generation of writers like Gita Mehta 'Indianness' was to be sought in the lived reality of millions of disparate group of Indians belonging to all classes and religions. Gita Mehta shows growth and development of a nation through its ups and downs post-independence through the use of the English language to express this state of 'Indianness' with all its complexities. Her journalistic background could also be responsible for the crispness of her literary style. She has admitted in one of her interviews that the book was written to make Modern India accessible to Westerners as well as for the younger generations. A composite picture of India is seldom viable in a land that has a rich history of cultural diversities. The book therefore makes an important statement of India as a civilization in process, a 'becoming'. Inclusive India is still a distant dream and Gita Mehta's book is a reminder of our flaws in governance and participation. ■

Notes:

1. Mukherjee, Meenakshi. "Women Creative Writers in Indian English Literature" *Between Spaces of Silence*, ed. Kamini Dinesh, p. 18
2. "Gita Mehta: Making India Accessible". Interview by Wendy Smith. *Publisher's Weekly*, 12 May 1997. BookRags.com. Web. 14 Nov, 2013.
3. 'Snakes and ladders' is an ancient game played with a dice wherein with each count the player either encounters a snake which can pull the player down or a ladder which can push a player up. The game is ruled by a matter of sheer chance.
4. *Sati* refers to the practice of women burning herself alive along with her husband's body in the funeral pyre. Gita Mehta refers to the incident of *Sati* that had taken place in the year 1987 in Rajasthan which garnered a lot of critical attention and furore.

Works Cited:

Ahmad, Aijaz. *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures*. London: Verso, 1992.

Chatterjee, Partha. *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986.

- Mehta, Gita. *Snakes and Ladders: A View of Modern India*. New Delhi: Minerva Publications, 1997.
- Mukherjee, Meenakshi. *The Twice-Born Fiction: Themes and Techniques in the Indian Novel in English*. New Delhi: Heinemann, 1971.
- Ramakrishnan, E.V. *Locating Indian Literature: Texts, Traditions, Translations*. New Delhi: Orient BlackSwan, 2011.
- Raveendran, PP. *Texts Histories Geographies: Reading Indian Literature*. Chennai: Orient BlackSwan, 2009.
- Timothy, Brennan. *Salman Rushdie and the Third World*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989.
-

Dr. Rosy Chamling, Head, Dept. of English, Sikkim University, Gangtok, Sikkim.

Gita Mehta's *River Sutra* - A Tale of Interconnectedness between Love and Renunciation

Biswajit Mukherjee
Swati Nayek

Gita Mehta's *A River Sutra* presents the tale of seven different characters but none of them is interconnected with each other. The novel encompasses a larger variety of themes like love, lust, ego and hatred. But the present paper makes an attempt to analyze the theme of renunciation as it has been presented in the novel. It has to be kept in mind that this theme is quite common in Indian literary tradition but here we have tried to show how the renunciation theme has been entwined with the theme of love and attachment. So all the characters who have been portrayed here have renounced the world but there is a deep rooted underlying attachment that they have for the physical world cannot be ignored altogether.

Gita Mehta belongs to the rich lineage of Indian English women writers comprising of Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Jhumpa Lahiri etc. When compared with other Indian women writers her contribution to Indian English literature is significantly limited but as a diasporic writer her works have predominantly dealt with the Indian culture, traditions and society in general. Her first book *Karma Cola: Marketing the Mystic East*, published in 1979 is a collection of interconnected essays dealing with the idea of mysticism that is generally associated with India. Her first novel *Raj*, published ten years after *Karma Cola* in the year 1989 presents a fine blending of history and fiction. In *A River Sutra* (1993), there is a deliberate shift in her focus of attention. She was more concerned with the cultural diversities that India projects and the religious traditions and myths associated with them. The present paper attempts to make an analytical study of Gita Mehta's *A River Sutra* bordering on the theme of love and renunciation as it is found to be present in Indian cultural ethos.

It has to be kept in mind that the idea of renunciation is one of the important elements in the Indian cultural milieu. That the idea of renunciation holds an integral part in Indian cultural ambit is amply testified in the way it has been presented in the two great epics – *The Ramayana* and *The Mahabharata*. Some of the precepts of *The Gita* also throw light on the magnitude of the idea of renunciation that has always been there in Indian culture and religion. Since renunciation holds such a key position in our culture the recurrence of the theme of renunciation in several literary texts of India is obvious. Writers like R.K. Narayan in *The Guide* or *The Painter of Signs* project the theme of renunciation. Similarly, Raja Rao's *The Serpent and the Rope* also presents the same idea of renunciation.

Renunciation or renouncing is the act of rejecting something that was previously enjoyed. In case of religion renunciation, it suggests where an individual decides to abandon material pleasures and embark upon the paths of self-realization which in the course of time becomes his or her sole purpose in life. The idea of renunciation is an esteemed idea in almost all the societies and religions of the world and there is probably no society which has not idealized the tale of an individual who has renounced the world of material desires. This idealism has percolated in almost all the segments of the Indian society and it is deeply rooted in our consciousness as well as our worldview. The veneration for the ideal at times has been so deep and enigmatic that a renouncer has often attained a higher political position in Indian politics. It is this feature of Indian cultural ideology that has probably made Mahatma Gandhi the “father of the nation”. Thus Meenakshi Mukherjee rightly says, “Renunciation has always been an Indian ideal, be it renunciation of worldly goods and possessions, or the renunciation of selfish motives passions and emotional bondage” (*The Twice Born* 97).

The traditional life of a Hindu was regulated by *Ashramadharm* and it is comprised of four stages of life. They are the *Brahmacharya* (the life of a student), the *Garhastya* (life of a householder), the *Vanaprashtha* (a forest dweller) and finally the *Sanyasa* (the stage of renunciation). Each of these four stages leads to the other one and they do not oppose one another in their ideas. The last stage, the stage of *sanyasa* is the stage of renunciation where an individual relinquishes all the material pleasures and accomplishments of this worldly life. When we talk of the life of renunciation we generally associate it with a *sanyasi* or a sadhu who is supposed to be clad in orange robe and who has abandoned all his worldly associations in order to live the life of an ascetic. There are few who really takes such bold steps to renounce the world completely and they are the gurus or the spiritual guide of our belief system. More than physical renunciation what is more important is the metaphysical renunciation. It suggests withdrawal not only physically but also mentally and that means to surrender or giving up the notion of ‘I’ or the ‘ego’ or the over powering ‘self’. It is a process of complete detachment at the metaphysical level from the surroundings and all the material and physical desires. It is a state of complete non-attachment. It is in this state that an individual starts his/her journey in order to search his real self.

The idea of renunciation as mentioned earlier suggests total withdrawal from the society, all familiar ties and all the other worldly affections in order to lead a life of recluse. But this complete detachment from the world of pomp and glory is only one aspect of renunciation. The Indian aesthetics of renunciation does not only project this retreat from material advancement but it has got a deeper metaphysical significance. Renunciation in Indian metaphysics is ensigned with the intent of achieving inner calm and complete blessedness and it also aspires to rise above pain and pleasures of life. In short it is a state of complete non-attachment. In order to achieve this state one's mind has to be free from pain, pleasures, love, lust, ego passion, anger and all the other material desires. This can be equated with the Christian concept of seven deadly sins where it is said that if a man is free from all these desires then only he can attain the bliss of paradise after death. Similarly, renunciation in Indian context can only be possible if a person can give up all these worldly emotions then he can attain the state of *JivanMukta*. The word *jivan* means 'life' and *mukta* means 'freedom'. Hence *JivanMukta* suggests complete 'freedom from life'. But this *JivanMukta* does not mean that one has to renounce the world completely. An individual is supposed to remain within all the temptations of the real world and still he or she has to have the power command over his or her own self to stay beyond it. Detachment while remaining attached to everything is the highest form of goal that an individual seeks to attain and it is the real path towards self-realization.

A River Sutra by Gita Mehta presents six different stories and all of them are apparently not connected with each other. They are The Monk's Story, The Teacher's Story, The Executive's Story, The Courtesan's Story, The Musician's Story and The Minstrel's Story. But there is another story that cannot be overlooked and that is the story of the narrator. All these stories, however, disconnected they appear to be but they have subtle underlying connections that deserves special attention. There are four things that probably bind them together. They are attachment represented through the idea of love followed by renunciation or complete non-attachment and the river Narmada and not to mention the narrator himself. Throughout the entire narrative of the novel the readers find that the narrator is directly or indirectly connected with each of these stories.

The first story that is the Monk's story is the tale of renunciation and love. This story has been narrated by the Monk himself to the narrator and obviously it is he who details the story to the readers. Ashok who has presently turned into a Jain monk was a son of a rich diamond merchant. He experienced all the pleasures of life and his hedonistic lifestyle reached such an acme that his temptations were all lost. He says, "At the age of twenty-six I had already become fatigued by the world, knowing that even at the moment of gratification, the seed of new desire was being sown." (*A River Sutra* 19). Realizing this reality of life and adhering to his father's advice Ashok decided to marry a girl who was an absolute stranger to him. His marriage also lacked the conjugal warmth and the seeds of non-attachment were seen to be sown in his life during that period of his life. He says,

My wife was a gentle creature ... I treated her with corresponding courtesy seeking only to make her comfortable with our intimacies, knowing she had neither the imagination nor the appetite for pleasure. For myself I did not miss the sexual excesses of my earlier life, and once the birth of our daughter was followed by a son, my wife became so preoccupied with her maternal duties I no longer needed to play the husband. (22)

So the gradual workings of the sense of detachment can be easily perceived from his words. His decision to renounce the world was further initiated when his ideas about his own father started to change. Ashok always believed that his father was a man of dignity and a charitable man who always was a strict follower of Jainism and who supported the idea of *ahimsa*. When he toured with his father to the diamond mines he “was shocked to see ... the conditions under which the diamonds were mined, or the distressing poverty of the miners” (17). His father’s nonchalant attitude towards the miners was enough to create an emotional gulf between him and his father. The question he dared to ask his father is enough to justify the statement – “How can you worry about a dead insect more than you care about a human being?”(17).

It can be concluded that there are three events that brought to fruition Ashok’s decision to renounce the world. Firstly, his life in the West. Secondly, his dispassionate marital life and finally his understanding of the actual nature of his benevolent father. But it is not possible to renounce the cravings of this world of *maya* so easily. It was the old monk, Ashok’s spiritual guide who paved the way for his journey towards complete renunciation. But the question that looms large was the life of an ascetic that Ashok chose for himself completely detached from his earlier life or there was some sort of attachment with his earlier life that can be evinced in his new journey.

On the day when he was supposed to renounce the world Ashok realized that the decision to renounce the world was actually less demanding than the act of renunciation itself. So when the day finally arrived he understood how difficult it was to leave completely and move towards his desired goal. When on the day of celebration he went inside his marble bathroom to take his shower Ashok was caught by extreme fear – the fear of leaving everything behind. He said to himself at that moment: “Suddenly I am paralyzed by fear. This is the last time I will embrace my children, or laugh with my brother. The last time I will enjoy the privacy of my bathroom” (24). All these are evidence enough to prove that he was unable to detach himself completely on the day of his renunciation with this world of love and affection and obviously to some extent the desire for material pleasures. Even while leading his life as a Jain monk some of his actions and utterances unmask the fact that his there is a deeper underlying sense of attachment even during his life of detachment. The way Ashok started to recapitulate his past life in front of the narrator with the latter’s little insistence suggests that it is through this poignant details of his narration he has remained attached to his former life. Again while he started to tell his tale the first thing that he uttered was “I have loved just one thing in my life.” (10). Now what is this ‘one thing’ has left the readers as well as the narrator

baffled throughout the novel. Finally, another instance that proves the Monk's unhindered sense of attachment with the world even in this state of detachment was seen when he was afraid to be left alone by his fellow monks who were supposed to be waiting for him in Mahadeo. He says, "If I am late, they will leave and I shall have to join a new sect of mendicants" (27). It is obvious that it is almost impossible for him to stay away from this corporal world with no human feelings and thus he says, "I am too poor to renounce the world twice" (27).

The second story of the novel is the story of a music teacher. Being bemused by the tale of the monk, the narrator goes to Tariq Mia, the village mullah to find a possible answer for his confounded self. But here he comes to hear about the story of the musician from Tariq Mia and in this way the narrator gets connected with the second tale as well. The theme of love and renunciation has been given a different dimension in the story of Master Mohan. Master Mohan always wanted to be a singer since his childhood. He had a voice that was deemed extraordinary and after four years of his father's repeated pleading who was suffering from tuberculosis, when opportunity beckoned, "Master Mohan's voice had broken"(36) "only two weeks before the record was to be made" (36). When Master Mohan came in contact with the blind boy Imrat at Amir Rumi's tomb he couldn't resist himself and brought the boy into his home after he heard Imrat's solemn voice. Master Mohan's complete attachment to art has actually resulted into a kind of detachment from his family and home. This detachment also augmented from the fact that he had a sorry married life and poor financial condition.

The music teacher's love for this boy was due to his love for music. The love that Master Mohan had towards Imrat was absolutely selfless and that is evident from the fact that he was not tempted by the money Imrat collected during his music lessons in the park. Mohan was also not tempted by the offer of five thousand rupees made by the two agents of the Sahib, who wanted to hear the voice of Imrat alone in his big bungalow. The boy became the objective-correlative of Master Mohan's unfulfilled dream to become a singer and it is through his alter-ego Imrat Master Mohan wanted to relive and at the same time attain his dream. There is an element of ambiguousness associated with the idea of love and the theme of renunciation depicted in the story of Master Mohan. Firstly, his love for the boy, as mentioned earlier is self-less but the presence of his self cannot be ignored altogether. His actions and decisions direct to the fact that all the troubles that he has undertaken for the boy is due to his overwhelming desire to make a great singer out of him. If Master Mohan could do that, it would point to the fact that even if he has failed in his life as a singer but he turned out to be a successful guru in the life of Imrat. Like the theme of love, the idea of renunciation is also double edged in the story. Master Mohan has already renounced the world of love and family of the corporeal world but in the ethereal has remained connected to art and music and the arrival of Imrat in his life has actually rekindled that metaphysical connection. Hence, when Imrat was murdered by the Sahib Master Mohan renounced the physical world for the second time by committing suicide. Tariq Mia rightly said that, "perhaps he could not exist without loving someone as he had loved the blind

child” (60). Actually Master Mohan could not exist without his art or his source of dream fulfillment.

The third story of the novel is the story of the Executive. It is the narrator who reads the diary of the executive and he tells the story to the readers and it is also by this way that the narrator is connected with the story. Nitin Bose, the executive of a tea estate was previously posted in Calcutta and later he was transferred to the north east. Life in Calcutta for him was filled with all kinds of vices – alcoholism, physical lust etc. Everything in life in Calcutta was mechanical. But when he was transferred to the North east, among the hills he experienced a new lease of life. The initial period of his stay in the hills was charming as timely rains in the first few years yielded a good harvest. Life for Nitin in the tea estate was different from the one he experienced in Calcutta. But the initial charm of the idyll lost its beauty when Nitin got involved with a married woman. They both enjoyed physical pleasure but after Nitin decided to go back to Calcutta the woman was stricken by the grief of separation from her love. Nitin lost his mental equilibrium and he thought that the woman casted a spell of black magic on him. In such a state of mental delirium he came to the rest house along the Narmada and he was certain that the “goddess at any shrine that overlooks the Narmada River” (89) could relieve him from his state of being possessed by the agents of the underworld. Nitin renounced the world of hedonistic life style that he was accustomed to lead in Calcutta and came to the tea estate but the desire and longing for a woman companion was always there inside him. Rima, the married woman thus became the figment of Nitin’s mind, the symbol of his unconscious desire. Nitin was so strongly guided by pleasure principles that the reality principles seem to have given a farewell to him. He apparently renounced his fast paced life in town but he was unable to renounce himself from his desire to experience the love and physical proximity of a woman. Even after embracing tranquility in the tea estate Nitin Bose could not detach his soul from the desires of his flesh. It is this desire that has probably led him to get involved with Rima who may be considered to be the imaginative creation of his ‘id’. But there is a second level of renunciation that Nitin Bose experienced. He wanted to unburden himself from the state where he feels that he has been possessed by the Rima’s soul.

The fourth story is the story of the courtesan. She renounced the world by committing suicide. She committed suicide because she never wanted to be caught by the police and be interrogated and humiliated by them. There are two reasons for such a mindset firstly because of her training as a courtesan and secondly, she was the wife of Rahul Singh, the legendary dacoit. Rahul Singh abducted the courtesan’s daughter as he thought that she was his mistress in the previous life and therefore wanted her love and affection in the present life. Though Rahul Singh abducted her, never for once did he force her to succumb to his desire. Realizing that Rahul Singh would never harm her or undermine her dignity, she offered herself to the passionate love of the dacoit. But after Rahul Singh’s death, she was afraid that she might not live up to the legacy that Rahul Singh has left for her and this is probably one of the major reasons for her to renounce the world by committing suicide. So in her case love and

renunciation worked simultaneously and it is her overpowering emotion of love that resulted in her death.

The fifth story is the story of the musician and his daughter. The narrator of the story by chance meets the daughter of the musician and she narrates her story to him. The musician's daughter was ugly and as a result she was not allowed to be part of the major family affairs but she considered her father as one of the greatest musicians in the planet. The musician's relationship with music, according to her daughter was quite sublime. Her father was of the opinion that if anyone decided to be a musician he or she enters into a pact with lord Shiva. She also tells her how one of his father's young students cheated on her. Her father agreed to teach him music under the condition that he would marry his ugly daughter after his music lessons are thoroughly completed. But the young disciple fled away when he got the first opportunity without keeping his promise and got married to someone else. From that moment the musician's daughter renounced her music and she never entered her father's music room. Being rejected and jilted in love she left music forever. Again in this story of the musician, it is evident that renunciation and love are mutually interconnected.

The sixth story is the story of the minstrel and the Naga baba. Professor Shankar who earlier led a life of an ascetic for ten long years attained enlightenment through his long stays in jungle and penance. Sine he decided to lead the life of a Naga sadhu, he had to face extreme conditions during the days he spent as an ascetic. He was a true seeker of truth and it is his deep rooted cravings to attain salvation through the understanding of truth he met a girl and rescued her from the brothel. The Naga baba named her as Uma, the name that we generally attached with Goddess Durga in Hindu mythology. Naga baba tries to set Uma's life on the path of spiritual progression and devotion. He wanted to make sure that Uma also learns the importance of austerity and penance. The Naga baba wanted Uma to completely detach herself from her previous life and attain salvation through the paths of spirituality. But what is interesting is that the Naga baba after spending ten years of his life as an ascetic re-entered the physical world with the belief that he had "no great truths to share" (182). He says to the narrator that "Don't you know that the soul must travel through eighty-four thousand births I order to become a man" (182). For the Naga baba, the real salvation lies within life itself.

Finally there is the story of the narrator who has provided a structural unity to the entire novel which comprises of seven varying tales. The narrator is connected with each of the stories. Either he has been a listener of the stories or he has been the reader of their personal documents and by dint of listening or reading he has narrated all the different tales to the readers. It is through story of the narrator that the novel opens. He is a retired officer of Indian Administrative Services. He felt that after his wife's death it was the proper time for him to leave the worldly pleasures and lead a life of recluse within nature. He considered himself as a *Vanprasthi* – a person who has renounced the world. He started to spend his

life as the manager of the Narmada guest House in order to experience mental peace and tranquility away from the materialistic world. Interestingly, the narrator as he explains has deliberately kept himself away from all the worldly affairs actually searches for human companion. That he could narrate all the six stories to the reader points to the fact that he was missing human companionship. He has withdrawn from the world but his withdrawal was a partial one as remained completely in the lives and stories of the other characters.

There are seven major characters in the novel – the narrator, the Jain saint, Master Mohan, Nitin Bose, the courtesan's daughter, the musician's daughter and the Naga Baba. All of them in some ways tried to renounce the world, either by physically detaching themselves from the material world or by committing suicide. But all the detachments are poised and counterbalanced by a deep sense of love and emotions. The narrator was in search for human companion, the Jain saint with little persuasion would start narrating his past life and that was his way of remaining attached to the world. Master Mohan committed suicide and renounced the world because he had no cause to live after the child was murdered. Nitin Bose was in search for tranquility and he ended up being mentally unbalanced. The courtesan's daughter had to commit suicide because his love for her husband was so strong that he didn't want the police to interrogate and defile her. The musician's daughter was so deeply hurt that he had to renounce her family and music. The Naga baba became an ascetic but when he realized that real truth lies only within human beings he came back to the world of normal human beings. So all of them were attached to the world in some form or their detachment was a form of non-attachment that was filled with the hues of subsided emotional allegiance. ■

Works Cited:

Mehta, Geeta. *A River Sutra*. New Delhi. Penguin Books. 1993. Print.

Mukherjee, Meenakshi. *The Twice Born Fiction*. New Delhi. Heinmann Educational Publishers. 1971. Print.

Dr. Biswajit Mukherjee, Asst. Prof. of English, Govt. General Degree College, Muragachha, West Bengal.

Mrs. Swati Nayek, Asst. Prof. of English, Rampurhat College, West Bengal.

Women in Vera's World: A Journey of Complexities

Jaya Chetnani

Rouble Varma

An individual's life is painted by different colors. The world outside and the world within provides different shades to an individual's life. These shades give different meaning to one's life and personality. Literature tries to understand and narrate this meaning to the world. But the meanings to be conveyed do vary according to individual's perception. Each writer narrates his own meaning. One of the African writers Yvonne Vera tries to give voice to African women. Yvonne Vera is an award-winning writer from Zimbabwe. Her works are known for difficult subjects matter. She deals with topics like rape, incest, etc. Vera's writing always talks about women characters. All her novels talk about women and their journey. The paper makes an attempt to study how Vera's world is connected with these African women and how the lives of these women are painted with different colors. The paper also focuses on the complexities and difficulties faced by these characters and the journey they make on this difficult path to create their own identity. And what is the importance of a woman in her world. It will make a study whether Vera's world is a world of imagination or reality.

Key Words-Identity, World, Complexity, Women empowerment

World-A simple and small word with a deeper meaning, There is a world where we all live, a world which is common to all of us. But still it carries so much of uncommonness with it. Every individual has a different life in the world. There are different worlds. One is a physical world which is same for all, Second the world by which the individual is surrounded and the third the world within. An individual's growth or personality has the impact of all these worlds. That's the reason why each individual has a unique story to narrate spiced with all the life experiences. The world and its stories don't change only from person to person but from one country to another too. In the world literature every country has narrated the story of its own world. A tussle between the inner and the outer worlds are given voice through words. One such country which was going through such phase

is Africa. The land has its direct impact on its people. African writers portrayed different worlds according to their own experiences and perceptions. As perceptions vary from person to person, it becomes the responsibility of the individual to give voice to the unspoken. Many African writers tried to portray the true picture of African society through their writings. But the focus of different writers varied. Some literature was to focus on African history from a male perspective. Some women writers focused on women. One such African writer was Yvonne Vera. She believed in breaking the silence and gave voice to the unspoken.

Yvonne Vera is one of the esteemed writers of Africa. Her writing has won many prestigious awards and recognition. Her writing had one thing in common; it was Africa in general and its women in particular. Her writing is known for difficult subject matters like rape, incest. Vera's childhood was spent hearing about war. Wars were an act where men were active participants, which left women alone. Men were forced to move away from home. And women were left alone at home. Due to this many times they became easy prey for people. This led African women to struggle for survival. Africa portrays the picture of African society which was not strong, both economically and intellectually. It means they lacked financial stability and their thinking also lacked modernity. Women in African society, especially the society portrayed by Vera, were considered as secondary. Though a citizen of the same country, they lacked equality. They were easily ignored.

As Vera was growing, so was Zimbabwe. When she was 15, Zimbabwe declared its independence. Vera was born in Zimbabwe's second largest city Bulawayo. But Vera's life had no similarity with these struggling women of Africa. Vera had a supportive family. Her father always motivated her to pursue a career in writing. For her studies, Vera moved to different places. So her education involved an experience from both village and city. This diversity had a great impact on Vera's learning and is easily witnessed in her writing. Her writing comprises of both beauty and horror. The versatile themes had a dominating impact on her writing. Vera was impressed by western culture and art. Her first work was penned in 1992. It was a collection of short stories.

Most of Vera's work had an essence of hope and despair. Her first novel *Nehanda* was a historical novel but had a touch of post colonialism and feminism. All her works talk about topics which focus on the pain of the African women. Vera has explored many dark themes in her novels. Her novel *Butterfly Burning* is the story of a girl Phephelaphi. It is the story of love, dreams, and hope. Phephelaphi is a strong, ambitious character who decides her own journey. She wanted to pursue a career in nursing. To fulfill her dreams, she moves to the city. There, fortunately or unfortunately she meets and falls in love with a man who was older to her. Soon she was selected for the nursing career but her dream was shattered by her unwanted pregnancy. The novel deals with the various difficulties faced by her in achieving dreams. Her novel *Without a Name* is set during the war of pre-independent Zimbabwe. In this novel, Vera focuses on the struggle of a rape victim. Mazvita, the main character, travels to the city to escape horrifying memories. She dreamed of beginning a new

life there. But her dream was short lived. She gets in relationship and becomes pregnant which shatters all her dreams. The novel *Under the Tongue* is the story of a young girl Zhizha. In this novel Vera talks about the problem of incest. Zhizha is raped by her father. Due to this she lost her will to speak. The story deals with the women of three generations i.e. the grandmother, mother and the daughter and how they deal with this complicated situation. *Stone Virgins* is another novel by Vera where she deals with women. It is the story of two sisters. Two men change the life of these two sisters. One sister is brutally killed and the other sister is raped and badly injured. The novel is the story of the courage these sisters had. How they survived the hardships faced by them. Thus in all the novels, women are the main characters. Vera's world of writing is surrounded by these women characters. Her novels not only focus on main female characters but even the minor characters give voice to the reality of the African women. Vera's two worlds were inseparable. Being a strong woman, she wanted her African women to be strong too. It was not about gender equality but about being independent. Vera also aims at making the world realize the pain, struggle and tragedy that a woman goes through, the plight of her personal journey. Vera wanted to bring a cultural change in society and break the prevailing norms.

Vera was strongly connected with her roots. Even after leaving Africa, She never detached herself from Africa and African. But Vera was sensitive writer. She specially focused on women who were weak. Like all other culture, even in Africa, women were considered inferior to man. They had secondary position in society. Vera aimed at bringing these women in forefront. Equality was not what Vera was looking for. She aimed at giving voice to the unspoken. There were reasons behind this. One reason was to give identity to the weaker section of society and secondly to share the values with other continent of the globe. Vera depicts the complexities of their world. Vera aims at attracting the readers by connecting them with the women character's complexities along with the unfortunate circumstances gifted to them by the society. These women characters were trapped by it. Her writing is always dense. She tells the intense terrifying act with beauty.

As the word 'world' has two meanings, one the external world, where people live and the other is the internal world, a world which lies within a person. So it simply means person in the world and world in the person. Both the world has a strong influence on a person's personality. In fact the two world forms the basis of one's growth. Human beings are trapped in these two worlds. A war is always going on between the two worlds. As there are no runners in war, so only the one world can win. As said that it is said that material elevation does not mean mental elevation. The same stands for the country and its people. The growth of a country does not always imply an overall growth of its citizen. Country's growth may lead to material elevation but it fails to elevate the minds of its people. Like all other countries Africa witnessed the same. Africa became free but its people were still in chains. The invisible chains were creating a barrier in the society. African society was divided. And this difference created different worlds for each individual. Vera was from Africa. At different point of age, she witnessed a new Africa. With Vera, Africa was also

growing. This African world which witnessed war and struggle created a sensitive world within Vera. Through her writing Vera tried to give words to her inner world, a sensitive world which has witnessed many complexities. Vera was a passionate writer. Writing gave her an inner happiness and satisfaction. But she never wrote for delighting her readers. Instead she wanted to give voice to the unspoken. Vera's world hardly resembled with the African society. She never personally witnessed any harsh realities.

Vera's inner world always had a thought of African women. Her writings gave Vera an outlet to express the pain of these African women; Vera's writing has portrayed different aspects of these women. There are many similarities in Vera's characters. The first striking feature of Vera's character is that they all are loners. Women in Vera's world lacked family love and support. Her characters failed to cherish the company of the near ones. They not only lacked love of family members i.e. parents and siblings but they also failed to have the support of friends or partners. This made their life more complicated. Most of the time, this became the reason of their problems. Being a loner was both blessing and curse for these women. Vera's women being a loner lacked all sort of support in their life. But this loneliness made them strong and confident. On one hand it helped them in being independent and on the other it made them a prey which was easily approachable by others. It became a reason for the setback in life. Phephelaphi being alone had a dream of pursuing a career in nursing. She was successful in getting the admission in the same. But being a loner, she took the shelter in the house of a man and was in a comfortable relationship with him. Unwanted pregnancy, the result of this relationship shattered her dream. Similar was the case with Mazvita. Thus though being a loner made these characters bold and strong but it also became a reason of their failure in life.

Women are always at the center in Vera's work. But Vera never aimed at making these women powerful in this men's world instead she aimed at making her women strong. Vera's world never compares her women with men. In none of her novels we see that she does not compare her women characters with men, nor she ever talked about the equality of the two. In Vera's world, her women are entangled in their own complicated world. Vera aims at telling the world about the complexities of these women's world. This is the reason why Vera mostly focuses on the women in her writings.

The life of these women characters was surrounded by complexities. Nothing was easy for these women. To survive and fulfill their dreams in Africa was a difficult task for these women characters. Vera's women characters like Phephelaphi, Mazvita were ambitious women. They wanted to have their own identity. The journey of their dreams and ambitions was shattered by the complexities of life. Phephelaphi in the novel *Butterfly Burning* wanted to pursue a career in nursing. She was even selected for it. But her unwanted pregnancy shattered her dream. But the sad part is that these complexities were never ending. These characters were trapped in the vicious circle of complexities. Phephelaphi not only lost her career but in future life became so complicated that she was forced to opt for death. Mazvita

also faced similar difficulties in life. She left her native place to fulfill her dreams and forget the harsh memories of dark past. But even she failed. Lack of support and unwanted pregnancy shattered her and she too became the victim of the complexities of life. These complexities forced her to reach the same place from where she wanted to begin a new journey.

Complexities come with conditions. Vera has portrayed a world where for these women nothing was unconditional. To live a life of their choice, these women had to fulfill many conditions. And these conditions made their life more complex. In order to be independent and pursue a career these women had to move away from their native place. Being a loner they lacked any kind of support. Thus they were forced to take help of strangers. And this help came with a condition. Mazvita in order to have a shelter had to live in a one room apartment with a man. And this shelter was provided on the condition of being used. These unconditional conditions added more difficulties in the life of these women characters. Unwanted pregnancy, rape, shattered dreams, Ambi culture, and many other were the outcomes of these conditions. But Vera's women were strong. They readily accepted all the conditions which came in their journey and were determined to fulfill their dreams.

Vera's world was not just an imaginary world. Nor Vera focused only on positive side. Vera's world portrayed the harsh realities of society. Her women characters were not the result of Vera's imagination. But these women characters represented the true African women. Vera was focusing on the darker side of African society. With her writing Vera aimed at setting a new sun. She not only focused on darker side of the societies and the problems women faced but also encouraged her women to be active and independent. She tries to give a message to the African women and the world that it's ok to face a setback in life. But one should not stop living their dreams and move on in life. Vera's women have been a victim in way or the other, but nothing stopped them from fulfilling their dreams. They were bold enough to face the world. Most of the women characters like Phephelaphi, Mazvita, and Zhizha were rape victims. Rape is brutal act which shatters a woman completely. But these women had the courage to face the world boldly and without any support. So Vera through her writing was giving a message to the African women to move on in life. During the struggle for independence, many African women went through same trauma. So Vera wanted to show the world the price paid by the women of Africa during these years and wanted to make them strong.

As it is seen that the life of these women was full of complexities, their journey was not always complete. Vera as a writer never assured the success of these women characters that were bold and strong. Women in Vera's world have different stories. The only thing common among them was that they had a tragic past and they know how to move on in life. But most of the Vera's women failed to fulfill their dreams. The complexities of life didn't allow them to live their desired life. But the good thing was that even if they had a dark end, the final decision of these ends was their own. In the novel *Without a Name*

Mazvita kills her infant. Similarly in *Butterfly Burning* Phephelaphi abort her child and later burn herself. For a mother to take such a decision is a tough task. Thus it shows that Vera's women were bold and strong in taking such harsh decisions.

Vera's world left no aspect untouched. In her novels one can see that she deals with different issues related to women. Her novels not only focus on making these women independent but it deals with emotional aspects too. Vera aims at making her women financial independent. To be independent was quite challenging for them. They had to go through physical, mental, emotional sacrifices. These women had to forget their real identity to be an object for physical use. Secondly 'motherhood' is the most cherishing feeling for any women and especially African women. But this was also sacrificed by these women. Motherhood was considered as an obstacle in one's growth. Mazvita and Phephelaphi had to sacrifice their career due to their pregnancy. Moreover African society has no place for a single mother. Phephelaphi mother left her because of this reason. Most of the time motherhood was forced on these women. Africa has seen many wars and struggle. During these wars, men lost everything. They lost their lands too. Thus they lacked power; the only place where these men could impose their power was on women. This was a major reason why these women raped and suppressed. Thus instead of cherishing motherhood, it became a burden for these women. They were compelled to opt for abortion. Ambi culture was another aspect to deal with. To create their own identity these women had to forget their real identity. Even their color created a problem for them. These black women had to go through painful chemical process in order to lighten their skin tone to compete with white women in city. Thus these women has to go through both mental and physical pain to survive in society. Vera shows how these women were living a hollow life. They lacked love care, support. They were only treated as an object to be used. In *Without a Name*, Neyendezi left Mazvita alone and preferred to live a safe life in village. Fumbatha left Phephelaphi when he discovered that she was pregnant. Women were just used for objectification. Vera's women lived in a conditional world which failed to give them true happiness.

Thus as a writer Vera aimed at telling the society that if the country was struggling, Even its people were struggling. But the main focus of her writing was on women. All her works were narrating the life of these struggling women. She wanted to focus that her women were strong and they had the strength to face the difficulties and move on in life. They were independent women who had a painful past but they never regretted in their life. Till the end they lived the life of their choice. For Vera to take a stand for them was more important than success. That is the reason why Vera's world is surrounded by women who struggle and try to live their dreams. And that is the reason why they are termed as bold women. The two worlds of these women were contradictory. The inner world within always encouraged these women to create their own identity. From within they were bold and strong. But their external world defeated their inner world. Their body, people and situations around them trapped these women in unavoidable circumstances and shattered all their dreams.

Vera's world depicts the harsh realities and complexities of African societies. It is not the world which entertains or delights, but educates the world about Africa and its struggle, especially from women points of view. It was about Africa in general, and its women in particular. Vera's world was completely a women's world. Her works mainly deals with feminine perspective. Vera has dual purpose of expressing .She not only aimed at telling the world about African women. She also wanted to make her women strong in their real life and to make them realize that a setback in life is never an end. But an initiative to a new beginning. ■

Works Cited:

Vera, Yvonne. *Butterfly Burning*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000. Print

Gaidzanwa, Rudo B. *Images of Women in Zimbabwean Literature*. Harare, Zimbabwe: College Press, 1985. Print

Lunga, Majahana John. *'What Kind of Woman is This?' A Reading of Yvonne Vera's Writing*. University of South Africa, 2007. Print

Vera, Yvonne. *Without a Name*. Harare: Baobab Books, 1994. Print

Vera, Yvonne. *Under the Tongue*. Harare: Baobab Books, 1996. Print

Jaya Chetnani, Research Scholar, School of Studies in English, Vikram University, Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh.

Dr. Rouble Varma, Associate Professor, School of Studies in English, Vikram University, Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh.

Negotiating Tribal Culture: The Traditional Hunting Practices among the Lotha Nagas

Libemo Kithan

The Lothas are one of the major Naga tribes mainly inhabiting in Wokha District, the central region of Nagaland. The district is blessed with natural resources surrounded by valleys, hills, rivers, lakes and waterfalls. Agricultural activities are considered to be the main occupation and the people are still practicing the primitive system of cultivation, i.e., *Jhum* cultivation. It is obvious that there must be abundance in flora and fauna as the major part of their homeland is covered by forest. Looking inside their socio-economic and cultural life it has been found that the people exploit the birds, reptiles, rodents and wild animals as part of their cultural life and for livelihood. Deep jungles nearby villages provide excellent ground for hunting. Each village hunts only in their designated hunting domain. Illegal hunting in the domain of others invites inter-village disputes resulting in imposition of fines against the culprit. Therefore, it is imperative to find out the traditional hunting practices in original form before the introduction of firearms to them. The study is also to understand the purpose of hunting; the unique hunting methods adapted by Lotha Nagas and to examine the relationship between hunting practices and belief system.

Key Words: hunting practices, culture, techniques, pride, belief system, taboo

1. Introduction

Northeast India is a land of multiple ethnic groups with rich biodiversity inhabited by diverse hunter-gatherers in the past. The region is blessed with rich natural resources, and its tribal people exploit the wild animals and birds to a great extent for their livelihood. Hunting has been a traditional practice since time immemorial. The simple nature of hunting with limited technological equipment leads them to infer parallels for the hunting strategies of the early peoples (Hazarika, 2017:38). Wildlife hunting is an age-old practice and humans have been hunting wild animals for many generations. Wildlife is an important resource for those communities that live in and around forests and is exploited for various reasons, including

food, additional income, cultural practices and as a sport (Aiyadurai, 2011:61). It has also been observed that 'hunting in Northeast India is also a traditional leisure activity for various tribal communities, and politicians, and bureaucrats also take part in modern day hunting (Ibid. 65). If hunting was ever, at any stage of their tribal history, the mainstay of life, it is intelligible that the commencement of the hunting season should be marked by a rite in honour of the mighty dead whose hunting prowess was still remembered (Seligmann, Vol.1 :59).

Hunting is an intrinsic part of the Naga society. It is an important activity required for means of livelihood in the traditional past. Hunting which was once considered as a mode of subsistence economy that carried human society until agriculture took over as a way of life continues to have its important role in the socio-cultural life of the Nagas (Lohe, 2014:184). The fallow lands, deep jungles nearby villages provide excellent ground for hunting. As a rule Nagas hunt in large numbers, all the men turning out to drive the game from ravines into more open country where it can be chased by the dogs and speared or shot (Hudson,2013:56). During the traditional past, the Nagas hunted wild animals and birds as a part of their subsistence and for ceremonial purposes. However, in the present context it has become a game of men's leisure and the people consider it delicacies in consuming wild meats and river fishes. Though the major consumers of wild meat in the Northeast are the rural communities, in Nagaland, high income families also eat wild meat which they see as a luxury. As elsewhere in the region, people living in comparatively remote areas have limited access to markets and are largely dependent on wild meat (Aiyadurai, 2011:65).

Hunting of wild animals is part of the traditional Lotha society and down the ages, it has been an important activity and a matter of pride. It is carried out mainly for household consumption. Many hunters in the villages hunt in every fruiting season throughout the year as a profession. The purpose of capturing of wild animals, birds and reptiles, dead or alive has been purely meant for meat and socio-cultural celebrations. Even before the introduction of modern firearms Lothas were expert in hunting. They hunt and kill the wild animals individually and through corporate hunting. The spear and *dao* (machete) were the main weapons they used in hunting. Their hunting games consist of squirrel, wild cats, wild boar, bear, deer, tiger, leopard, elephant, etc and birds of every kind. They not only use spear and *dao*, but certain traps and snares are used to catch the small animals. But the big animals are either trapped in the pitfalls or are cornered in a particular place by picking. In pitfall, a pit is dug on the path of the animal and it is covered by twigs and leaves etc so that it will look natural. When the animal walks on it and falls into the people spear it and thus kill it (Ghosh, 1979:55-56). Faith and dream is also another important factor for the hunters whether to go on the fixed day or postpone it. Since they believe in the dreams, it comes true in a curious way. Believing in dreams before stepping out for hunting was evident even among the Angami tribe. Every Angami dreams before going for a hunting and believes most heartily in the truth of such prognostications, and, at any rate with certain dreamers, these hunting dreams have a remarkable way of coming true (Hutton, 2003:88).

2. Methodology

This paper is based on oral tradition and culture of the Lotha Nagas. The account of the knowledgeable persons in the village who had experiences of traditional hunting was interviewed in unstructured manner. The vernacular writing of the local people has been referred as a component of primary source. Ethnographic and anthropological account left by the British has also been referred. The available related literature in a form of books and journals in different parts of the region is being referred for better understanding of the theory and practices as secondary source.

3. Objectives

The objective of this paper is to explore the different methods of hunting practiced during the traditional past. The entire economy life of the traditional Lothas was dependent on jhum cultivation and forest products. The villagers collect everything from the forest for the construction of house to collection of wild foods and thus, hunting was their usual practice and a part of their life. Therefore, the main objectives of this paper are:

1. To examine the hunting culture in original form before hunting by firearms
2. To investigate what type of birds, animals, rodents and reptiles they have hunted
3. To find out the meat they tabooed

4. Hunting culture

Hunting plays an important role in the socio – cultural life of the *Lothas*. The Lothas go for hunting of wild animals and birds with a variety of purpose. They do not kill and consume the meat of all the wild animals and birds that comes to their way during hunting expedition. They are very cautious and selective about what species of animals, birds, rodents and reptiles to be hunted. There are certain wild animals and birds which cannot be consumed by young and old for they consider eating of those meats was a taboo. Eating some animals and birds were restricted for the young, adults, women and children. At times they set out for hunting searching for a specific animals and birds as the first food for the new born baby. Some wild animals and birds are hunted not for meat but for the feathers, teeth, skull, tusk and bones which are associated to ceremonies and festivals.

The following wild animals, birds and reptiles were hunted, as remembered by an old men in the Lotha villages:

- a. Wild animal:** *Sotsü* (elephant), *Mmhorü* (tiger), *Mmhorü terio* (leopard), *Tsiyo* (serow), *Sepfü* (reindeer), *Siano* (Samber and barking deer), *Sevan* (bear), *Onni* (wild boar; *Nipong* (male wild boar), *Yakso* (monkey), *Kyatsü* (marbled cat), *Shali* (wild dog), *Liso* (Hedgehog), *Syu* (civet cat), *Tsongoro* (wild cat), etc.,
- b. Birds:** *Votsü* (Wreathed Hornbill-Rhyticeros), *Rhüjüng* (Great pied Hornbill-concave casqued hornbill), *Nnro* (Oriental pied hornbill), *Yizum* (Greater racket-tailed drongo), *Seno* (Minivet), *Müngshiro* (Eagle), *Vüingngum* (Large Dove-

Columbidae family), *Verhük* (jungle fowl), *Yipya* (Pheasant), *byulokvü* (quail), *Akao* (green pigeon), *Vüangi* (Asian Barbets), *Khetsü* (Oriental turtle doves), *Yivan* (Blue whistling thrush), *Khvüshi* (Black and white laughing thrush), *Liosangsü* (a songbird of the thrush family-turdidae), *Vetyuru* (Bulbul), etc.,

- c. **Reptiles:** *Jerhüng* (Monitor Lizard), *Ongum* (Python), *Shifü* (Tortoise) etc.,
- d. **Rodents:** *Sethan* (porcupine), *Jerha* (tree squirrel), *Selok* (flying squirrel), *Zhütong* (large wild rat) *Nokano* (giant rats), *Oshyu* (mole rats), *Kvüniro* (chipmunk) etc.,

5. Types of Hunting

There are several types of hunting practices by the Lothas in the ancient days and the same practice was prevalent until a new method of hunting by gun during the colonial and postcolonial periods were adapted. The ancestral Lothas applied unique methods, techniques and tools which they found it deemed applicable for all the season to capture animals, birds, reptiles and rodents. Some of the techniques, methods and tools of hunting are still prevalent. Those different types of hunting may be summarized in the following separate heads:

5. 1. Hunting associated with ceremonies and festivals

According to the oral tradition of Wokha village, when a village is established the foremost duty of the community is to construct the *Pvüiti Ki* (Chief house) and *Chumpo* (*Morung*). In the process of constructing a *Chumpo*, the elders cut down a big tree to be used as *Humtsen* (Kingpost). While thinking about the symbol to be craved on the post suddenly 2 (two) *Rhüjüng* (Hornbill), a male and female, appears facing each other (joining the bill). Fascinated by the scene they decided to carve the image of Hornbill in *Chumpo* wooden kingpost. The Lotha ancestors considered hornbill, the king of birds and most admired. It is a revered bird as it is closely associated with ceremonies and rituals since time immemorial.

During the festival the Lotha men wears a *Tongkho* (head gear/head-dress) during the with hornbill tail feathers. This tradition has been practiced by their forefathers and passed down to generations. Hornbill was regarded as a special bird by the Lotha ancestors and putting its feathers was a mark of enemy head takers and therefore, it was insignia of the warriors. The men would hunt hornbills and make use of the feathers as and when they bring head to the village. The Lotha warrior put one feather in his *Tongkho* for bringing one head in the village; two feathers for two heads; three feathers for three heads and it will keep on increasing the feather according to his head's trophy. It was a symbol of valour and bravery since the number of feather will increase according to the heads he brought to the village by killing someone. To beautify their head gears out of red hair and tail feather cock minivet (*seno hanpong*) and greater racket-tail drongo (*Yizum*) were also hunted. Therefore, hornbill, minivet and greater racket-tailed drongo were killed through trap and snare at the fruit trees and in the river side when comes to quench their thirst (Fig-1).



Fig-1 Hunting spears Carved Hornbill at Wokha Village *Chumpo* Warrior with *Tongkho* (head gear)

The bones and ivory of elephant, teeth of a wild boar are also associated with ceremony and festivals. Those were worn by the men folk as ornaments during the festivals. Hunting those animals was necessitated since it is a sign of pride and prestige in the society. They displayed the hunted animal skulls, bird's feathers, animal's teeth, skin etc., at home that brings pride and prestige in traditional Lotha society (Fig-2). Hunting also took place at the time of child birth ceremony. When a child is about 4-5 months, the father of the child would hunt a bird called *Liosangsü* (a songbird of the thrush family) and put in his hand which they called *Ngaro eshan*. The symbolic meaning is to let the child grown up talented with beautiful and good voice like *Liosangsü*. However, the bird is extinct and so, in the present days people hunt red-vented bulbul (*Vetyuryu* and *oyeni*) for *Ngaro eshan* (*Ngaro* means baby and *eshan* means first taste).



Fig-2 Hunted animal skulls at Nrüng Longidang Village, Wokha Village and Elumyo Village

5. 2 Community Hunting (*Nzontsü Zhütsoranben*)

Community hunting is called *Nzontsü Zhütsoranben*. The community hunting is normally done after clearing the jungle for new jhum field. But in certain case like tiger

hunting, the community would fix the date hastily. The traditional Lothas are ritualistic in nature. Rituals were performed not only in their agricultural practices but in all the events they partook. Therefore, rituals are performed in every village before going for community hunting and the hunters would avoid marriage feast, sleeping with wife, killing of domesticated animals, etc., Every participating villager performs this special ritual in order to bring good luck and good omen for the hunters and expedition of hunting. They invoke blessings of *Sükhyingo*, a jungle deity who blessed the hunters with wild animals.

J.P. Mills in his *The Lhota Nagas* mentioned, *Sityingo* (correct spelling is *Sükhyingo*) is the jungle deity who owns all wild animals as a man owns domestic animals. If the hunting party kills a deer with a torn ear they will hunt no more that day, for have they not killed a deer whose ear *Sityingo* has snicked as a sign of ownership. The deer, however, can be eaten. Furthermore, the dogs must be purified before they can hunt again. Their owner orders his wife to prepare a little “madhu” (rice beer). This she must do in silence. Next day no stranger from another village may enter his house, nor anyone who is doing a “genna” of any kind. The following day water is added to the “madhu” and the “madhu” rice given to the dogs to eat. The owner, taking them with him, goes with an old man to a spot outside the village, where the latter makes a fire with a fire-stick, and lifting the dogs in his hands passes them through the smoke, uttering as he does so the following prayers to *Sityingo*: “We have made new ‘madhu’ and new fire, and have purified the dogs. May all the deer wherever they may come to our village and be hunted by these dogs”. He then watches to see what insects come near the fire. If big insects come the dogs will get sambar. If small insects come they will get barking deer (Mills 2003b:64-65).

All male members of the village take part except children and old men. If the animal is hunted or killed with one leg, chunks of meat is given to the person who kills the animal or one who makes the first successful hit and rest will be distributed among the villagers whoever participated in the expedition. The dog owner also gets the share if the dog contributed in chasing out the animal from jungle. Community were usually involved at the time of hunting elephant and tiger. According to the oral tradition, spearing elephant and tiger needs invigorating and was tougher than going to *Ralo-vo* (*Ralo* means a traditional war expedition to hunt human heads and ‘vo is a short form of ‘go’).

For elephant hunting, it was precious for them to make armlets out of its tusk. Though it involved life risk they hunt elephant through the technique of making large and deep pitfall called ‘*Sokvü*’ at the pavement area for want of tusk and quantity of flesh. Pitfall is dug normally 12 x 10 feet at the surface and the depth is 12 feet. At the bottom it is normally narrowed down to 6 feet and laid hard bamboo spike (*otssi*) in such a way that elephant will fall inside with four legs and get injure by the spike. It will cover up by the twigs and dried leaves to look natural. When the elephant falls inside the pitfall, the huntsman will spear and kill it. The hunters will retain the tusk and the villagers will collect the meat for consumption. It is a myth for the Lothas of not selling elephant meat, lest the herd will attack the person who sells.

Since tiger is a ferocious animal it involves the community at large for hunting. The hunting of tiger can be in winter, summer or any season. The community hunting was necessitated when the village do not tolerate the loss incurred upon them by the tiger attacked on domestic animals and fowls. The chosen huntsmen will trace the tiger territory and their sleeping place. The tradition of Wokha village tells that the tiger will sleep after consuming sufficient amount of meat they killed. After spotting the tiger, the community will clear a path and observe whether he comes out or still inside the territory. Nrüng Longidang Village tradition tells that a tiger will not cross the path that was cleared by the human.

The hunting team will put up a V-shape palisade called *Ola* or *Kotsum* at the lower point using strong bamboo and wood plinth in a criss-cross manner with the approximate height of 9 feet so that the tiger will not be able to escape. At the lower end point, a confinement hut called *Vükshup* measuring about 6 feet length and 3 feet height will be built firm and strong. The hunting team will go well equipped with dao, spear, spike and shield and surround or ring from the upper point. The group formation is semi-circular yet divides into two group, left and right, for the action. They will move ahead simultaneously. They will start clearing the jungle called *Chencho* and narrow down, called *ntsenya* towards the palisade. The brave and experienced hunters will take position at the most strategic and danger area called *Latsum*, which is between the upper hunts men positioning area and the palisade. When the tiger is chased down towards the palisade, and finally while trying to escape, the tiger will enter inside the *Vükshup* (confinement) and from there it be will be killed. The Lothas called this hunting technique – *Mmhorü Eha* which means rings the tiger and is killed. The whole tiger's corpse will be taken to the village and hung up in the village ceremoniously. Thereafter, they will visit the village *Chumpo* (morung) and halt for a short moment with a belief to cleanse their body so that they will not face unnatural death in the hand of the enemy and the wilds (Fig-3). We have seen the similar culture of celebration among the Ao Nagas when a tiger is killed. The killing of a leopard or tiger is celebrated as the death of an enemy and the chant which announces it is that which proclaims the taking of a head...it is then carried out, accompanied by the crowd of men and boys, and deposited on a platform in the place assigned by tradition to this purpose, usually near the cemetery (Mills, 2003a:140).

The hunting of tiger by constructing a palisade and confinement hut was a unique culture of the Lotha Nagas. In hunting tiger and leopard the Sema do not, like the Lothas and Aos, build a palisade, but merely surround the animal with spears and shields. The dead body is treated much as that of an enemy, at any rate in many parts of the Sema country, the head brings back to the village and hung up outside where the heads of enemies are hung (Hutton, 2007:77). Imchen and Jolekar, in their paper titled “Traditional Animal Hunting Practices among the Ao Nagas”, mentioned about the hunting of tiger by constructing a stockade. The stockade was fenced heavily using wooden logs or bamboos (Imchen & Jolekar, 2015:510). J.P. Mills has reported the adaption of Lotha tiger hunting method by the Rengma Nagas villages. The Tesophenyu group of villages build a fence and stud the

ground with “panjis” after the Lotha fashion, from whom they say they learnt the method a generation ago (Mills, 1982:97).

It is said that in Wokha village, 2 (two) tigers were killed in two occasions at the place called *chon-hanjü* (pottery clay mining area) and *Tsüngtsütong* below APMC (Wokha-Mokokchung road) during *Mmhorü Eha*. In Nrüng Longidang village also 2 (two) tigers were killed in one hunting occasion at Nrülong area near Hayimong (abandoned village). Hunting tiger was a dangerous affair- sometimes incurred losing human life and occasionally inflicted a serious injury upon the hunters. In the recent past, there was *Mmhorü Eha* in Nrüng Longidang, a Lotha village, in 1984. On chasing towards the palisade, the tiger tried to escape and in the process one of the hunting team, named Tachamo Ezung was severely injured by the tiger. The injured tiger bit him on his thigh and as Tachamo hold a stump, a hunter named Wochumo slashed the tiger by a dao on the head and thereby, victim was released. Finally, the tiger was killed by the team and brought to the village and hung up in the platform. Tachamo was died on 31st July 2019 (Fig- 4).

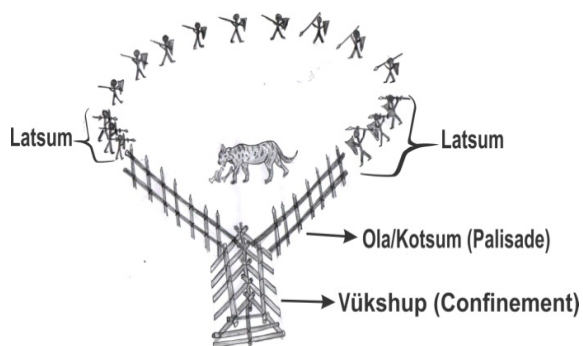


Fig-3 Lotha Technique of hunting tiger injured during tiger’s hunting



Fig-4 Tachamo Ezung,

5. 3 Individual Hunting (*Kija Zütsoranpen*) is either carried out by a person alone or group of four to five people in an appropriate fruiting time throughout the year. The hunter goes to the river valley for Serow and Samber. The deer hunting usually took place in a valley running down the hills and the professional hunters know the types of wild fruits they eat most. The Lhota is a wonderful judge of the line a deer is going to take and can generally be relied upon to get his spear into the running target at twenty yards, so that these hunts are more often successful than unsuccessful (Mills 2003b:64). If a group of persons hunt together, the meat is equally distributed among the group. The person who kills the animal gets larger share. If the animal is killed with the assistance of dog, the owner of the dog will be given the head; fist spear gets a hind leg; second spear gets a fore leg and the remaining of fore leg is given to the eldest among the group. If killed without a dog, the person who wounded the wild first will get the head. The hunting party would equally share the meat. Oral tradition also tells that a piece of liver and meat is wrapped by a leave for *Sükhyingo*, a deity of the wild animals. This will be given to the oldest man in

the village. On reaching the village the hunted animals are also shared to their neighbourhood and relatives. Individual hunting was evident from the fact that the hunters hang good number skulls as pride and honour in their residence. Usually hunting of birds, small animals, rodents and reptiles were done individually.

6. Techniques and Tools use for Hunting:

The technique of making a pitfall was applied to other animals just like they killed elephant by applying that technique. They dug the pit and covered by the twigs and dried leaves to look natural so that the animals crossed their path will be fallen inside the pitfall. A hard bamboo spike was placed at the bottom of the pit. Elephant-pits were huge affairs, but the ordinary pitfall was about ten feet deep, with the bottom covered with big jagged rocks and “panjis”, so that any animal which fell in was likely both of to have its legs broken and to be impaled (Mills 2003b: 57). Other techniques and tools may be summarized in separate heads as below:

6.1 Hunting with dogs (*Sophan-Fü*): A trained dog which the Lothas call *Sophan-Fü* was a companion and effective partners for the hunters. *So* denotes *oso* which means meat and *phan* denotes *phana* which means chase, while *fü* denotes *füro*, meaning a dog. The *Sophan-Fü* is an indigenous dog specifically trained by the hunters for hunting purpose which resembles with the Dingo Indochina and black Thai Ridgeback. It is a well trained dog for the purpose of hunting animals where both of the ears and tail is chopped off during the course of training. This type of dog was seen till mid-1980s in Lotha villages. On reaching the hunting territory, the hunters release the dogs to different direction to sniff for animals' presence. Once the *Sophan-Fü* notices the presence of animal it starts barking to confuse and intimidate the wild animal. On hearing the barks the hunter would go to that direction and kill the animal. The *Sophan-Fü* will not stop chasing until the wild becomes tired of running. This was one of the most successful and easiest ways to kill an animal by the Lotha ancestors. The owner's of *Sophan-Fü* is highly paid in terms of the meat.

6.2 Hunting with spear and Dao

Otsso (spear) and *lepok* (machete / *dao*) was the heart and soul of survival for the traditional Lotha Naga society. It is used as a tool to protect from enemies and dangerous animals and also used as main implements or tools to kill them. It takes lots of hard work and intelligence to hunt with a spear and dao, and the Lothas used it with precision. Spear is normally used to kill wild boar, deer, bear and even an elephant. Spear was a common tool used by the Lotha Nagas before the knowledge of modern guns for hunting. They are very tactful in using the spear in a sense that they did not throw the spear impulsively as it was scarce. They did throw or stab the wilds at the right moment when they are sure of killing it.

6.3 Traps and snares

Different types of traps and snares were made to kill mostly birds, rodents and reptiles by the Lothas:

a). The common one was called *tsirhi* which is a triangular trap made up of bamboo and cane string. *Tsirhi* can be made in big, medium and small which the traditional Lotha hunters placed at the running track of the rodents and reptiles. The same *tsirhi* was also said to have applied to trap birds in the bushes. Hundreds of *tsirhis* can be placed in a particular place where the ground bird gets its wild feeds (Fig-5).

b). *Kvütok* is another effective technique of hunting birds and small animals. *Kvü* denotes *okvü*, meaning hole and *tok* means ‘to dig’. The method is digging a small hole and put fruits, rats or any other indigenous wild’s favourite stuff inside. *Kvütok* method can be applied either through rectangular bamboo trap called *Tsirhi* and *Zentyu*. (Fig-6).

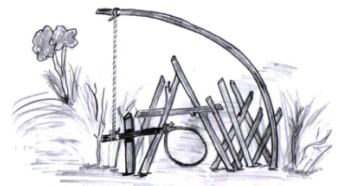
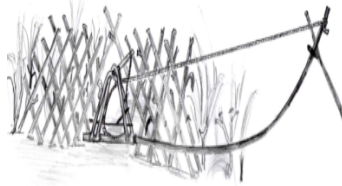


Fig-5 *Tsirhi*

Fig-6 *Zentyu*

c) Another type of snare which is effective method of catching ground birds is *Chüngra*. It is called *Chüngra* because when the bird is caught from the neck it gets firmly bind by the string. The trap is made by tying the seed as allurement which is hard red seed of wild plant called *Sumphang*, found in the wet forest area. The Wokha village ancestors collect this particular wild seeds from the Wokha hill (Mount Tiyi). There is a myth that even if the jungle fowl (*verkhük*) missed the trap, the *Chüngra* (red seed) will ask the *verkhük* to have a competition with him to see whether his eyes looks more radiant red than the latter. The jungle fowl then pecks the red seed and hanged to be died there. Varieties of birds are being hunted through traps and snares (Fig-7).

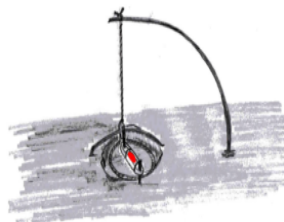
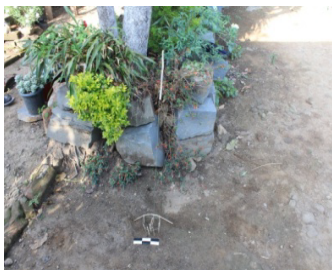


Fig-7 *Chüngra*

d). Rope snare (*Ozhü-nzen*) was also a popular method to hunt smaller animal and rodents of different kind. The traps string is made out of *Erünhyan* (fibre extracted from the tree called *Sterculia Urens*) and *orü* (cane). (Fig-8).

6. 4 Fall trap (*Okyo*)

Okyo (Fall-trap) is generally prepared to trap bears, civet cat, wild cat and monkey etc. The traditional *okyo* making method is to place a large flat stone in diagonal oblique bind by a strong string. One end of the string is tied up in the nearby tree and the other end is to make to catch trap with fruits or rats. The size of stone is depending on what type of animal is being targeted (Fig-9).



Fig-8 *Ozhü-nzen*

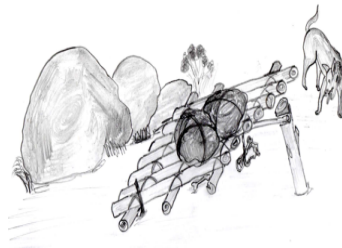


Fig. 9 *Okyo*

6. 5 Crossbow and birdlime

There are two types of crossbow used by the traditional Lothas to hunt birds, small animals etc., called *Lotssi* and *Lotso*. *Lotssi* is made of wooden boot, bamboo limb and arrow with strong string made of *Erünhyan* (fibre extracted from the tree called *Sterculia Urens*) while *Lotso* is made of cane string, bamboo limb and treated round clay balls to shoot. Both are very effective in killing birds, small animals, squirrels etc., even from a far distance (Fig-10 & 11).

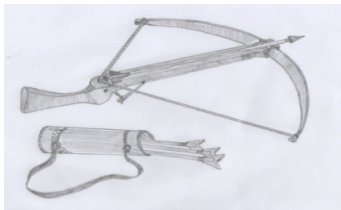


Fig-10 *Lotssi*

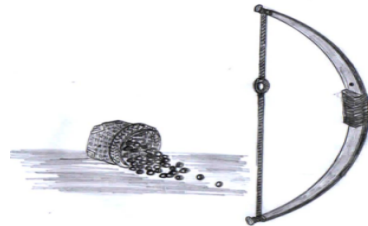


Fig.11 *Lotso*

Oni-khum (strong adhesive trap) is another effective traditional method to trap variety of birds which is usually called birdlime. To produce *Oni* (strong adhesive) involves certain kind of rituals according to Lotha oral tradition. The sticky sap is extracted from a tree called *Nitsotong* (ficus family of tree). The birdlime is prepared outside the house where nobody can be seen; otherwise the person who is preparing will not get bird. The Lothas used broken clay pots to put the sap and boil it until it is turned malleable and extremely adhesive compound called *oni*. Normally, *Oni* is placed near the fruiting trees in different branches so that any birds that come near would be stuck and become incapacitate to escape. Live insects are also placed over the *oni* to attract the bird (Fig-12).



Fig-12 Oni-khum

7. Hunting of Reptiles

Ongum (Python) hunting is peculiar in nature. When a python is found in the jungle, a wood plank is placed so that he would put his head to rest over it and become easier to kill it. An old man from Elumyo village narrated that, python is killed by telling him to lie over the wood plank telling him that he will become beautiful and smart if do that, and the same method is applying even today to kill. *Jerhüing* (monitor lizard) is killed easily if caught his tail. Oral tradition tells that the entire strength and power of the monitor lizard is in his tail.

8. Belief system

The traditional Lotha society is ritualistic, systematic and careful in nature. They believe that human and tiger were friends and some people have a spirit of tiger. If the tiger is killed, the human who possessed tiger's spirit also dies. Therefore, they do not simply kill and eat tiger's meat. Monkey's meat is not eaten by a man whose wife is pregnant; eating by the children was prohibited as well with a belief that they might become like a monkey in appearance and character. Eating owl was tabooed to the young people that they may not be wise and smart if eaten. Flying squirrels were tabooed to children and young alike with a belief of unprecedented sexual arousal. Black and white laughing thrush (*khvüshi*) is not eaten for fear of early grey hair. Crow (*kyashak*) is not eaten for fear of becoming a thief like the crows. Reptile's meats were forbidden to women and children. Blue whistling thrush (*yivan*) is tabooed for incurring debts as the birds goes to as many as 9 (nine) rivers since early in the morning. In his vernacular writing (*Kyong tathi Juli- the Lotha Naga Customs & Culture*), Ngullie mentioned that the Lothas tabooed eating python since the Lotha ancestors believe in the legend of human being turned into python; Eating elephant meat would lead to difficulties in moving around; prohibit tiger's meat since the tiger eat human flesh and eating bears meat would lead to complex disorder (Ngullie, 1993: 5).

9. Conclusion

It is observed that hunting is an integral part of the Lotha Nagas which is deeply embedded in socio-cultural and economic life. The method and techniques they applied

was a spectacular traditional skills and knowledge. The legacy is being carried forward generation after generation with great reverence and at times associated to ancestral belief system. It was indeed, a wondrous reminiscence to those aged professional traditional hunters (informants) how they could hunt and trap different kinds of wildlife without modern hunting equipments, arms and ammunition. Despite the enactment of several laws related to wildlife conservation by the government, the Naga society cannot alienate themselves completely from their traditional hunting practices. This is because of the fact that hunting is not just a sport for the Lothas but it is deeply rooted to their socio-cultural identity. The tradition of prohibiting hunting during madding season is respectable even in the modern generation. Women did not participate in traditional hunting activities, yet out of their affectionate feelings towards their husband they participate while hunting ferocious tiger. They took position behind their husbands by spearing wooden stick with a motive that their husbands must not be attacked by the hunting tiger.

Undoubtedly the climatic changes and deforestation ultimately decline the population of wildlife but the serious concern is the tradition of hunting with guns which is indeed, a weapon of destruction to the wild habitats. The ancient tradition of ‘we feeling’ and sharing hunting spoils to the village elders, neighbours, friends and relative through the hunting sport has been lost because hunting has become commercial. The beliefs and practices of regular hunting on the pretext that wild meat is tastier than domesticated fowls and animals must retrench as many species of birds, animal and reptile has been extinct and some are in the verge of extinction. If at least eating of those birds and animals’ meat which were tabooed by the ancestors is being respected, it will indicate a sense of love for the environment and ecology and thereby, the forest will remain beautiful to certain extent.

Works Cited:

- Aiyadurai, Ambika. (2011). “Wildlife hunting and conservation in Northeast India: a need for an interdisciplinary understanding, in world Pheasant Association”. *International Journal of Galliformes Conservation*, 2: 61-73, p. 61
- Ghosh, B. B., (1979). *Nagaland District Gazetteers*, Wokha District. Kohima: Government of Nagaland, pp.55-56
- Hazarika, Manjil.(2017). *Prehistory and Archaeology of Northeast India: Multidisciplinary Investigation in an Archaeological Terra Incognita*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, p.38
- Hudson, T.C., (2013). *The Naga Tribes of Manipur* (Reprint). Delhi: Low Price Publication, p.56
- Hutton, J. H., (2003). *The Angami Nagas* (reprint). Kohima: Directorate of art and Culture, Government of Nagaland, p.88
- Hutton, J.H., (2007). *The Sema Nagas* (reprint). Kohima: Directorate of Art and Culture, Government of Nagaland, p.77

- Imchen, Akiyala & Joglegar, P. P., (2015). “Traditional Animal Hunting Practices among the Ao Nagas: A Case Study of Mangmentong Village, Nagaland”, in *Heritage: Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies in Archaeology* 3: 507-525, p. 510
- Lohe, Nutazo, “Traditional Knowledge System in Hunting and Trapping Methods among the Nagas of Northeast India”, *Asian Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, Vol. 2, Issue 8, August 2014, 2348-7186, p. 184
- Mills, J. P., (2003a). *The Ao Nagas* (reprint). Kohima: Directorate of art and Culture, Government of Nagaland, p. 140
- Mills, J. P., (2003b). *The Lhota Nagas* (reprint). Guwahati: Spectrum Publications, pp. 64-65
- Mills, J. P., (1982). *The Rengma Nagas* (reprint). Kohima: Directorate of art and Culture, Government of Nagaland, p. 97
- Ngullie, N. T., (1993). *Kyong Tathi Jüli* (The Lotha Naga Customs and Cultures). Wokha, p.5
- Seligmann, “The Vedda Cult of the of the Dead”, *Transactions of the Third International Congress for the History of Religions*, Vol.1, p. 59

Interviewed with:

1. Yisansao Tsanglao, 76 year as on 05/03/2019, Elumyo Village
2. Zumomo Tsanglao, 68 year as on 05/03/2019 Elumyo Village
3. Chanbemo Ngullie, 90 year as on 27/03/2019, Nrüng Longidang Village
4. Tachamo Ezung, 86 year as on 27/03/2019, Nrüng Longidang Village
5. Vanchumo Murry, 85 year as on 27/03/2019, Nrüng Longidang
6. Longtsuman Ngullie, 62 year as on 15/05/2021, Nrüng Longidang Village
7. Tsensao Erui, 80 year as on 16/05/2021, Wokha Village
8. Chichamo Erui, 76 year as on 16/05/2021, Wokha Village)
9. Yitsomo Murry, 77 year as on 17/05/2021), Wokha Village

Libemo Kithan, Assistant Professor, Department of History, Mount Tiyi College, Wokha, Nagaland.

Literary Reviewing of J.M. Coetzee's –Inner Workings (Literary Essays 2000-2005)

P.C. Kambodia

J.M. Coetzee (born in South Africa and presently based at Adelaide, South Australia) is a writer, reviewer and translator of Dutch and Afrikaan literature. Two of his novels have already been awarded booker prize and he won Nobel prize for literature in 2003. He evaluates literature written in various forms such as prose, poetry, dramatic poetry written in various countries of Europe, United States of America, Canada, India etc. His literary reviews (generally called as his literary essays) have been published in three volumes. They are –Stranger Shores (Literary Essays, 1986-1999), Inner Workings (Literary Essays, 2000-2005), Late Essays (Literary Essays, 2006-2007). Before Coetzee got 03 volumes of literary essays published, Nadine Gordimer, South African political activist and literary writer who received Nobel prize for Literature in 1991 also got 03 volumes of literary and political essays published to her credit. The titles of her three volumes are- The Essential Gestures (1988), Writing and Being (1995), Living in Hope and History (1999). Of Course, some of her novels were banned in South Africa.

Coetzee's literary essays are highly critical, brief but informative and written within couple of pages. These essays sum up the literary artists in various literary previews say for instance their names, area of fame, nationality, hardship of their personal life, struggle and literary brilliance with which they move throughout the world in form of the books written either in the original language of the translated versions. These essays are a clear cut proof of the writer's habit of wide range of reading with proper understanding. No doubt, they are an evidence of Coetzee's scholarship. He accounts the name of those famous literary writers who had influenced and motivated them whom Coetzee selects for his literary criticism or evaluation. These essays include myths based on metamorphosis, cultural transmission and transposition, issues of identity, magic-realism, sexism, power control and politics, anti-semitism, anti-black bigotry, survival mechanism, pornography etc.

In order to understand these essays fully, the readers should have a fair knowledge of the history of at least two centuries prior to the birth of the writer of these essays along with the knowledge of contemporary events that happened when those literary works were being written by their writers. Coetzee makes us known to the purpose of writings of these

writers say for instance spreading of undue hate by the contemporary political leaders to expose unrest of the Jewish community or to create mere political writings. Coetzee gives us the list of the established works of these writers and he aims to tell which creation of theirs has been the best which creation of theirs has been the worst and their output known far and wide internationally. This evaluation of more than forty writers is based on Coetzee's own reading of these writers either in their original script or in their translated version.

The writer of this paper wants to concentrate on Coetzee's collection of literary essays entitled-*Inner Workings* (2000-2005) just to have a brief literary survey of some of them and of course this collection has a total No. of 21 literary writers. These writers at a glance can be viewed in table No. 1 to know the period of their living and the domain of their literary activities.

Key Words – Materialism, Socialism, Cultural transposition, Arcade, Senility, Theology, Bigotry, Pornography, Nazism, Communism, Convulutes, European.

Table No. 1

Sr .No.	Name of the writer who has been evaluated by Coetzee in his Inner Working (2000-2005)	The period of writer's living. (The date of his birth and the date of death)	Domain of his literary activities and his literary achievements
1.	Italo Svevo	19 th Dec. 1861 to 13 th Sept. 1928	Italian novelist and short story writer. A pioneer figure in psychological novels in Italian language.
2.	Robert Walser	15 th April 1878 to 25 th Dec. 1956	German speaking Swiss writer whose fiction covers People's personal habits and life styles
3.	Robert Musil	6 th Nov. 1880 to 15 th April 1942	Austrian philosophical writer who is considered to be one of the most important and influential modern novelist. He combines the writings of the stream of Science and Arts
4.	Walter Benjamin	15 th July 1892 to 26 th Sept.1940	German essayist, Cultural critic and a well-known writer of German Philosophical articles covering issues such as status of religion, materialism and power politics.

5.	Bruno Schulz	12 th July 1892 to 19 th Nov. 1942	Polish writer, literary critic and art teacher belonging to Jewish family. He is a master of 20 th Century prose with an influence of left wing but he is virtually ignored by the western critics.
6.	Joseph Roth	2 nd Sept. 1894 to 27 th May 1939	Austrian literary and political journalist. He is a regional novelist and his historic writings are taken to be authentic for the fall of Austro-Hungarian empire.
7.	Sandor Marai	11 th April 1900 to 21 st Feb. 1989	Hungarian novelist and political journalist whose writings are profoundly anti-facist. He received his education in a military academy (Vienna) took part in the world war-II Survived but persecution by the communist drove him out from the country in 1948.
8.	Paul Celan	23Nov. 1920 to 20 th April 1970	Paul Celan is a Romanian born German poet and translator. His main field of translation is from German poetry to Russian poetry. Basically he himself is a Jewish poet who kept on visiting several European countries like Jerusalem, Israel to know more about Jewish culture and tradition
9.	Gunter Grass	16 th Oct. 1927 to 13 th April 2015	German poet novelist and playwright who received Nobel Prize for Lit. in 1999. It is he who introduced magic realism in Europe. In his writings, he mixes fabulous with the realistic.
10.	W.G. Sebald	18 th May 1944 to 14 th Dec. 2001	German Poet and prose writer who mainly concentrated on the literature of Australia through story telling, essays, philosophical writings. The tone of his writings is mainly melancholic and his stories are chiefly based on (amnesia) loss of memory.

11.	Hugo Claus	5 th April 1929 to 19 March 2008	Belgian poet who tried his hand in drama and poetry. He wrote scripts for films and also directed them. He had strong passions for theatre and was attached with several art movements such as COBRA.
12.	Graham Greene	2 nd Oct. 1904 to 3 rd April 1991	English writer and journalist who gained reputation as a writer quite early in his life. Some of his novels are serious in tone and catholic in touch . He wrote so many scripts for the British movies.
13.	Samuel Beckett	13 th April 1906 to 22 nd Dec. 1889	Samuel Beckett born in Ireland but passed most of his adult life in France so he commanded both the languages English and French equally. His main area of interest is poetry, literary translations and script writing for movies.
14.	Walt Whitman	31 st May 1819 to 26 th March 1892	American poet, essayist and journalist whose literary works make a shift from transcendentalism to realism. In his poetry, he makes use of amativness, eroticism, amorousness and same-sex love (homosexual tendencies)
15.	William Faulkner	25 th Sept. 1897 to 6 th July 1962	American novelist and short story writer who tried his hand in screenplays, poetry and essay. He tried his career in Hollywood film industry. His writings have a colour of Christian humanism and moralistic tones.
16.	Saul Bellow	19 th June 1915 to 5 th April 2005	Saul Bellow is a Canadian-American novelist and recipient of the Nobel prize for literature in the year 1976. In his writings he takes up issues such as cultural transmission, chaotic life of metropolitans etc.

17.	Arthur Miller	17 th Oct 1915 to 10 th Feb. 2005	American playwright and essayist of the 20 th Century who made his presence realized in American theatre. He wrote scripts for several famous American and British movies such as Death of a Salesman .
18.	Philip Roth	19 th March 1933 to 22 nd May 2018	He is an American novelist and short story writer who wrote social, confessional and fictitious war novels. He focuses on Nazis threat, plots against Jewish Community, anti-black bigotry (a kind of hostility without any ground).
19.	Nadine Gordimer	20 th Nov. 1923 to 13 th July 2014	She is a South African novelist and political activist who received Nobel Prize in literature of the year 1991. The issues that she takes up in her novels are Europe's projection to communal communities, quest for justice, South African living and the bad faith in it etc.
20.	Gabriel Garcia	6 th March 1927 to 17 th April 2014	Colombian novelist and a short story writer who tried his luck in theatrical screen writing and journalism. The issues that he takes up in his novels are cross- generational marriages and love affairs, senility (mental state of mania and confusion), psychological realism
21.	V.S. Naipaul	17 th Aug. 1932 to 11 th Aug. 2018	He is a British writer of fiction and non-fiction in English. He won Nobel prize in literature in 2001. His initial books were comic in nature but his novels also have journalistic flavor. His main stress has been on social analysis.

In order to imbibe Coetzee's literary essays (2000-2005) it is almost necessary to know the history of the European countries like Germany, Poland, Austria, Vienna, Switzerland, Hungary, Italy etc. as the writers of the most of them are Europeans and to know which of the community was in majority in which part of their European countries in the times contemporary to these writes for which table No. 1 has been set and it can be viewed. It will be in the interest of readers to know from the books of European history about the rise of the power of Nazis, Bolshevik revolution, Catholicism in the European countries, persecution of the European Jews as in June 1941, only a year after Coetzee's birth, Hitler invaded USSR causing havoc and disturbance everywhere.

There are several scenes of war in these literary essays where German refugees roam about in the doomed cities terribly frightened from war and they were almost mentally paralyzed by the horror of war. The general gloom was about destruction of habitat and terrible loss to life and property. History kept on recording what so happened in the European countries during world war I and II. One of the purpose which learned writers like Coetzee or Nadine Gordimer may have in their mind is to find out correlation or link in any way between history, literature and politics and through these essays; Coetzee proves this inter-relationship of history, politics and literature. There are so many writers who would prefer to surrender their breath rather than surrendering their writing ideals or models. They readily accept exile or banishment and they don't surrender to political pressure. The purpose of such writers is to remain truthful and faithful to their own loyalty to literature and self-prestige and while doing so they set up a link between literature, history and politics. Joseph Roth and Sandor Marai belong to such Category of literary writers whom Coetzee includes in his literary evaluation. Robert Musil is yet another writer about whom Coetzee writes: (2002 : 105) "A move to the livelier intellectual environment of Berlin was cut short by the rise of power of the Nazis. RoberMusil and his wife returned to Vienna, to an Ominous political atmosphere; he began to suffer from depression and poor health. Then in 1938 Austria was absorbed into the Third Reich. The couple removed themselves to Switzerland. Switzerland was meant to be a staging post on the way to the United States but the entry of the United States into the war put an end to their plan". When we read literature produced by Robert Musil we come across a well-knit Knot inter-weaving literature, politics and history.

In W.G. Sebald's essay **After Nature** Coetzee quotes **Heimat** (Homeland) in Austrian literature commenting upon the concept of home and being at home in perfectly literal way and the national history of Austrians based on their national territory, population have also been recorded and of course politics also goes on side by side and thus we come across a unification of history, politics and literature.

Arcade means a passage often between two streets where there are shops or market stalls but later on the concept of arcade meant huge building with large covered area with several passages having glass roofed top and panelledshops on either side. Such arcades became quite famous in Paris. These arcades provided urban population thrilling experience

of shopping. In the late 1920s Walter Benjamin was highly influenced by the arcades of Paris so he started writing a book (**Passagen-Werk**) which is known in English as **Arcade Project**. The book remained incomplete as the writer Benjamin took an overdose of morphine and expired while, in the times of war, he was running to neutral Spain from France stealthily and was caught by the Spanish police.

Coetzee evaluates Walter Benjamin's incomplete **Arcade Project** and focuses on the use of History in it. He says that History includes victories, prophetic visions, sufferings, chronological recordings and History also teaches us new ways of writing civilization. Further in this essay, Coetzee proceeds from cultural History to economic History based on trading through Arcades and in his literary evaluation Coetzee refers to terms like the elevation of market value, sole measure of worth, the sign of what it will sell for (M.R.P.), reign of the market, storage of commodities to remind us how the writers proceed from general meaning of History to economic History in specific. Coetzee further clarifies that Walter Benjamin had already read Charles Baudelaire's, the French Poet's book-**A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism** and taken notes for his (Walter Benjamin's) unfinished book **Arcades Project** and added his new convolutes (argumentative and renovative ideas).

In this critical essay, the **Arcades Project** Coetzee introduces us to the selling system of Parisian wanderers and thereafter the dotting overview of the large metropolitan landscapes with arcades wherein the dreams of the era of capitalism flourished. Phantasmagoria (exhibition of optical effects and illusion) kept on hiding reality and originality of the products to be sold in the arcades thus ditching business ethics. Gamblers, whores, wax-models, mechanical dolls, huge mirrors on walls everything was there to boost the trade and commerce up. These arcades catered more to the needs and desires of women and above all they created more and more fashion based desires. These arcades were full of beautiful objects, curtains, carpets, gold and silver ornaments, ancient toys made of the alloy of zinc and copper. Costly furniture items made of rare wood and soft silk women dress material opened further scope for more and more commercial activities in the arcades. Regarding the economic history and Walter Benjamin's **The Arcades Project** Coetzee writes : (2008 : 57) "The Arcades book was never intended to be an economic history though part of its ambition was to act as a corrective to the entire discipline of economic history".

Brighton Rock (1930) worldwide famous fiction by Graham Greene has been reviewed by Coetzee with a deep critical analysis. As a writer, says Coetzee, Graham Greene touches various topics of writing such as crime, corruption, punishment by law, god, divinity, religion, ethics, theology, destiny of soul, catholic teaching etc. In general Coetzee declares him as a writer of the catholic church and tells us that he was highly impressed by T.S. Eliot who wrote a religious play **Murder in Cathedral**. Coetzee reveals Graham Greene's other phase of writing and that is the writer of war novels wherein hovering of black clouds, suspense, terror, death-toll are quite common. No doubt, one of such novels by Graham Greene is **The End of The Affair** involving the theme of war and to support the same

opinion of the proceedings of war quotes can be given from the same novel by Graham Greene: (2003 : 71) “I (Maurice Bendrix) never heard the explosion and I woke up after five seconds or five minutes in a changed world. I thought I was still on my feet and I was puzzled by the darkness. Somebody seemed to be pressing a cold fist into my cheeks and my mouth was salty with blood”. It is the description of a war scene after explosion where the plaster of roof fell down on the hero Bendrix and badly injured him.

Graham Greene’s writings, says Coetzee, had full influence of British film industry of 1930^s and 1940^s. It was because of him that the British films started including genuinely the bitter realities of British life and their ways of living as Greene himself was writing screen scripts for the British movies and also directing them at the sametime. Several of his earlier written novels were also adapted for making films say for instance slightly modified version of **Brighton Rock** was used by the British film producer Carol Reed in 1947 to make the film entitled **Young Surface**. Besides this, Coetzee comments upon Greene’s narrative technique and the major sub-categories of his fiction such as individual destinies, his sympathy with the poor and down trodden, unemployment and the support which he expresses for humanity.

One of the major issues which Coetzee picks up in his literary essays is the issues of translation because originally those works which Coetzee evaluates were written in the European and the other languages of the world. It would be worth mentioning to include his views for the translated literature of these writers.

ItaloSvevo is an Italian novelist who wrote his second novel entitled as **Emilio’s Carnival**. It was translated by Senilita with the title **As a Man Grows Older** tracking the same semantic (wordwise meaning) of the original Italian title of the book where as the original book is very much about sex. The book reveals sex as a weapon in the battle, sex as a commodity to be traded and it deals with various other issues of sexism and it is not at all about growing older as the original Italian title suggests so Svevo’s translators asked him to change the title of his book but he refused saying that it was the title that influenced him to write the book and changing the title would mean mutilating his book. Of Course, the reason for not changing the title can’t be justified but the titles of the original books by ItaloSvevo had always remained a challenge and headache for his translators.

Coetzee discusses the other problems of Svevo’s translation from Italian to German, English and Swiss languages. He says that problems of his translations arise because Svevo’s home (town) language was Triestine, a variant of the Venetian dialect. Svevo’s command over literary Italian was not masterly nor he hoped to master it so he advised his contemporary German translators to make necessary corrections at their own and to render the translations artistically in German. This way his translations were slightly improved.

La Coscienza di Zeno is yet another novel by Svevo. It has been translated from Italian to English by Beryl de Zoete, an English Women of Dutch descent and in her introduction to these translations she accepts that times have come to say good bye to these

writers and of course she declares that in her translated versions of Svevo she had made prose more sustainable and pithy improving the original considerably. Here we should be reminded of the fact that the challenging and time consuming task of a translator is to give well defined shape to the chain of ideas of some other writer and in his reshaping he (translator) has to come up with gestures, equivalent diction, words and phrases and in doing so his translations become a higher item than the original itself depending upon the ability of a translator.

Joseph Roth being Austrian by birth wrote fiction in German language with full command over literary excellence in form of refined emotions, superiority of literary style, poised and lively expressions. His highly enabled translator Michael Hofmann translated Roth from German to English and won several prizes for his excellence of the translated works. Coetzee here gives it as an example of the abilities and qualities of the both of them – the original writer and the translator.

Paul Celan is also analysed as a translator by Coetzee. He talks about the difficulty and obscurity of the original poet which the translator has to bear unavoidably. The charges are on the translator but he tries to defend on the basis of limitations of language and cultural differences. It is not justified to blame the translator if the fault lies in the original script and the genuine limitations of translation are easily understood by those who have read the original creation and the translated version commenting upon the quality of translated work. Coetzee instructs the translators asking them to improve upon their craftsmanship and reduce clumsiness because it unnecessarily degrades the quality of their translated work.

Protective concern and the rights of living of the animals have ever been an issue for Coetzee and it could be noticed in his novels and also in his literary essays. While evaluating Arthur Miller's screen play **The Misfits**, Coetzee expresses his worries about the role given to the animals in movies. The screen-play **The Misfits** was designed to cast in form of a movie of the same title in 1961. The movie contains the scene of horse capturing in which horses are involved in terrible fight scenes and they are bitterly pained and tortured. In the olden times, says Coetzee, it had happened occasionally but in the modern times of motion picture cinematography, it is happening every now and then mechanically whenever the roll of the film is unrolled to screen the movie in theatres before the spectators. He means to say that we should be serious enough to the rights of living of animals and be kind to treat them in friendly way. Coetzee can be quoted for this literary essay **The Misfits** that appears in his collection of literary essays *Inner Workings* : (2007 : 222) "The horses are real the stuntmen are real, the actors are real; they are all at this moment, involved in a terrible fight in which the men want to subjugate the horses to their purpose and the horses want to get away; every now and again the blonde woman screams and shouts; it all really happened; and here it is, to be relieved for the ten thousandth time before our eyes. Who would dare to say it is just a story?"

Coetzee is ever ready to sympathize and protect the wild life. He is against hunting,

slaughtering, blood-shedding and bird hunting. In his metafictional novella entitled **The Lives of Animals**, he says that our cruelty to entire race of animals is not only a crime but a grim sin committed against our religious morality and divinity. Jopi Nyman, a well-known critic on Coetzee's literature writes: (2003 : 141) "This (mercy to animals) may be connected with Coetzee's another text dealing with animals and ethics, **The Lives of Animals** published in 1999 where the issues of race and species are occasionally discussed on an equal footing. This can be seen when it shows the wide-known novelist Elizabeth Costello presenting a reading of Jonathan Swift's **Gulliver's Travels**. In her lecture Costello seeks to problematize the conventional understanding of human animal relationship."

The Assiatantis a fiction written by the German speaking Swiss poet and novelist Robert Welsler. In his third volume of literary essays entitled **Late Essays**, written in the period between the years 2006 to 2017, Coetzee evaluates **The Assistant** by Robert Welsler praising the scenes and sights in the book and the animal immersion in nature which Robert Welsler's book contains but Coetzee does not like animal hunting and troubling them as in this collection of **Late Essays** he writes : (2017 : 103) "Early in the morning and late in the evening, the slow exhalations of fog horns could be heard across the lake, exchanging warning signals off in the distance and announcing the presence of boats. They sounded like the plaintive cries of helpless animals."

Half a Life by V.S. Naipaul has been literally evaluated by Coetzee and in his evaluation, he exhibits his interest in the Indian culture, civilization, spirituality, Indian social reformers like Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Swami Vivekanand, Indian deities like god Shri Ganesha. Coetzee refers to W. Somerset Maugham's visit to India which V.S. Naipaul includes in his book **Half a Life** and through Maugham's visit Coetzee shows his interest in the Indian lengthy time period of penance without food, self-denial, Indian asceticism. Besides this, Coetzee's interest is seen in the Indian political movements by referring to the rule of Muslims, Mughals, Britishers, Gandhianism, Brahminism and the Caste system over here in India. Along with the critical evaluation of the book **Half a Life**, Coetzee evaluates the writer V.S. Naipaul saying that the latter is a writer with powerful prose and writing skills but with a limited gift of fantasy. He says that as a writer Naipaul looks back with a historian's eye over imperialism, colonialism, slavery and he sees India more deeply wounded in her civilization and for such observation the fault does not lie on Coetzee's part but on V.S. Naipaul's part himself who forgot that his forefathers were Indians.

The cultural traits in the form of cross cultural differences have also been a point of consideration in Naipaul's **Half a Life** which Coetzee further evaluates in terms of self-denial, love-less spirits, food habits (Indian and American diet), psychological make-up and the bent of mind in the oriental countries and the western countries. To make his observation more strong, Coetzee quotes parallel examples to V.S. Naipaul's observation referring to the other Indian writers like Anita Desai's novel **Fasting, Feasting** and the writings of Ashis Nandy who exhaustively deals with the same issue of cultural differences or cultural transposition and to support Coetzee Ashis Nandy can be quoted : (2008 : 75) "In

the East, the battle has involved the west. Main-stream Indian Culture does implicitly recognize that in terms of the themes central to it, it is not a matter of adjusting to or fighting the might and the world view of the west as an outside agency. Because the west, in spite of all its theories of martial races and ignoble and noble savages does not probably incorporate India-India does incorporate the west.”

To conclude, we see that J.M Coetzee, the winner of the Nobel prize for literature for the year 2003 evaluates more than 60 eminent literary writers through his literary essays published in 03 volumes. These literary writers mainly cover European countries and the United States of America. The readers of these essay wish that they could have gone through the famous works of these writers which Coetzee evaluates. Had it been for some writers and their best works, it would have been possible but the list is long as many as 60 writers so the task is not so easy; Coetzee is not the first writer to write such high quality literary essays as before him, Nadine Gordimur, the Nobel prize winner for literature for the year 1991 had also written 03 volumes of literary essays.

Coetzee’s literary essays in general include the impact of both of the world wars that is world war-I and II. The European countries such as Switzerland, Germany received a major jolt on their economy and the refugees were rendered over there. These essays reflect such grim problems. The writing of several writers like Robert Musil were banned not only in one country but in several countries so those writers could not make their living in those counties, of course they were living there and they were driven into exile. The issues of materialism, power control also come in Coetzee’s evaluation. These essays reflect the role of Nazis, Communist party in USSR, German Left wing and protection for animals. The other issues which Coetzee focuses on through these essays are the world and regional history, economics, trade commerce and industry, shipping, cultural transposition. No doubt these essays prove Coetzee’s high class learning and scholarship. ■

Work Cited :

- AshisNandy . The Intimate Enemy. New Delhi : Oxford University Press. 2008
- Graham Greene. The End of the Affair. London : Vintage Books. 2003
- J.M. Coetzee. Inner Workings. London : Vintage Books. 2008
- J.M. Coetzee. Late Essays. London : Harvill Secker. 2017
- J.M. Coetzee. Stranger Shores. London : Vintage Books. 2002
- Jopi Nyman. Postcolonial Animal Tale from Kipling to Coetzee. New Delhi : Atlantic Publishers. 2003.

Dr. P.C. Kambodia, Associate Professor, Dept. of English, B.S.R. Govt. Arts College, Alwar, Rajasthan

Impact of Gender on Language Use

Bindunath Jha

According to Saussurian concept of linguistics, language does not reflect our world but constitutes it. The view that we perceive and construct our world through a particular linguistic system that bears relevance to the relationship between gender and language use. This research paper aims to find out this relationship through the analysis of the impact of gender on language use in the city of Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh), India, with reference to Hindi and English. The paper also aims to explore various aspects of the language choice and its relation to gender of the respondents. For the purpose of the study, 66 females and 188 males' respondents were taken into account. The data were collected through a questionnaire. Within a particular social setting or speech community, the effect of gender as a social variable has various sociolinguistic implications in relation to language maintenance, language planning and policy, prestige forms and language attitude. The findings of the research may be generalized to the entire region of the North India, where Hindi, Bhojpuri and the other languages, and their dialects exist along with English.

Key Words: Sociolinguistics, language, gender, language use, prestige forms

Background to the Study

Language is essentially embedded in one's identity at both individual and social levels. It plays a pivotal role in how a person is perceived and assessed to be by the others in terms of a variety of social attributes, such as solidarity, belongingness, social status, power, prestige, etc. The promotion and maintenance of a language depends on language choice and language use in a variety of formal and informal domains, and also people's attitude towards it. Individuals tend to accept the language of the group that they want to associate themselves with. Saville-Troike maintains that 'positive feelings about one's own language are often engendered by the role it plays as a marker of desired group identity, and negative feelings if such identity is rejected' (Saville-Troike 1982: 187).

In sociolinguistics, language use, language policy and planning are central theoretical preoccupations. Fishman has made a significant contribution. He suggests that

language attitude and language use need not be corresponding to each other, as ‘it is possible for language attitudes to improve in a compensatory fashion as both use and knowledge decrease’ (Fishman 1989, quoted in García and Schiffman 2006: 209). Vitality of a language depends on the number and status of native speakers who use it for important functions. Hymes (1972) points up that children in a multilingual society acquire the knowledge of ‘allocation of whole languages to different uses ... from the beginning of their acquisition ...’ (Hymes 1972: 279). Thus, language choice is an important factor for a person to be successful in communication.

In India, Hindi is the Official language along with English as the Associate Official language. Interestingly, India does not have any national language. It will be interesting to observe the use of these languages in Indian context and how they are influenced by the gender of the respondents. Agnihotri accounts for the emerging significant role of English in government, judiciary, administration and current corporate world in the era of globalization in the Indian context since India’s independence. With gradually emerging situation of the partition, it was argued that ‘if Urdu was to be the language of Islamic Pakistan, Hindi must be language of Hindu India’ (Agnihotri 2007: 186). An interesting debate was related to the role and status of English in India. Members of the CA strongly protested against the retention of English, as it was seen to be inseparable from the colonial rulers. However, it should be noted that India has also witnessed movements for the maintenance of English (Kachru 1983, cited in Aggarwal 1988: 289). Some of the members of CA argued for it as a world language. Nehru supported the continued use of English, but also emphasised the promotion of Indian languages for various activities of the nation:

However good, however important, English may be, we cannot tolerate that there should be an English-knowing elite and a large mass of our people not knowing English. Therefore, we must have our own language. But English ... must continue to be a most important language in India which large members of people learn and perhaps learn compulsorily.

(CAD 1946-1950, quoted in Agnihotri 2007: 194-195)

When the recommendations of the 1956 Official Language Commission were implemented, Hindi was declared to be the language of the Supreme Court and the High Courts and an alternative language for the functions of the Union Public Service Commission by the Presidential Order. Soon after it, there was a strong sense of dissatisfaction among the non-Hindi speaking people, and consequently the All India Language Conference was held at the initiative of C. Rajagopalachari against the imposition of Hindi, which was seen much like a foreign language by the representatives of different languages. Thus, through an amendment in the Constitution (1963), the provision was made that ‘notwithstanding the time limit of fifteen years for the continuation of English, the English language *may* continue to be used, in addition to Hindi, for all official purposes in the Union and in the Parliament’ (Krishnaswamy and Krishnaswamy 2006: 123).

METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of the study, data were obtained from 66 females and 188 males' respondents total belonging to different professional fields, such as medicine, law, engineering, etc. The instrument for collecting the data was close-ended questionnaire, which consisted of the questions about LSRW skills in Hindi and English, and the use of these languages in different domains. The respondents were asked to make a self-perceived evaluation of their skills in these languages on a five point scale ranging from *Nil* to *Excellent*, where 1= *Nil* and 5= *Excellent*, in response to the first question in this part (see Appendix 1). For comparing language skills of the respondents, the average ordinal values were drawn from the responses of the subject. The *t*-test was performed on these average values using SPSS The frequency of the use of the languages under investigation was tested in relation to *reading books, watching television, talking to friends, reading magazine/newspaper, talking to members of family, language use at workplace, and in neighbourhood*. The respondents were asked to provide information about the frequency of language use on a four-point ordinal scale ranging from *Always* to *Never*, where 1= *Never* and 4 = *always*.

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

For the purpose of analysis independent sample *t*-test was conducted with 252 degree of freedom for which the critical value was 1.96 with 95 percent confidence level. The calculated value equivalent to the critical value or above it means significant difference in language skills and language use between males and females. Besides, the mean scores of the obtained ordinal values of self-assessment was also considered in order to compare the language skills, and also frequency of language use between males and females in various formal and informal domains.

The analysis of self-perceived evaluation of language skills shows that Female respondents graded themselves higher than their male counterparts in terms of their skills in both Hindi and English. The analysis shows that the female respondents graded themselves higher than the male respondents did in terms of their skills in both Hindi and English. Though the *t*-test does not show any significant difference in self-evaluation between the male and the female respondents in terms of their skills in Hindi, the mean scores of skills in Hindi indicate that the female respondents evaluated themselves slightly higher than the males respondents did. In terms of skills in English, a significant difference can be observed as the females graded themselves significantly higher than the males did in terms of their skills in English. This result may be explained in relation to the significance attached to English language and its deep rooted Historical importance in the Indian subcontinent. It is a further confirmation of what Kachru observes on the importance of English in India. According to him, the power of English 'resides in the domains of its use, the roles its users can play, and – attitudinally – above all, how others view its importance' (Kachru 1989: 4). All the major class of the Indian society, which are influential throughout the nation, use English for various important functions. Thus, for the common masses, learning

English becomes a motivational tool for social mobility. The mean scores of language skills for Hindi and English suggest that the respondents graded their skills higher in Hindi than in English irrespective of their gender. It is indicative of a strong bond between Hindi and its speakers, and also the role that Hindi might play in some specific domains.

As far as language use in a variety of contexts is concerned, the analysis of reading habit in terms of reading books in Hindi reveals that gender affects the reading of books in Hindi significantly. On the basis of the obtained mean scores of reading books in Hindi, it can be said that the male respondents claimed to read books in Hindi always, whereas the female respondents claimed to do so very often. The comparatively lower frequency of reading books in Hindi by the female respondents reveals their lack of motivation towards Hindi. We observed that the female respondents claimed to be more proficient in English than their male counterparts. Thus, a sustained motivational force seems to be working in favour of English language, as prestige and international recognition being generally attached to it. Further, women may be more conscious about the current trends than men.

Another context in which gender seems to affect language use significantly is related to reading magazines and newspapers in Hindi. Here also we can notice on the basis of the mean scores that the frequency of reading these texts is far higher in case of male respondents than in case of female respondents. This tendency can also be explained in the light of the same reasons cited above. In addition, the comparatively lower frequency of reading these texts in Hindi by the female respondents may be due to the quality and quantity of the reading material available in Hindi, which does not catch up with the international and cosmopolitan standards. The world vista open to the reader through English newspapers and magazines may be perceived as wider by female respondents. This tendency among female respondents may be correlated with the tendency observed by Kailash S. Aggarwal (1988) in his research titled 'English and India's Three-language Formula: An Empirical Perspective', conducted on the students of Sambalpur district of Orissa. The research reveals that the respondents considered English 'the 'language of opportunity' in India...an important passport for good employment and recognition' (Aggarwal 1988: 297). Newspaper and magazines are important means of dissemination awareness of the happenings and opportunities across the world.

Significant Difference
Skills in English
Reading Books in Hindi
Reading Hindi magazines & Newspapers

No Significant Difference
Skills in Hindi
Reading books in English
Reading magazines and newspapers in English
Watching TV programmes in Hindi
Talking to members of family in English
Use of English in office
Use of English in neighbourhood

Watching TV programmes in English
Talking to friends in Hindi
Talking to friends in English
Using Hindi in Office
Using Hindi in neighbourhood
Talking to members of family in Hindi

Table: Effect of Gender on Language Use

(The areas of language use printed in bold face refer to higher frequency of language use by females.)

In the other contexts of language use, no significant difference can be observed between the male and the female respondents. However, on the basis of the mean scores, a comparison in the frequency of language use can be made between the male and the female respondents. The contexts in which the frequency of using English by female respondents is higher include the following:

- reading books in English
- talking to members of family in English
- magazine and newspaper reading in English
- use of English in office
- use of English in neighbourhood

Out of the total 14 contexts of language use, females show a higher frequency of the use of Hindi only in the context of watching television programmes. The mean scores for males and females in terms of reading books in English, reading magazines and newspapers in English and using English in office reveal that females claim to use English in these contexts always, while males claim to do so very often.

The higher frequency of reading books, magazines and newspapers in English by the female respondents seems interconnected. It should be kept in mind that the respondents for this research were selected for various professional fields. Thus, reading these types of text in English by females may be explained in terms of their professional requirement. This interpretation is further confirmed by Sukhdev Singh's research conducted in Punjab. The research concludes that 'the language policy and socio-economic environment being favourable to English as a second/foreign language give it the status of an asset worth possessing' (Singh 2006: 165). English language may be perceived as a status symbol and the female respondents may be more status-conscious than the male respondents. Besides, they may find the content of such texts in English more appropriate and standard to catch up with the international and cosmopolitan requirements. Here we cannot find clear boundary of use of in Hindi in relation to formal and informal domains. Nevertheless, female tend to use English far more than their male counterparts in formal domains.

The contexts in which the frequency of language use is observed to be higher in case of males than females include the following:

- watching TV programmes in English
- talking to friends in Hindi
- talking to friends in English
- talking to members of family in Hindi
- using Hindi in office
- using Hindi for interaction in neighbourhood

The male respondents graded themselves considerably higher than their female counterparts did in domains mentioned above. It can be observed here that males use Hindi in family, neighbourhood, office and among friends. Thus there is no clear boundary of use of Hindi in relation to formal and informal domains. It is interesting to note, nevertheless, that they claim to use English also while interacting with friends. Similar observation has been made previously in relation to use of Hindi and English by the female respondents.

The findings also lead us to conclude that use of English by females is more pervasive especially in the formal domains in the urban area of Luck now and by and large in the whole state than that of Hindi. At the same time tendency of use of Hindi by males in formal domains can be observed. There is a consistently growing tendency of use of English by females in both formal and informal domains. It may be indicative of their growing awareness of the prestige and the opportunities that are tended to be associated with English. They may have a desire for associating themselves with the growing trend of using English in a variety of formal contexts. ■

Works Cited:

- Aggarwal, K. S. (1988) 'English and India's three-language formula: an empirical perspective', in Kachru, B. and L. E. Smith (Eds.) *World Englishes* (No. 3, Vol. 7). Great Britain: Pergamon Institute of English. pp. 289-298. Print.
- Agnihotri, R. K. (2007) 'Identity and Multilinguality: The Case of India' in Tsui, A. B. M. & J. W. Tollefson (Eds.) *Language Policy, Culture, and Identity in Asian Context*. New York & London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Taylor & Francis Group. Print.
- Bryman, A. (2008) *Social Research Methods* (3rded.) Oxford, New York and New Delhi: Oxford University Press. Print.
- García, O. & H. Schiffman (2006) 'Fishmanian Sociolinguistics: (1949 to the Present)' in García, O., R. Peltz & H. Schiffman (Eds.) *Language Loyalty, Continuity and Change: Joshua A. Fishman's Contributions to International Sociolinguistics* Clevedon, Buffalo and Toronto: Multilingual Matters Ltd. pp. 3-68. Print.

- Hymes, D. H. (1972) 'On Communicative Competence' in Pride, J. B. & J. Holmes (Eds.) *Sociolinguistics: Selected Readings* Middlesex & New York: Penguin Books Ltd. pp. 269-293. Print.
- Kachru, B. B. (1989) *The Alchemy of English: The Spread, Functions and Models of Non-Native Englishes* Delhi: Oxford University Press. Print.
- Krishnaswamy, N. & L. Krishnaswamy (2006) *The Story of English in India* New Delhi: Foundation Books Pvt. Ltd. Print.
- Saville-Troike, M. (1982) *The Ethnography of Communication: An Introduction* Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher Ltd. Print.
- Singh, S. (2006) 'Understanding the Socio-economic, Sociolinguistic Situation and Social Psychology behind Learning a *Language* in Punjab' in Thirumalai, S. (Ed.) *Languages in India* (Vol. 6).

URL: <<http://www.languageinindia.com/june2006/sukhdev.html>>

Dr Bindunath Jha, Assistant Professor, Deptt. of English Janta Koshi College, Biraul, (A Constituent Unit of L. N. Mithila University) Darbhanga, Bihar

Feminist Thoughts in *Inside the Haveli*

Shahaji Rajaram Karande

Feminism can be put in plain words as empowerment of women. Male and female both are integral part of human society but females are not equally respected in our society. Especially, India has a history of male-dominated culture. Women are very useful but undermined in Indian society. The present research paper describes the feminist thoughts in *Inside the Haveli*. Here, Rama Mehta in the novel *Inside the Haveli* describes a remarkable family story unfolding in Rajasthan which represents the classical clash between modernity and traditional values. It portrays the character of Geeta who became habitual with the traditions instead of getting rid of them and finally victimized.

Key-Words: Feminism, male-dominated culture, Indian society, modernity, traditional values.

Introduction

Feminism can be put in plain words as empowerment of women. Male and female both are integral part of human society but females are not equally respected in our society. Especially India has a history of male-dominated culture. Women are great in many respects but often underestimated by Indian society. In the tradition of Manu, she is the daughter, the wife, the mother, the sister, to be looked after, to care for. The social status of women is a complex phenomenon.

“One is not born, but rather becomes a woman... It is a whole that produces this creature.... Only the intervention of else can establish an individual as other”

Simon de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (1949)

The major themes of Indian novels in English are encounter between tradition and modernity and the old and the new. *Inside the Haveli* depicts a remarkable Rajasthani family story represents the clash between modernity and traditional values. Geeta an educated girl from Bombay comes to Udaipur as a daughter-in-law and finds it difficult to adjust

herself to the life in the haveli. It records the desire and attempts of the protagonist to change her social world.

In Hindu society, tradition is the backbone as well as the spirit of the existing structure. The tendency in the Indian traditional society is to subordinate self-interest to the family welfare and surrender individuality to the tradition. The Karta being the head of the family had special rights. His obligation out-weighed his authority. He was in the position of a leader. He was completely responsible for the welfare of all. The wife was expected to obey her husband, to take care, to look after the children and give respect to her elders. The men in society were regarded as superior to women.

In the novel *Inside the Haveli*, we have the story of women in Rajasthan who lived in the purdah. Sangram Singhji's haveli was the biggest in the gully. His son Bhagwant Singhji and daughter-in-law named Kanwaranisa had one son Ajay Singh who got married to Geeta from Bombay.

For the first time when Geeta came to this haveli, it was compulsory to keep the face covered and not to talk too much. All her acts were closely watched and criticized. She was taught how to do things properly. There were restrictions between ages and also different sexes. A woman must behave in a respectful manner and follow the traditional norms. That's why Geeta's mother advised her to respect her mother-in-law and elder people and never argue with them.

The guests and the relatives came in the haveli to celebrate the birth of the girl Vijay. No one expressed their feelings. They covered their emotions under an elaborate exchange of formal gestures and words. Everyone moved cautiously. Every word was weighed before it was spoken. Thus the atmosphere in the haveli was very artificial for Geeta. In the haveli she felt nervous when relatives gathered; she was still not comfortable with her face covered. She felt suffocated in the veil. After two years of marriage, Geeta came to her father-in-law's house. Still, he was a stranger to her. She never spoke with him. In her parents' house men and women talk with each other quite freely. But here she could not talk with her father-in-law.

If Geeta wanted to tell or to say something, she used to say it through the maidservant. Bhagwant Singh inquires about Geeta's health through maidservant ('how is Binniji', he asked). Geeta hated all that. She was very unhappy when realized that

'Even after seven years I am a stranger to those that are mine, and I will always remain a stranger'.

There were also restrictions in husband and wife relations. They hardly got an opportunity to meet during the day. Mother-in-law wanted Geeta not to show any concern for her child in front of others. Thus a woman could not enjoy any freedom with her husband and also with her child.

Another restriction was to cover the head in front of the elder or outsider or other persons. A daughter-in-law always had to bear in mind that she was no longer a child but a married woman. Even Laxmi, a maidservant was rebuked with these words: “Look at you with your face uncovered where it any other man, he would beat you, but Gangaram is a saint-which man can put up with a wife who does not make him comfortable”.

Geeta’s mother advised her to keep head and face always covered. Once when Geeta had not covered her face, Pari said, “What would your father-in-law think if he saw you with your face uncovered? Binniji, a daughter-in-law of this haveli does not behave like this.

Another restriction was that women never enter into men’s apartment. Once Geeta entered in men’s apartment when Pari saw that, she said, “What are you doing here all alone, Binniji, I know you are an outsider, but it is time you learned our ways. In this section of the haveli, women come only when properly escorted”.

In spite of these restrictions, Geeta started the classes for illiterate women servants from various haveli. Her mother-in-law first took objection for her classes because the other mistresses of the haveli criticized the behavior of Geeta and her classes. When her father-in-law gave her permission for her classes then her mother-in-law said, “Once your father-in-law gave his approval to something then I am not afraid of what the world says”.

Thus there was a very big impact of male dominance over the women in every act. They could not act freely or do a single thing without men.

Laxmi did not bear all these restrictions and ran away from the haveli but Geeta lived with all these and bore it in her mind that it was just for living life. Geeta’s daughter started to go to school. All the persons and the servants in the haveli took objection to Seeta’s going to school. Geeta’s father-in-law gave her permission for sending Seeta to school and Geeta felt satisfied that her dreams were fulfilled.

Another example of restrictions was for the widows. Pari and Manji are the examples of the widow’s. There was a custom that the widow was not allowed to wear jewelry and colored sari like other women. Even the presence of a widow on religious occasion was considered inauspicious. Though Pari belongs to the servant yard, she could not attend Seeta’s wedding in the same yard. As a widow, she had no place where auspicious or religious things were going on.

An early marriage to a complete stranger out of the native village was a terrible crisis in a girl’s life. Seeta and Vijay became the victims of the early marriage. Geeta became furious because she was against the early marriage. Her father-in-law forced her to agree with the marriage proposal of Vijay.

Geeta felt that she was like a mere- ‘doll kept in a glass for a marionette show, a mere prisoner, a willing prisoner,’ in the constricted atmosphere of the haveli.

But Geeta went on with her efforts for changing the life in the haveli.

Thus the novel presents an intimate picture of a system which existed since feudal times. It is a revelation of attitudes towards women and their status in a certain section of Indian society. In it, the role of women is sharply defined. Young daughter-in-law must be polite, obedient and silent. They were not expected to voice an opinion and must unquestionably follow every instruction of the elders.

“Within the haveli, all its tradition-bound, and while this means strength and security it also means isolation and stagnation”. (Srinivasa Iyengar)

Conclusion

In the novel *Inside the Haveli*, we see that Mrs. Mehta’s research into the life of a community in which the system of purdah was an integral part. In this connection, the concluding utterances of the novel are very significant.

“You are now the mistress of this haveli. You cannot forget its traditions in your sorrow.”

Thus all of her resolutions crumble and Geeta herself adapted to the traditions instead of getting rid of them. Geeta became the victim all such social bigotry. This proves Simon de Beauvoir’s hypothesis which we need to deconstruct so as to occupy the place that we really deserve.

Works Cited:

Allen, Walter, (1954), *The English Novel*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

C. Paul Varghese, (1971), *Problems of the Indian Creative Writers in English* (Bombay: Somaiya Publications), P.25

Dhawan, R. K. (2000), *Indian Women Novelists*, New Delhi: Prestige Books.

Rama Mehta, (1977), *Inside the Haveli*, Penguin Books, New Delhi.

R. S. Pathak, (2000), “Feminist Concerns,” Prestige Books, New Delhi, pp. 35-36

Satish Kumar, “A Survey of Indian English Novel,” Prakash Book Depot, Bareilly, pp.13-33

Simon De Beauvoir, (1949), *The Second Sex*, trans. H, M, Parshley, (Penguin, for sexual relation), p.93

Satish Kumar, (2006), “A Survey of Indian English Novel,” Prakash Book Depot, Bareilly.

Shahaji Rajaram Karade, Dept of English, Mahatma Phule Mahavidyalaya, Pimpri, Pune, Maharashtra.

Influence of Eco-feminism on Indian Mythology with reference to Volga's *The Liberation of Sita* : A Study

Papari Kakati

Re-writings in the 20th and in the 21st century, by writers who have taken a fresh approach to Indian epics and its various mythical characters while challenging established norms, have inspired readers to revisit the epics and mythologies. In the Indian literary tradition, mythologies have inspired writers, to illustrate the real social situations of our country through references to mythologies and epics. The Indian myth has created much literary and critical interest among contemporary writers. In the act of re-writing or re-visiting, a writer feels almost compelled to add a bit of his or her own thinking about aspects of it in some form: comments, observations, interpretations etc. It happens especially when the story is as comprehensive and profound as the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and is also one with which the writer has grown up and which has become a significant part of one's cultural identity. The eminent Telegu poet and writer P. Latitha Kumari (Volga) is a remarkable name in this regard, whose works can be added to the list. Her masterpiece *The Liberation of Sita* presents a lot of interesting insights and evokes thoughts in the minds of the readers, compelling them to see all the events through the lens of her. Volga has tried to invite the attention of the readers by adopting the idea of sisterhood among women characters while re-writing and re-visiting the epic Ramayana in the light of eco-feminism.

Key Words: Re-Writing, Mythology, Eco-feminism, Women, Justice

Introduction

Today the re-telling, re-writing or re-visiting of mythologies seem to have become an inevitable part of Indian story-telling tradition. The mythical characters are legendary characters that at one point are believed to be real, still continues to generate literary responses from research scholars and renowned writers. Myths often explain natural or historical events. It is seen that the Indian people are normally reluctant to defy myths because they are deeply rooted in religion and culture. Moreover the Indian religion and

mythology are closely interwoven and cannot really be separated. Mythologies tend to outline an entire universe in which the gods represent the whole of nature in humanized form, and at the same time, show in perspective the origin of societies, the destiny of human beings in such societies, the limits of their powers, and the extension of their hopes and desires. Myth has always been an integral element of literature and the interest of the writers of this twenty first century in this area is remarkable. Most Indian myths have been derived from two epic poems The Mahabharata and the Ramayana, as well as from the ancient Hindu texts, Puranas. The spellbinding stories in these books excite, enthrall and frighten the readers at the same time. The characters of the two great Indian epics have 'global influence'; challenges modern creativity. The novelists of our time who are exposed to the global influences of these two Indian epics are reinterpreting the episodes in their works from their own perspectives. It seems, they are trying to reconceptualise the two great epics. The Re-writing of Indian epics and mythical characters have gained popularity out of literary circulation and the storytelling still continues to generate literary responses from research scholars and renowned writers from both India and abroad. Although myth is the outcome of past already embedded into the mindset of the people yet the changing socio-cultural scenario have added new dimensions to myths. Modern thinking individuals, intellectuals and writers have challenged ideologies established by myths and thrown new light on readings of mythical characters. They have brought myth to the forefront by contesting as well as redefining prevalent norms. The eminent Telegu poet and writer P. Latitha Kumari (Volga) has tried to prove this fact by her work *The Liberation of Sita*. The traditional mythological narratives have been chiefly dominated by the male writers and reflect patriarchal ideologies. The Revisionist myth-making is a process of re-explication of patriarchal myths; it is the substitution of female elements from the margin to the centre. The central motif of the re-tellers or the re-writers is to break down the preconceived fabrication of woman and womanhood. Today the female revisionist writers of the Ramayana have attempted to give voice to the ignored or peripheral women of the mainstream epics through the lens of feminism and eco-feminism. In fact the reinvention of myths has figured prominently in Indian women's writings. Volga has penned several Indian mythological works with her point of views. she has deviated from traditional writing in order to adopt a 'new writing' imbued with 'new thinking' and 'new techniques'.

This paper purports to observe the impact of **Eco-Feminism** in the discussed author's re-writing and re-visiting of the Indian mythology, to cherish the uncommon and unique sense, the idea of **Sisterhood** promoted by the author in the rewriting and revisiting of the Ramayana. It further intends to convey the idea and to examine the validity of the author's opinion that '**Truth does not remain the same forever but keeps changing continuously**' and '**All Men are the same**'.

Discussion:

Inspired by the **Valmiki's Ramayana**, Volga authors *Vimukta*, the English version of which is *The Liberation of Sita* (December 2015), a slim collection of five stories. In

them she re-imagines Sita's life after her banishment from Ajodhya. The title of Volga's this book indicates Sita's emergence as the liberated one. Volga's stories belong to a literary tradition of feminist revisionist myth-making but she takes it further and makes it her own. Volga is showing Sita and other overlooked female characters from the Ramayana in a different light, from their own perspectives, displaying their perceptions about men in their lives, thus enabling this issue to be read under the vigilance of the idea of Sisterhood. Volga's re-visioning is to be taken as a means to forge a vision of life in which liberation is total, autonomous and complete. In this book Volga is giving voices to women characters marginalized, oppressed, insulted, abandoned in the master narrative, extending the story of a character beyond its conventional closure, forging female bonds and creating a female collective and redefining many conventional epistemes including liberation with the invention or promotion of an Idea of '**Sisterhood**', much less known than the oft-celebrated idea of brotherhood. It is believed that **Women** are supposedly the enemy of their own sex. Usually women are portrayed as jealous and resenting other women. But Volga's depiction of women is a break from this absurd myth. She has promoted the idea of '**Sisterhood**'. Volga opines that this idea of sisterhood is always discouraged, treated with suspicion. But, with the help of this idea Volga presents us a very beautiful work named *The Liberation of Sita*. Sita's empathising with other minor, overlooked female characters, equating her own hardship like trial on fire with tribulation of others have overwhelmed the readers. Volga has beautifully depicted and rejuvenated all the marginalized, abandoned female character's journeys in her work. Through a very popular mythical figure **Sita**, Volga holds her own opinion that it is totally futile for women to make **Men** the centre of their lives, because women are at the last deceived by men, on various ridiculous pretexts and women remain the subject of male apathy. Through the dialogues of Surpanakha, Ahalya, Renuka, Volga tries to opine that women must strive to find their own identities, to do something worthwhile with their own lives and there only will remain their fulfilment. The mission behind writing this book is to contextualise the Ramayana to the modern world and the modern society where women have explicitly started to no longer tolerate the intellectual or physical oppressions to conform to any mythological impressions of femininity. Subjugation of women by upper castes for several centuries has been portrayed in the epics like Ramayana. Literally the wars portrayed in our epics never really end. They are wars fought over the bodies of women, the honour of wives, daughters and sisters. Indeed there is no end to the violence perpetrated by men over chastity of women, their proprietary rights over women. It is a reality, even today in different ways. There is the continuation of violence on the female psychology and health from the ancient period. And it forms a continuum. Volga gives importance to the understanding that a woman's liberation is not merely in her disentanglement from the material world, **spirituality** is equally important in it. Volga's *The Liberation of Sita* tries to prove this fact. In each story **Sita** is interacted with different woman who was never given much importance in the mainstream epic the Ramayana. After the end of every story of the book **Sita** is shown loaded with some undeniable truth or experiences of life, wrapped with the warmth of sisterhood.

In the first story entitled *Reunion* from the slim collection entitled *The Liberation of Sita*, Sita meets Surpanakha. Surpanakha, the sister of Ravana, a woman of demon clan is shown recovered from her humiliation and mutilation. She has conquered her rage and revenge now and has realised the truth that beauty is not a physical attribute. She learns to love herself the way she is. Before meeting Surpanakha, Sita took her life to be withered and regarded it to be meaningless. The reunion of Surpanakha with Sita enabled Sita realise that her fulfilment resides only in discovering herself, in belongingness with nature, not in mourning the banishment gifted by her husband to her in the stage of pregnancy, not in yearning for her love and not in bringing up her children also. Impressed by the words of Surpanakha, Sita decides what she is to do after the departure of her sons from her in future. In this story Surpanakha's tremendous love and care for nature is reflected in her nurturing of a beautiful garden. This shows a strong bond of nature with her. The fragrance of eco-feminism is to be noticed here. Similarly Sita's decision to take shelter in the lap of mother earth; resting under the cool trees after her sons' departure indicates a strong bond between the earth and herself. Both Sita and Surpanakha in this story are giving value to mother Earth. Both are shown understood, matured enough in handling their lives themselves without the simplest assistance of men in their lives. Both are seen finally accepting the strength of Mother Nature who never doubts, ditches, hurts and questions. All these events are presented to us by Volga with the help of the sense of sisterhood. Both Sita and Surpanakha felt a unique sense of sisterhood for each other throughout the conversation.

In the second story *Music of the Earth* Sita is interacting with Ahalya. In Valmiki's Ramayana, Sita never really meets Ahalya, but in Volga's re-writing Sita meets Ahalya. She meets Ahalya when she is living in the forest with her children. Here Ahalya is a woman of great wisdom who actually shows Sita the path of Liberation. Initially Sita gets perplexed by the talks of Ahalya. Sita is constant in her faith that there is a term called 'truth'. Ram's love for her, her love for Ram is an eternal truth, which will never change. But Ram's passivity and the helplessness towards the end in the mainstream epic Ramayana give us enough scope to believe Ahalya's belief regarding the capability and nature of Man. The patriarchal rule has forced Ram to ask for Sita's chastity test. The masculine mentality here denies the women their right to their bodies, their own sexuality, own decisions, their own desires, feelings. All the talks Ahalya delivers initially seem to be a perverse logic to Sita. Sita is left confused over the issue of the power of deciding between truth and untruth. Ahalya feels a queer bond of sisterhood with Sita and this very bond has enabled Ahalya disclose what she has experienced in her life, about the universe, men and about Nature. Sita is told through the lips of Ahalya-

'Truth does not remain the same forever but keeps changing continuously, that is the wisdom I learned' —page 28, *The Liberation of Sita*.

Finally Sita is shown realising the perplexing lines of Ahalya believing that 'All Men are the same'. Sita's perception of Ram as a noble, amazing man is shattered at last. She gets infuriated when Ram describes Ahalya as "characterless" because she later comes

to know the truth of Ahalya. She is shown believing that the real way to get the wisdom in life is the experience. Ahalya succeeds in transferring this message into the heart of Sita that there remains a complete separate identity for every individual (being) apart from the attachment with many other persons in the name of relationship.

In the third story entitled *The Sand Pot*, Sita is culminating experiences of her life. Sage Jamadagni's wife Renuka Devi's company makes Sita feel sitting in the same boat with a common destination. The sarcasm Renuka Devi showers on Sita's mind finally wins the trust of Sita. Sita finally believes the speeches of Renuka Devi regarding--husband, duty of a true wife towards her husband, her children, and fourthly a woman's art of creating something different and unique. Renuka Devi regards all these things to be of same value. She deplores that society values the bookish knowledge collected specially only by the men under the umbrella of patriarchal society more than the knowledge that can be attained by being merged with the Nature and its various inhibitors. For this reason the human beings fail to do justice, see things correctly, and judge a thing impartially. Renuka Devi laughs at the sages of high class who fail to realise the real power hidden inside a woman, as they are trained more by State-rules and knowledge of shastras (religious books) rather than the influences of Mother Nature. Sita is asked by Renuka Devi to worship the nature and its inhibitors sincerely because she believes that it's only in the lap of Nature a true knowledge arises. In this story Sita realises that the Nature is the real teacher, the instructor who never questions, asks for any tests to give. Nature only gives, showers love, compassion and affection. Sense of sisterhood sprouted within the hearts of both and this very sense enabled both Sita and Renuka Devi exchange their views, feelings frankly which has never been shown in the mainstream epic Ramayana. Sita feels closer to Renuka Devi. She finds a common pain in the interaction with Renuka Devi. Sita is able to empathise every painful situations of Renuka Devi. Wrapped with motherly affection Sita finds immense peace and tranquil herself with the thought that she is not at all alone in this earth who is suffering from unbearable, unwanted pain and insult. In this story the 'Pot' (made of sand) has been taken as a symbol, as a sign of practice, concentration, meditation, dedication, care and reverence.

In the fourth story entitled *Liberated*, Urmila, the sister of Sita delivers a tremendous lesson. Out of sheer impossibility Sita is asked to become a totally freed individual, freed from all kinds of bonds attached to human beings but spiritually connected. Sita initially finds it difficult enough to get detached physically from her husband, her sons; later she realised the truth that the real peace of mind exists in the detachment from earthly and humanly relationships. A kind of spirituality arises in Sita where she feels every bond attached to her is temporary and pain-giver. She is made to feel that pain and sufferings arise from the possession of emotional attachment with human. The effort to find out oneself from within is a great challenge. Sita goes through a tough meditation to get detached and finally attains the state which Urmila has asked. Sita overcomes all her sorrows, anxieties like Urmila at last with the help of this knowledge that ruling over one's own soul or mind

is the ultimate way to get peace without any expectations from the materialistic world. Here both Sita and Urmila are liberated and transcending themselves. It is to be noted that the sense of sisterhood acts a major role here to make believe and understand the complexities, agonies and miseries of women world.

In the fifth story entitled *The Shackled*, Ram the ruler of Arya dynasty is shown feeling a taste of poison. The very sense of duty which is entrusted by his teachers since his childhood with the responsibility of preserving and propagating the Arya Dharma is slipping from Ram's throat to his heart. Rama swallows a kind of terrible loneliness onwards the end of the epic. He is distanced from all he desires. The pain of permanent separation from Sita appears excruciating. The life of Ram appears lying suppressed under authority, as if shackled tight by the teachers or instructors of Arya Dharma. Ram finds it difficult even in shedding his tears over the loss of his wife, loss of his mental peace and happiness. Ram finds himself weak and incapable and realises that his glorious and dignified nobleness has made him handicapped. Being a Man (Masculine) even Ram finds himself completely helpless at the hands of circumstances and his destiny. The shackles of Arya Dharma around him appeared as a barrier in his liberation from worldly roles. He feels defeated inertly, totally broken by the most loving, submissive, subsidiary, calm and dignified nature of Sita (Feminine) who can be identified as the Nature itself. Sita's consolation to Ram at the last is very striking and emotional when she declares herself to be the daughter of the earth and in no way in need of anything in her life. Both the universe and Sita are merged in each other. The political power of the Arya Dharma has snatched Ram's power over himself. Ram is seen everywhere shackled even if he wants to give up the authority, he cannot.

Volga's *The Liberation of Sita* sincerely follows the norms of Eco-Feminism. Being a branch of feminism, eco-feminism examines environmentalism, and the relationship between women and the earth. Eco-feminism does not want the women and the nature to be regarded as properties of Men, neither men as the curator of so called culture and the women as the curators of the nature. Eco-feminism emphasizes that both women and nature must be respected. The oppression of nature and the oppression of women are the two very recurrent themes found in the writings of Volga demanding justice for them. She believes that the myths give strength to face the real problems in daily life. She has purposely re-written and re-visited the myths to convey the people what is the truth behind mythical stories and tries to prove how myths help the natives to overcome their personal and external conflicts of life. Volga's re-writings and re-visiting of mythologies appear instructive, teach human beings how to live and act as a guide to social norms. They are the explanations of fact and events, whether natural or cultural. They describe the ritual and cultic customs of the society. Myths have the power to modify the moral behaviour of the people. In the *Liberation of Sita*, Volga has elucidated the dilemma of women. The modern women can relate to and learn from the very narratives or the re-written mythological stories centred on the timeless women of the epic Ramayana. The delineation of Sita's living in hut at the Valmiki's ashram, naturally attired, indicates connection with the Mother Nature. Like the

Mother Nature, Sita is shown accepting the virtue of courage, sacrifice and forgiveness. Volga's Sita is the daughter of the Earth, demure, mild-mannered, simple, level-headed, yet emerges stern and decisive in the face of turmoil just like the Mother Nature. Symbolically, Sita, being the daughter of the earth, is in tune with the power of nature and is gifted with healing power. Her power is natural, emotional and free-flowing. In conversation with her sons, Sita tells that she could lift up the very bow of Shiva, one that none of her suitors had been able to lift that up except Ram. In author's voice, 'Sita is very strong in her quiet way, but she doesn't make a big deal of it'. In Volga's *The Liberation of Sita*, the minor women characters of the epic as we know it - Surpanakha, Renuka Devi, Urmila and Ahalya, all have been successful in steering Sita towards an unexpected resolution. Sita is inspired to raise her voice and think about herself. Thus the re-writing of the story of the mythical women characters Sita, Ahalya, Renuka Devi, Surpanakha, Urmila in *The Liberation of Sitas* has accurately followed the norms of eco-feminism. Volga is concerned with the female characters, minor and major, portrayed in the mainstream Indian epic the Ramayana. Volga has been successful in discussing the miserable conditions of the female characters and has tried to give them justice by brilliant retellings and reimagining those characters' roles in the Indian epic. She has given unique voices to the major and minor female characters by re-writing the mythology from this Indian epic and has urged the readers to see those women characters as the author see them. The author has made the readers take a second look at the women figures and the readers are made to love and pity with equal measure. Volga has analysed the roles played by the women characters in the Ramayana. Today's readers can internalise the stories of the female protagonists portrayed from the epic, as the author has depicted what it means to be a 'woman', then and now, in the Indian patriarchal society. The modern women can relate to and learn from the very situations authored by the writer. The author has urged the readers to re-examine characters such as Sita, Renuka Devi, Ahalya, Urmila and Surpnakha, as they are part of our national consciousness, but often have been interpreted through a patriarchal lens. In this re-writing of Volga, readers notice the women characters demanding answers, deciding to standing up against the unjust actions upon them.

Conclusion

Volga, in her brilliant work *the Liberation of Sita* has shown Sita absorbing the life-lessons from the minor female characters of the Ramayana, as the minor females have learnt about the tyranny of patriarchy and how to withstand it. Valmiki's Ramayana is the story of Rama's exile and return to Ayodhya, of a triumphant king who always does right by his subjects. In Volga's retelling or re-writing of the myth, it is Sita who, after being abandoned by Purushottam Rama, embarks on an arduous journey towards self-realization. Along the way, she meets extraordinary women who have broken the shackles and freed themselves from all that held them back: husbands, sons, and their notions of desire, beauty and chastity. The experiences which Sita gathers from various woman characters ultimately prove to be helpful for her to liberate herself from whatever she is going through in the

mortal world. *The Liberation of Sita* opens up new spaces within the old discourse, enabling modern women to review their lives and experiences afresh. Volga attempts to show both major and minor women characters in this work as victims of man's right to discipline women in their family. The doctrine of eco-feminism reflected in this book stresses the investigation of the parallels between the oppression of nature and the oppression of women. An eco-feminist reading of the re-writings of the age-old patriarchal interpretations of mythologies is therefore an obligation today and should be encouraged. Volga has successfully achieved the attention of the readers and she skillfully succeeds it by adopting the idea of sisterhood among women characters. ■

Works Cited:

Bajpai, Mehak. Review of 'The Liberation of Sita': A Feminist Engagement with Ramayana. *Intersectional Feminism-Desi Style, Feminism in India*, 25 September, 2018

Banerjee Divakaruni, Chitra. *The Pallace of Illusions*. Great Britain, Picador, 2008

Biehl, Janet. *Rethinking Eco-feminist Politics*. South End Press. 1991.

Kane, Kavita. *Menaka's Choice*. Rupa Publications, Sixth impression, 2020, New Delhi

K.J. Warren, 'Feminist Theory: Eco-feminist and Cultural Feminist' *International Encyclopaedia of the Social and Behavioural Sciences*. Available at <http://www.sciencedirect.com>. Accessed 15 December 2020

Volga, P. Lalita. *The Liberation of Sita*. Harper Perennial, 1st edition, 10 August, 2016

Ms. Papari Kakati, Asst. Prof., Deptt. of English, Gossaigaon College, Dist. Kokrajhar, Assam.

Narrative Technique in John le Carré's *The Constant Gardener*

Ashima Pandey

John le Carré (David John Moore Cornwell), a British author, is originally known for disillusioned suspenseful spy novels based on a wide knowledge of international espionage. As a masterful storyteller, he is skilled at spinning intricate tales. He made the popular form carry a serious weight. *The Constant Gardener* (2000) is a fast-moving, intriguing look at the problems of big pharmaceutical company, government corruption and collusion, and personal greed and fear. The novel is a relatively straightforward conspiracy thriller made complex through the heavy use of non-linear story weaving. The incidents, the events that precede each other and that follow are arranged in such a manner that they heighten the ethical dilemma of the protagonist of the novel. This paper attempts to trace the narrative technique in John le Carré's *The Constant Gardener*.

Key Words: - *Spy- novels, international espionage, ethical dilemmas, John le Carré, narrative technique.*

John le Carré (David John Moore Cornwell), a British author, is known for disillusioned suspenseful spy novels based on international espionage. He deals with very serious ideas-including the consequences of the dominant international political myth of the era of the Cold War, and more recently with the sense of disorientation in the aftermath of its demise. His novels are authentic, have a political slant, and are full of literary symbolisms. He has an ambiguous relationship to the contemporary literary canon. As a masterful storyteller, he is skilled at spinning intricate tales. Le Carré has explored profound moral and ethical issues through spy novel forms and has explored the moral problems of patriotism, espionage, between ends and means.

John le Carré used the spy genre - formerly dominated by Ian Fleming's escapist James Bond books - and elevated it into literature. Unlike other contemporary novelists, he confronts important personal and collective dilemmas that arise when liberal democracies engage in spying, counter spying, and covert operations. He explores the central, political, ethical dilemmas of the present times and elevates the significance of spy genre beyond the limitations of the conventional spy genre. John le Carré is a great story teller; he writes not for mere entertainment, he has made the popular form carry a serious weight.

John le Carré is acknowledged to be one of the best writers today in the league of Graham Greene, Ludlum, Ian Fleming, Tom Clancy, Alistair Maclean etc. He has used ambiguity as a technique to disguise the moral critique or a political message; it is an effective literary device for his unique form of moralizing.

The ambiguity makes the distinction between fiction and reality obscure and softens the radical moral criticism. Le Carre's stories bring across the complex difficulty of real-life moral dilemmas and make the reader aware of the serious effects of the choices one makes in order to balance obligations to self, to significant others, and to the institutions. His stories seem real because of a dense and artful blending of fiction with history, and imaginary settings with actual places.

John le Carré known for his cold war spy novels has made a shift to contemporary issue thrillers in this book. *The Constant Gardener*, his eighteenth novel published in 2000, is an attack on Big Pharma, tells the story of Justin Quayle, a British diplomat whose activist wife is murdered. Justin believes that there is some conspiracy behind the murder and tries to uncover the truth. An international conspiracy of corrupt bureaucracy and pharmaceutical money is revealed in his investigation.

The story of *The Constant Gardener* is based on a real-life case in Kano, Nigeria. It revolves around an unethical treaty between a drug company, British government, the Kenyan government, and a pharmaceutical company. They are involved in testing a new vaccine on poor Kenyans in a clandestine way. Unfortunately, the vaccine has a nasty side effect that kills some of the inoculated. Changing the venue is too expensive for the alliance, so they hid the test results and bury the dead bodies.

The novel is a fast-moving, intriguing look at the problems of big pharmaceutical company, government corruption and collusion, and personal greed and fear. These factors combine to make a mockery of aid to developing nations and to put many innocent people's lives at risk. The novel is a great work of insight into human temperaments and understanding of acute human affairs. The main substance of the novel is love, losing one's soul mate and rediscovering new affections after the departure of one's mate.

The novel is set in Africa in a remote area of Northern Kenya, to that part of Africa where Brits are idling away in "dangerous, decaying, plundered" Kenya, where grave-digging thieves steal wedding rings off the corpses of the wealthy, and a "safe haven" isn't a shelter for spies but rather a bedroom, closed off from below by a steel security door. It begins well, mustering exotic background detail, like the crowded Matutu taxis careering through the streets of Nairobi, while characters in the foreground conduct the intensely British rites of diplomatic life, where careers are spent perfecting a persuasive sociability over lunch.

The plot in is very complex. The novel begins with the gruesome murder of the young and beautiful Tessa Quayle near northern Kenya's Lake Turkana, the birthplace of mankind. In the remote area, the dedicated activist she is found brutally murdered.

In short, just another bloody Monday in late January, the hottest time in the Nairobi year, a time for dust and water shortages and grown grass and sore eyes and heat rippling off the city pavements; and the jarcandas, like everybody else, waiting for the long rains. (CG 1)

It is evident from the cited paragraph that le Carré opts for a selection of a chain of such elements of nature as would concretise the effect of Tessa's murder on Woodrow's mind. Since Tessa's murder is at the centre of the moral dilemmas, it is, nonetheless, equally relevant to the source of emotions in the novel. A 'bloody Monday' gets tied with a chain of natural elements such as 'the hottest time', 'a time of dust', 'heat rippling off the city pavements' and 'jarcandas'... 'waiting for the long rains' and these elements and images of nature make the entire atmosphere of the novel palpable.

It seems that Tessa's companion, the doctor has fled the scene. The evidence reveals that the crime was done in a frenzy. Justin Quayle, Tessa's widower is mild mannered and unambitious, thus the members of the British High Commission in Nairobi take it for granted that he will leave the matter to them. But Quayle surprises everyone, haunted by remorse and jarred by rumours of his late wife's infidelities he risks his own life and sets out to investigate the case in his own unique way. He uses his privileged access to diplomatic secrets, moves across three continents stopping at nothing to uncover and expose the truth. Quayle could ever have imagined a conspiracy more far-reaching and deadly.

His experience tells him there is something more behind the murder; he seeks to uncover the truth and finds an international conspiracy of corrupt bureaucracy and pharmaceutical money. At the outset of the novel we find Justin First Secretary at the High Commission, is faced with identifying her severed head, "Her eyes closed and eyebrows raised and mouth open in lolling disbelief, black blood caked inside as if she'd had all her teeth pulled at the same time. You? She is blowing stupidly as they kill her, her mouth formed into an You?" (TCG 8) Justin is disgusted and astonished to see his beloved head as he thinks of the passion she had for the African cause.

Justin is introduced as handsome and diffident, middle aged man, who appears not quite up to the task of tracking down her killers. As his colleague Sandy Woodrow puts it to the pair of British police who comes over to investigate the murder. The gardener of the title is Justin Quayle, an officer at the British High Commission and one of those supremely English characters who embrace being a part in the machinery of government with a fanatical resignation. He had no desire to do great things beyond tending his flower garden, and little use of his thinking ability beyond creating diplomatic arguments for not doing anything in the face of terribly unfair treatment.

Justin decides to uncover the truth behind the death of his wife. He is not bothered about the consequences. Justin "loves nothing better than toiling in the flowerbeds on a Saturday afternoon - a gentleman whatever that means - the right sort of Etonian, courteous to a fault . . ." (TCG 27).

The novelist expounds that diffidence can be a powerful attribute when you are surrounded by scoundrels. Justin simply hides in the house of Sandy, the man who used to stare at the beautiful Tessa as if he would eat him up with his eyes. Sandy had even sent her a love note in a moment of weakness. Now his own wife Gloria has taken a fancy to the grieving adult schoolboy, Justin initially seems such, hiding in their guest suite: “What are you doing down there?” She wondered. “Are you lying on your bed flailing yourself in the darkness? Or are you staring through your bars into the garden, talking to her ghost?” (TCG 114)

The story is further taken as Justin makes his journeys like a kind of holy rogue agent, picking his way through shady commercial deals, government collusion and outright corruption as if he were on a latter-day Pilgrim’s Progress. Tessa had sent a report to the British government on the activities of pharmaceutical companies in Kenya and elsewhere in Africa, outlining the effects of an anti-tubercular drug which, improperly tested, killed people. The government had quieted it up in the name of trade. The novel explores ideas of corruption and injustice within the pharmaceutical industry and the British High Commission in Kenya.

Justin further learns that Tessa had uncovered a corporate scandal involving medical experimentation in Africa. KVH (Karel Vita Hudson), a large pharmaceutical company working under the cover of AIDS tests and treatments, is tested a tuberculosis drug that had severe side effects. Instead of helping the trial subjects and begins again with a new drug, KVH covered up the side effects and improved the drug, anticipating a huge outbreak of multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis.

Justin travels the world, often under assumed identities, to recreate the situation leading to Tessa’s murder. As he begins to piece together Tessa’s final report on the illegal drug tests, he learns that the roots of the conspiracy stretch further than he could have imagined; to a German pharmacy watch NGO, an African aid station, and, most disturbingly to him, corrupt politicians in the British Foreign Office.

The British bureaucrats are exposed by the author as conscious, watching Justin in case he makes the details public, spoiling the story that Tessa was killed by her colleague, the black fellow activist and her supposed lover Dr Arnold Bluhm. Justin believes neither the loving part nor the killing. Much of his wandering is concerned with a certain shadowy Swiss pharmacy. He doubts whether Tessa’s murder could have been a corporate job. Le Carré succeeds in creating a situation so close to reality that accurately demonstrates the issues of illegal drug testing in Africa. In spite of the fictitious Tuberculosis drug, Dypraxa, and the fake pharmaceutical company, KVH, the premise of the novel feels real.

The Constant Gardener is a relatively straightforward conspiracy thriller made complex through the heavy use of non-linear story weaving. The storytelling choice seems unusual because the main character is characterised as a diffident, almost passive man, while the influence character is shown as an assertive, almost aggressive. This works well

in the story and adds some “flavor” to the main character growth over the course of the story. Another unusual aspect of this story is that the influential character dies at the beginning of the story.

The story begins with a climax. The incidents, the events that precede each other and that follow are arranged in such a manner that they heighten the ethical dilemma of the protagonist of the novel. The story moves forward and backward, some scenes or sudden mental pictures are shown in flashbacks. Justin Quayle, a mild, low-level diplomat and a constant gardener, investigates his wife’s death, their relationship, and his own heart. Tessa, who is much younger than Justin is a society girl. She is an Oxbridge-trained student turned into a lawyer and zealous missionary to the poor - Mother Teresa of the Nairobi Slums, one newspaper calls her, the ‘Angel Who Gave a Damn’. Tessa’s friend is a Belgian-African doctor named Arnold Bluhm. In flashbacks, the readers see them meet, marry, and fall in love; follow her in the teeming streets and clinics of Nairobi, usually accompanying Arnold Bluhm, the Black doctor with whom she spent the night before her murder, and who, after robbers, is the prime suspect.

Memories and flashbacks of prior events are used for complicated story weaving. The investigations made by Justin take us forward and through the memory of Justin in flashback we learn about the first meeting of Tessa and Justin at a journalist’s meeting. Their affair, their wedding, the motive of Tessa marrying Justin becomes clear to him when he makes the investigations. She had married him in order to help the desperate African refugees.

Le Carré uses first person narration and limited point of view to narrate the forward actions. For the past incidents he uses third person narration and the omniscient narrative point of view. Le Carré’s strength lies in his plotting style and portraying his characters. He mentions the details with great authenticity, precision minuteness and aptness. In his own investigation, Justin does not shrink back as he faces his memories, his colleagues, local police, hired thugs, and a nasty corporate CEO. He gets help from unexpected places because of his connections.

He discovers the mystery that involves the members of the British High Commission and the not-so-respectable business practices of the multi-billion-dollar pharmaceutical industry. In the process of learning the secrets of his powerful enemies, Justin learns all of his wife’s many secrets as well.

Through the memory of Justin, it is revealed how he had met Tessa, about her affair and her pregnancy, even though she kept on working outside of home. But when they lose the baby, they both become sad, and started having problems in their marriage. She is constantly told that he never takes action to solve the problems of poor African people. The author makes the protagonist realize that his wife didn’t really love him, but married him in order to help the desperate African refugees. They are vaccinated without being informed what the vaccination is supposed to be against. In the process of investigation, Justin

discovers that a new vaccine Dypraxa was tested. It caused many deaths, though, and that the fact was kept quiet.

Sandy Woodrow seemed to have been Tessa's lover, but he seems to support the pharmaceuticals' illegal activities, he gets carried away by the millions each one of them could earn for selling the product to the world.

The grief-stricken Justin wants to know more about these gloomy circumstances and why their home was ransacked after her death, so he begins to investigate. Justin finds out that Tessa had sent a report to Sir Bernard Pelligrin, head of the Africa desk of the British Foreign Service, through Sandy Woodrow, revealing the conspiracy of KVH and Three Bees and accused them of blatant illegalities and wrongful deaths. Tessa had found out that her letter was suppressed by Pelligrin, and she had then conspired to get hold of Pelligrin's abusive and remorseful letter dismissing her revelations. Justin learns that the British government was in on the conspiracy in order to assist its corporate allies.

Justin is determined to follow up on Tessa's investigation, returns to England, where his passport is confiscated, and he realizes that he will no more be accepted in British Foreign Service. He acquires a fake passport so that he can continue his secretive consultations with some of Tessa's fellow social activists in Europe. And despite beatings and death threats from paid thugs, the mild-mannered diplomat's resolve is firm. He learns about Tessa's acquisition of Pelligrin's self-damning letter, and also he learns both that Bluhm was not really Tessa's secret lover, but he was also an innocent victim, and that Tessa's ill-fated trip to Lokichogio was connected with her efforts to meet a developer of Dypraxa, Dr. Lorbeer. He sets off to find Lorbeer back in Africa. Justin accumulates more crucial evidence about the conspiracy. A cynical but sympathetic head of MI5 in Kenya, Tim Donohue informs him that the British government has taken a contract out on his life, just as it had done with Bluhm and Tessa. Justin firmly goes ahead manages to track down the eccentric Lorbeer in Sudan, acquire from him the damning letter from Pelligrin, and get it dispatched back to allies in England where it can be revealed to the public. Justin understands that he cannot escape his tragic fate.

Towards the end of the novel we find that, Justin is threatened in London, when he has to quit his job. He returns to Kenya, to find that Arnold Bluhm has been tortured to death. British government minister Bernard Pellegrin, Justin's ex-boss, seems to be at the core of the conspiracy. Justin is convinced that he cannot win or let the cat out of the bag. Justin chooses to go to the same spot where Tessa was killed. He knows that Crick or some African gunmen would kill him.

Back in London Justin's relatives, friends, journalists and politicians gather at his funeral. They assert that Justin was a diplomatic man who committed suicide silently. However, the letter Justin had written just before his death reaches Tessa's cousin disclosing everything. Pellegrin leaves the place in a rage; hundreds of pictures are taken by the few journalists present at the funeral. He rushes towards the sight in his official car. But it's too

late. The pharmaceutical's shares go up in stock markets around the world.

Le Carré is a superb moralist. Rand Richards Cooper reviewing *The Constant Gardener* in *New York Times* concludes:

It's not that a novelist can't also enlighten and exhort. But where in Dickens the desire to improve the real world — to weigh in on the subject of debtors' prisons or child labor in factories — never interfered with creating a supremely inviting fictional world, one senses an impatience in "The Constant Gardener," as if le Carré were chafing in his eagerness to have us admire his heroine as he does, to get us to believe. Taking sides with the angels, his novel unabashedly wears its heart on its sleeve. It's almost enough to make you long for the old cold war bleakness and ambiguity. (NYT 5)

In the novel *The Constant Gardener*, le Carré's strength can be seen in his plotting style and portraying his characters. He mentions the details with great authenticity, precision, minuteness and aptness. His style is precise and elegant and his novels are noted for skilful plotting and witty dialogue. Although there is clearly a political tone to his work, le Carré's political message is deliberately ambiguous. His moral message is even more ambiguous. The tension between ethics and politics, central to le Carré's work, constitutes the main focus of this work.

The fast-moving novel slows down slightly in the middle as Justin hops to yet another international destination, but it's still a fun read. Le Carré writes some great characters, all with distinct voices and personalities. The story might be unrealistic at times. The novel is a complex study of human relationships. Overall, *The Constant Gardener* is a successful, well-crafted book built on a solid story form. ■

Work Cited

Aronoff, Myron J. *The Spy Novels of John le Carré Balancing Ethics and Politics*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999. Print.

Anonymous, *The Constant Gardener*, Publisher's Weekly, 2013. Web. <https://www.bookbrowse.com/> 24.12.2016

Barber, Michael. "John le Carré: An Introduction", *New York Times Book Review*, 25 September 1977, 44-45.

Le Carré, John. *The Constant Gardener*, United States: Hodder & Stoughton, 2000, Print. All subsequent references are from this edition.

Dr. Ashima Pandey, Assistant Professor, Shivpuri Institute of Technology, UIT Shivpuri, Madhya Pradesh

Dalits Identity in the Social Order and Creative Writing

Piyush Bala

Historically, Hindu society in India has been characterized by a high degree of social stratification and institutional inequality governed by the caste system. The caste system as a societal order of social, economic, and religious governance for Hindus is based on the principle of inequality and unequal rights. The word *Dalit* means **oppressed**. It was first used by Jyotibha Phule (in the 19th century) in the context of the lowest castes in the Hindu caste system, which was considered untouchables. The name was then picked up by Dr BR Ambedkar (in the 20th century), and since then it has become a popular name for the Scheduled Castes communities of India, and is generally not considered offensive. The *Dalits* or the *untouchables* (known as *scheduled castes* in government parlance) stand at the bottom of the caste hierarchy, and were historically denied equal rights to property, education, and business, as well as civil, cultural, and religious rights. They were also considered to be polluting, and they suffered from social and physical segregation and isolation. The result was a high level of deprivation and poverty.

Key Words- caste system, inequality, untouchables, dalits.

Introduction

India is an egalitarian nation. It is a sovereign, socialist, secular which is devoted to provide justice, liberty, equality and fraternity to all citizens living in the country. Justice – social, economic and political. Liberty relating to thought, expression, faith and worship. Equality of status and opportunity to all. Fraternity for dignity of an individual and also for the unity and integration of nation. Indian society is formed of castes. It is the caste that divides the nation into many groups and sub-groups. The one group is Dalit, socially, economically and educationally backward, backward in all aspects. The emergence of Dalits in the society is looked through various ways. They have despair, injustice, exploitation, discrimination and dehumanisation. The ancient Dharma Shastra of the Hindus imposed social, political, economic and religious restriction on lower caste. In the simplest way to

define Indian population is through two sections- a) touchables b) untouchables. The social, economic and literacy play an important role in dividing the society. There are certain features of society which differentiate the untouchables from touchable. Untouchables live in separate area at the edge of the village or town. They live in the Ghettoes. The word untouchable has been replaced by the word Dalit. The Dalits live a life of physical degradation, insults and personal and social humiliation. They were relegated to menial occupation, lived outside the village and fed on the left over of the upper castes people. In the ancient days physical touch was considered as defiling even the fall of the shadows. They did not have access to facilities like; wells, rivers, roads and schools.

Dalits in society

Over years things have changed, Dalits demanded to live with honour and dignity. It stands with the view of democracy for, by and of the people. Equality and liberty of men. The question of identity was important for the Dalits as they were socially oppressed groups.

The Dalits are the untouchables, but the things have changed. Over the years the assertions have become vocal and agitational. The Dalits have started talking about the oppression and are laying agitation against oppression. They started looking for their right at social level. The urbanisation has changed the life of Dalit at broad level; the job avenues were open for them, though they did not have the proper kind of job. The British played a major role in the change of the social status of the Dalits. The question of identity was brought into sharp focus among the Dalits. They got the opportunity to serve the British Indian army. The consciousness among Dalit led to different responses:

- A) The Dalits started changing their living style. They started avoiding certain practices like; beef-eating, carrion carrying etc. They came to follow the Bhakti idea of the Hinduism.
- B) The Dalits started adopting Christianity to get rid of their untouchable past.
- C) Dalits started many movements making claim that they were the real inhabitant of India, who were defeated and subjugated by the Aryans.
- D) The establishment of Buddhism as the religion of Dalits to avoid discrimination.

The supremacy of the Brahmans was brought into question. They prove that Brahmans were the Aryans so they were the outsiders and the rest of the people were native. From time to time we find several protests against the supremacy of the upper caste. The 19th and 20th centuries saw great social reformers like Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Sri Narayan Guru, Jyothiba Phule, Periyar E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker and others. The social reform movements conducted many struggles against the caste system, caste oppression and untouchability in many ways. Gopal Baba Wangle played an important role in giving the lower caste as equal to upper castes in army. He questioned Shankaracharya to prove how the Dalits were untouchables than any other person. His support played an important role in making Dalit conscious and led to spread of many movements. Dalits started considering themselves as

the originals of India who were defeated and subjugated by the Aryans. Another Dalit leader of Maharashtra KisanFagujiBansode claimed, ‘The Aryans conquered us and gave us unbearable harassment. At that time we were your conquest, you treated us even worse than slaves and subjugated us to any torture you wanted. But now we are no longer your subjects, we no service relationship with you..... we had enough of harassment and torture of Hindus..... If you don’t give us our rights of humanity and independence, than we will take our own rights on the basis of our own strength and courage, and that we will do.’¹

The Dalit leaders adopted the term “Adi” very strongly, by which they meant original. A popular movement known as Adi – Hindu movement was formed by Achhootanand, the leader of the movement, who spread the awareness that the untouchables were the original inhabitants of India. Another movement Ad Dharma was started in Punjab, which declared; “we are the original people of this country, and our religion is Ad Dharm. The Hindus came from outside and enslaved us.... They became the owners..... They turned us into nomads.”²

Dalit assertion can be seen with the appearance of B.R. Ambedkar. He was the foremost Dalit thinker and ideologue. With his support Dalit became mature in ideology and politically. Ambedkar was against caste system. He found it as the root of untouchability. Ambedkar presented the caste system in his paper presented in Columbia University where he explained that caste system could not be imposed by the Brahmins over the society. It was only possible when they were able to convince other people of the society, of their values of superiority that had to be followed by others.

Dr. Ambedkar had tried all ways to eradicate the untouchability and caste system. He wanted certain reforms as grass root education and Hindu code bill. Dr. Ambedkar had made a proper study of Hindu society and had found that it the Hinduism related philosophy, religion and social order helped in maintaining the caste system. He insisted for class system, which is the father of caste.

Dalit Literature

Dalit literature means works based on Dalits or the literature written by Dalits. Dalit literature led to the awareness, identity and consciousness of the Dalits. At the beginning of the twentieth century, a few upper caste Hindu writers attempted to portray the lives of the untouchables. It seemed that they did the work either to bring social reform or due to sympathy for the lower caste. The writings seem to lack realism, they didn’t try to portray with vitality and hope as well as despair. The Dalits have always met negligence in literature as in the society of Hindus. Premchand was first to portray the character of Dalit in literature. His literatures bear independent and recognisable characters. He is a rare writer who writes both in Urdu as well as in Hindi. Inspired by his writings many writers took his work for translation. His literature can be included in Dalit literature. Dalits characters in his works are not only poor and down-trodden fighting for existence but it also gives a solution with the help of struggle. For e.g. in Ága-Picha’the Dalit character fights all odds and completes

his M.A. and becomes a Lecturer in college. Also in 'SaubhagyakeKode' Dalit survives to become a musician. The character in 'SaubhagyakeKode', Bhagatram, an M.A. student says;

“Unluckily I’m among those whom the society considers low. I’m a Chamar by caste. My father was an attendant with the Inspector of the schools. On his recommendation I got admission in school..... Initially the teachers in the school avoided touching me. Now the situation has improved, but still the boys are not friendly with me”.⁵

The social boycott of Dalits are portrayed very effectively in the telefilm of Satyajit Ray, based on the work of Premchand's 'Sadgati'. Where the character Dukhi working for Brahmins priest does not get fire to burn his bidi in a proper way rather it is thrown towards his head. The Dalits are beaten by the Colonial Government in 'Premashram', and 'Kayakalp'. Mahngu is beaten in 'Thakur KaKuan'. In the literature of Premchand we find the colonial government, landlords and Brahmins mainly responsible for exploitation of Dalits. The exploitation of Dalit women is more pain giving, they are considered as a source of entertainment by the upper caste men they consider their body as their property. The example of this kind is reflected in 'Godan', where Silia is exploited physically as well as economically. The best part of Premchand's literature is that Dalit have shown resentment and tried to rebel against their social condition. Sukhiya in 'Mandie' asserts her right to enter the temple and make offering on her own. But the consequence is very pathetic, she is physically stopped and her child falls from her arms and die. Even Mangal an orphan boy in 'DoodhkaDaam' searches for equality when the landlord's son asks for a ride on his back, he replies,

“So long as I’m not going to be a rider I won’t be the horse. You people are pretty smart! You want to enjoy being riders and I’m supposed to stay a horse.”⁶

The resentment can be felt very well in 'MeriPehliPachan'. It is the resentment of Chamars against Kayastha. Who tried to dishonour the females of Chamars. The landlord was beaten by all the Dalits standing united with the weapons like; umbrellas, sticks, shoes, fist etc. He has also highlighted the irrational thinking and behaviour of the people. He tries to bring forward the thoughtless approach of the people. 'Kaffan' tells the story of this strange thought of the people. Ghisu the character finds the false belief that the dead body should have proper clothing, though it did not have it in the living life. On the other hand Madav also finds that people believe in spending thousands of rupees on the priest but don't prefer to help the poor and needy, who are deprived from their basic need. But most of his characters are illiterate. The main purpose of Premchandra was to bring out the problems of Dalit i.e. poverty and social discrimination. Premchand wanted to spread the awareness that the Dalits were an integral part of Hinduism and its society, so the Hindu society should adopt Dalit with equality. Brahmins, particularly the priests were responsible for social and religious discrimination and economic condition was one of the major factors effecting the position of Dalits. Premchand advocated for the nationalism by rooting out the Varna-system, there should be no categorisation on the basis of caste. There will be no Brahmins,

Kayastha, Khastriyas etc., everyone will be recognised by being Indian.

The Dalits did not have proper education, there were no roles played by the Dalit writers in the literary development. It was only after the independence that some educated Dalit felt the need of thinking. They launched a new literary movement under the banner 'Dalit Panther' in Maharashtra. The movement was supported by Dalit writers, poets, and activist through their writings and speeches. Later on it was supported by neighbouring states of Gujarat, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and then other state. Dalit authors have gone through their lives in literature. The pain narrated by them may be personal but it also makes a realization that the members of the same community suffer as the writer.

There has always been a conflict who to call a Dalit writer, it continues to exercise literary criticism. But the Dalits feel that the interpretation of Dalits in literature cannot be done honestly by other writers who have not lived the life of Dalit. The Dalits criticise for the superficiality of experiences, feelings and interest made by non-Dalit writers. Polanki Ram moorthy says: "Dalit literature is enriched and beautified by the life-force only. Sincere revolutions go to make it. Established value has been discarded in Dalit projections as despicably unjustifiable, inclined or too narrow in themselves. These creations embrace humanity and life fully well. That is why, the so called style, form, construction that is the outward decorum finds insignificant attention in Dalit creation."⁷ Dalit literatures are concerned with freedom and expression. The three values can be considered as major force constituting Dalit literature representing their life- equality, freedom and harmony. The sovereignty in Dalit literature is not only the life spirit but also the beauty. According to Sharankumar Limbale, the Dalit writer-activist, defines Dalit aesthetics as: "The aesthetics of Dalit literature rests on: first, artist social commitment; second the life affirming values presents in the artistic creation: and third the ability to raise the reader's consciousness of fundamental values like equality, freedom, justice and fraternity."⁸ The feeling of distress can be heard in the writings of Dalit writers. As one Oriya poet writes,

"They are rage now
They are awakened
Awakened from the mass slumber
They will burn down the establishment
For their bread and butter
They have already given a call
And are ready to shed their blood
With red tears."⁹

The harsh and rebellious voice is heard of the poet confronting the enemies; it reflects poet's own experiences. It is all that the poet wants is freedom. He wants to be liberated, break all walls that have restricted him to limitation.

"Who are those
Who took away the service-sword from the Dalits

And imprisoned him for eternity?
The self respecting Dalit will no more bear it.
But, break the chain and sickles
And smash the prison house
To be liberated from red-tapisms
Around him and the world!"¹⁰

The pain and distress of the society is reflected in one of the Dalit writings'

"This country which demands a pot of blood
For a sallow of water
How can I call it mine
Though it gives the world
The (empty) advice of peace?"¹¹

Dalit writings are different to Non-Dalit writings, mainly on two aspects i.e. the denunciation of caste system and assertion to claim their rights to live with dignity and have all rights as others. Dalit writers want to abolish the tradition whereas the non-Dalit writers feel that tradition should be there but with reformation. The things that are not required must be thrown out. The tradition according to the Dalits is only a shield to protect the interest of the Non-Dalits. Dalits want the reconstruction of society. R.C. Jadhav writes about the struggling condition of Dalit writers,

"The actual world is filled with dreadful, terrible, humiliating events. Dalit writers cannot escape being tied physically and mentally to this world. Dalit writers are doing the difficult task of portraying this life through personal experience and empathy, absorbing it from all sides in their sensibility. To live this life is painful enough; it can be equally painful to react it on the mental level. Dalit writers are deeply involved in this process. It is not easy to extricate themselves from it and write. The creation of literature has its own laws. Higher literary creation is possible on the basis of these laws. Those who have the right to say that 'our humanity is our burden' can easily master these rules of literary art. The gift of art can never be as heavy as the burden of humanity."¹²

It can be seen that the Dalit writers are not against any caste or group but against the system, establishment and government. They infact want to bring social change and revolution through writings. Large numbers of Dalit writers have added their contribution and are continuously coming forward to protest the system. They are trying to bring change. Even the women Dalit writers are narrating their condition with the help of literature. It is praiseworthy to see that writers have shown interest in translating the original works of Dalit writers written in language other than English. Even the education system has a positive attitude towards Dalit Literature as several Universities have introduced it in courses of studies. Dalit Literature is looking forward for recognition as world Literature.

Conclusion

There is still a long way for the Dalits to go achieving respectability, dignified life and livelihood and justice in social system. For the Dalit community across the country, little has moved ahead against untouchability. Still today majority of Dalits, regardless of education or economic status, has to meet daily subjugation, humiliation and exclusion from India's mainstream caste society. This attitude of impunity is rooted in the social and cultural values, though the Constitution has made a very conscious change and consistent interventions of various organizations and movements, mindset in the society has not changed. These complex reality demands commitment from all people to come forward and involve with Dalit human rights. We all need to think and organize in support of Dalits assertion. It is time that we follow the footsteps of Dr. B R Ambedkar, Babu Jagjeevan Ram, Mahatma Jyothi Rao Phule, Savithri Bai Phule, Periyar and give voice to the anguish aspirations and hopes and lead them forward and affirm right to equality, identity and dignity. ■

Works Cited:

- Bichitrananda Nayak, "Mukti", Anirbana Cuttak, p. 20.
- G. Austin, "The Indian Constitution", p. 19-20.
- Ibid., p.20.
- Ibid., p.232.
- Limbale, "Towards an Aesthetic of Dalit Literature", p. 119-20.
- Mark Juergensmeyer, "Religion as Social Vision: The movement Against Untouchability in 20th century Punjab", p. 45-46.
- M.S. Gore, "The Social Context of an Ideology", p. 91
- Omvedt, "Dalits and the Democratic revolution", p.110.
- Pralhad Chedwankar, "Empty Advice" in *Anthology of Dalit Literature*, ed. Mulk Raj Anand and Eleanor Zelliot, p. 37.
- Polki Ram Moorthy, "Dalit Literature: Anger Hath a Cause" in *The first all Indian Dalit Literature*, ed. Bojja Tharakam, p. 39.
- Ram Anand (ed.), "Premchand Rachnawali", vol.4. p.85.
- R. C. Jadhav "Dalit Feelings and Aesthetic Detachment" in *Poisoned Bread*, ed. Dangle, p. 303-304.

Dr. Piyush Bala, Asst. Professor, Dept. Of English, D S P M University, Jharkhand.

Assertion through Annihilation: A Critical Reading of Simone de Beauvoir's *She Came to Stay*

Ameer Ahmad Khan

Simone de Beauvoir's fictional work *She Came to Stay* is an illustration of her feminist existential theory expounded in *The Second Sex*. Normally the woman is in conflict with the man in the assertion of individuality. But this novel depicts a triangular crisis in which two women are fighting for one man. Finally the wife goes to the extent of annihilating the other for the assertion of freedom. The article aims to establish that in a feminist existential conflict jealousy has a major role and the assertion of freedom and individuality could be achieved only through the annihilation of the other.

Key Words: Existentialism, Feminism, Individuality, Annihilation, Other

Introduction

Simone de Beauvoir (1908-'86), the most preeminent French existentialist philosopher and writer, has long been regarded as one of the founding 'mothers of modern feminism' and an accepting inspiration to generations of feminists. The publication of her two volume book *The Second Sex* (1949), in which she delineates the historical and cultural structures of patriarchy, is often credited with establishing the theoretical underpinning of modern feminist scholarship, marks an epoch making event in the history of feminist literature.

Apart from her theoretical work, de Beauvoir has written six novels and two short story collections. Her autobiography is also outstanding with four volumes. Beauvoir's major concern in her writings is the secondary social status given to women by the patriarchy. She has taken it as a feminist existential problem and has tried to depict the challenges faced by women in her fictional works.

Review of Literature

Beauvoir's *She Came to Stay* has been a subject matter of critical analysis for many scholars. Kate Fullbrook and Edward Fullbrook's book *Simone de Beauvoir and Jean Paul Sartre: The Remaking of a Twentieth-Century Legend* is marked by the overbearing tone of moral outrage and states that Sartre shamelessly stole the core ideas of *Being and Nothingness* from Beauvoir's novel *She Came to Stay*.

Nancy Bauer in her authoritative study *Simone de Beauvoir: Philosophy and Feminism* tries to establish Beauvoir's feminist and existential outlook in the conflict between Francoise and her existential other. In Bauer's observation "Beauvoir is the true founder of twentieth century existentialism" (163). De Beauvoir's relationship with Sartre has been at the heart of much of her writings, and her philosophic identification with him problematic. Margaret A Simons in her article "Beauvoir and Sartre, The Philosophical Relationship" traces out de Beauvoir's originality: "An important area of Beauvoir's originality and influence on Sartre is in the relationship of the individual to the social, historical context of individual's action. Beauvoir was the first one to address herself to the problem of the other, a concern which later becomes so prominent in Sartre's work" (169).

Discussion

Simone de Beauvoir's first novel *She Came to Stay* poses the feminist existentialist question of choice and consciousness. It is a reconstruction of her own experience, based on the painful trio that she, Jean Paul Sartre and her young friend Olga Kosakieviez tried to create while de Beauvoir was teaching in Rouen before the war. "Literature is born something in life goes slightly adrift," de Beauvoir justifies the writing of her novel in the second volume of her autobiography *The Prime of Life* (365). The novel set in Bohemian Paris concerns three central characters-Pierre, a young theatrical actor- director, his lover Francoise, and Xaviere, an alluring child- woman who disrupts Francoise and Pierre's relationship. For years Pierre and Francoise have had a happy, rewarding and stable relationship. This is jeopardized by the arrival of an outsider, Xaviere.

In *The Second Sex* de Beauvoir has spent several pages in portraying the dilemmas of the woman in love when confronted by a rival:

From the moment when she feels less than perfectly loved, she becomes jealous, and in view of her demands, this is always pretty much her case; her reproaches and complaints, whatever the pretexts, come to the surface in jealous scenes; she will express in this way the impatience and ennui of waiting, the bitter taste of her dependence, her regret at having only a mutilated existence. Her entire destiny is involved in each glance her lover casts at another woman, since she has identified her whole being with him. (673)

When confronted by a male rival for the female partner, men's jealousy takes an aggressive, outgoing form and is directed more often at the unfaithful female rather than towards the

male rival. When women are confronted by a female rival for their male partner, jealousy is often turned inwards and is depressive. If it turns outward, the aggression is directed at the female rival rather than at the unfaithful male partner.

Pierre and Françoise have been deeply committed lovers for a long time, as Pierre puts it: “You and I are simply one. That’s the truth, you know. Neither of us can be described without the Other” (*She Came to Stay* 17). The smooth and apparently solid edifice of the life which Françoise appears to have built for herself begins to crack with the arrival of the adolescent Xaviere. Although Françoise has tempted Xaviere to come to Paris with promises of freedom, it is her desire to possess this young girl from the provinces that makes the project interesting to her. Françoise tries to train the girl to talk about herself. But Xaviere, although young and naïve has an ungovernable streak. In *The Study of Literature of Possibility: A Study in Humanistic Existentialism* (1961) Hazel Barnes analyses the self – other relation in *She Came to Stay* and remarks: “Relations at the beginning are on the plane of indifference” (123). Françoise never sees Xaviere as a self-determining subject who might in any way affect Françoise’s life. Jealous and resentful when Françoise is with Pierre, she refuses to talk at the end of the day spent alone. Gradually, Xaviere shows signs of wishing to capture Pierre’s attention for herself to the exclusion of Françoise.

The visit of Xaviere puts an end to the prospects of an endless happiness of Françoise’s autonomy. Generally people wish to see themselves as pure subjectivity, sovereigns in a world in which other people are primarily objects in their own reference system. However, in certain circumstances, they discover that they have been observed unaware, or when they see that another person is judging them, they become aware of their status as objects in the world of other people. Then they feel that their sovereign status at the centre of their own world is threatened. Elizabeth Fallaize in *The Novels of Simone de Beauvoir* observes: “Françoise’s lack of awareness of her being for- others, of how she appears to other people in the world, is damaging to her awareness of herself as a sexual and gendered being” (34). Xaviere is simply a presentation of the implicit challenge that all other consciousness constitute to our own. She is endowed with a character “ideally suited to her incarnation of the “Other” (29). Xaviere is capricious, obstinate, egotistic and nihilistic and she poses the classic adolescent challenge to the adult world of Françoise and gradually she forces Françoise to become aware of her subjectivity.

Françoise’s liberty and power are completely resided in Pierre. Pierre’s wishes, desires, words, works dominate the life of the pair. For her “[n]othing that happened was completely real until she had told Pierre about it; it remained poised, motionless and uncertain, in a kind of limbo (*She Came to Stay* 17). With Pierre, Françoise has resolved everything. They told one another everything. They kept nothing hidden from each other. Every moment of her life that she entrusted to was given back to her clear, polished, completed, and they become moments of their shared life. Françoise sees merged with Pierre: “We are simply one.” (17) and feels anguish at their separation; “it weighed heavily on her heart” (108).

Xaviere is sarcastic about the grueling monotony, regularity, and effort of their lives. She even tells that they are exactly like civil servants. She despises their plans for evenings at the theatre and other amusements: “Once you decide to have a good time to order, it’s always pitiful” (95). She laughs at their fused oneness: “You both have so many ideas in common”, said Xaviere. “I’m never sure which of you is speaking or to whom to reply” (57).

Pierre’s new affair with Xaviere destroys Francoise’s sense of security and alters the flow of truth between them. The principal drama does not involve the establishment of equality and love among three people, rather the self’s right to be at all. The triangle flattens out into a straight line stretched tauntingly in a tug-of-war between self and other. Francoise is forced to see Xaviere differently: the young girl’s “demands, her jealousies, her scorn, these could no longer be ignored, for Pierre had entered into them to give them value” (61). As Pierre becomes obsessed with Xaviere, idolizing her, Francoise cedes Xaviere to him: “Henceforth, Xaviere belonged to Pierre” (112), and she feels that “time was spread out all around her in a quiet, stagnant pool. To live was to grow old, nothing more” (113). Francoise’s sense of exclusion and exile challenges her solipsism, her sense of being the sole knowing subject. She had the painful impression of being in exile: “In the ordinary way, the centre of Paris was wherever she happened to be. Today everything had changed. The centre of Paris was the café where Pierre and Xaviere were sitting, and Francoise was wandering about in some vague superb” (114-15).

Now Francoise has to suppress her feelings and begins to tell lies. She permits herself to express only sympathy for Pierre and sacrifices her emotional harmony for the sake of his freedom. On the surface, Pierre appears to be the truthful one, but his truth is based on Francoise’s not saying what she thinks. Meanwhile, Gerbert, a young friend of both Pierre and Francoise has taken an interest in Xaviere, and she presumably in him, while Pierre wants her all to himself. The stakes reach a new high when Xaviere and Pierre happily confess that they are in love, in Francoise’s hospital room. Francoise is jealous of Pierre’s affection for Xaviere, as she thinks, “not without a fight would she lose this little sleek golden girl whom she had adopted early one chilly morning” (201). Extreme love, as Beauvoir suggests in *The Second Sex* may lead to selfishness and too much sacrifice:

[T]he act of love requires of women profound self-abandonment; she bathes in a passive languor; with closed eyes anonymous, lost, she feels as if born by waves, swept away in a storm, shrouded in darkness: darkness of the flesh, of the womb, of the grave. Annihilated, she becomes one with the whole, her ego is abolished. But when the man moves from her, she finds herself back on earth, on a bed, in the light; she again has a name, a face: she is one vanquished, prey, object. (658)

Despite the moments of hatred towards both Pierre and Xaviere, Francoise now feels she must give herself without reservation to the trio. She assures Xaviere: “There is no disaster to fear between the three of us” (*She Came to Stay* 204). On the contrary:

[E]very thing could be so easy, she said. ‘A couple who are closely united is something beautiful enough, but how much more wonderful would be a trio who loved each other with all their being’. She waited a while. Now the moment had come for her, too, to commit herself and to take her risks. ‘Because, after all, it is certainly a kind of love that, exists between you and me’. (210-11)

Francoise’s consciousness thus begins to challenge her belief that the world is wholly enclosed within her consciousness. She cannot conceive the possibility of giving shape to a desire for another woman as an autonomous being to her own desire as an autonomous woman. It seems on one level Francoise resented Xaviere as a rival; on another, she felt it wrong to object because she would in effect be objecting to former incestuous fantasies in herself: All through the past month, she had tried persistently to become reconciled with her, but Xaviere stubbornly remained a stranger whose negative presence cast a threatening shadow over Francoise. At the same time all the three resist the idea of Pierre being with both women-Francoise and Xaviere out of possessiveness, Pierre out of guilt- and none can talk about their discomfort, the project continually involves new deception and self-deception or ‘bad faith’.

The ‘balance’ between herself and Pierre is thus fraught with danger for Francoise. The crisis over Xaviere is actually highly salutary as it forces Francoise into a brutal recognition that she does not form an indissoluble unit with Pierre and that she must take responsible for herself. Now Francoise is convinced that her sovereign status at the centre of her own world has been abolished. Gradually Francoise began to see Xaviere’s influence on Pierre’s penetrated areas where Francoise believed they had once been in firm agreement. Francoise is at her most vulnerable to Xaviere’s challenge when Xaviere posits herself as a woman. De Beauvoir states in *The Second Sex*: “In a state of uncertainty, every woman is a rival, a danger. Love destroys the possibility of friendship with other women because the woman in love is shut off in her lover’s universe; jealousy increases her isolation and there by narrows her dependence” (674).

However, Francoise may wish to see Xaviere as a child, she is increasingly forced to recognize that there is also a more adult Xaviere, a “supple, feminine Xaviere” (*She Came to Stay* 47). As Carol Ascher In her book, *Simone de Beauvoir: A Life of Freedom* observes: “She has the knack for seeing all the weak spots- as a fictional character, she is de Beauvoir standing aside and laughing, somewhat brutally at herself” (52).

Meanwhile Xaviere has enshrined her feelings and asserted them with such audacity that she is rewarded by Pierre’s passionate interest. Since Francoise never expresses jealousy or threatens to leave him if he continues with Xaviere, Pierre’s truthfulness is self-indulgent and has little at stake.

As the crisis intensifies, Francoise is gradually forced to recognize her existence in the world on the same terms as other people, she begins to see that “whether she liked it or not, she too was in the world, a part of this world. She was a woman among other women”

(*She Came to Stay* 146). Now her social existence is defined clearly –being-for –others. In *The Prime of Life* de Beauvoir describes this transformation:

Such was Françoise's first transformation: from a position of absolute and all embracing authority she was suddenly reduced to an infinitely tiny particle in the external universe. This misfortune succeeded in convincing her, as it had done me that she was an individual among other individual no matter who they might be. (338-39)

Again Carol Ascher offers a closer analysis of *She Came to Stay*, a story of love into antagonism and violence:

She Came to Stay can be read as a fictional expression of *Being and Nothingness*, also published in 1943. The novel traces Sartre's two "primitive attitudes", the denial of one's own freedom, in which one allows oneself to be an object and to be absorbed by the other's freedom, in the hope that this will be sustaining; and the attempt to possess the other as object, denying her or his freedom, to prevent a threat to one's own sovereignty. (50)

Beauvoir clearly directs the reader to interpret her depiction of a triangular relationship as an examination of the problem of the threat to the existence of the consciousness and the need to affirm ourselves as consciousness. In the article "She Came to Stay: The Phallus Strikes Back", a stimulating study of Beauvoir's fictional and autobiographical writings, Jane Heath observes: "Xaviere is identified as the locus of the threatening and destabilizing feminine within the text, undermining the masculine economy represented by Pierre and Françoise" (Fallaise 171). Jane Heath tries to give a phallic note to this conflict by describing Françoise's adoptive masculine and possessive attitude towards Xaviere as a display of 'amour captatif' a type of love, a desire to possess the object totally and exclusively; the loved object is seen as a thing; not as an independent consciousness. Françoise undoubtedly assumes that this scheming and manipulative young woman should be eradicated in order to maintain her relationship with Pierre, to reestablish her personality as a social human being. So in order to preserve what she values most in the world, Françoise, on a suitable occasion, skillfully murders Xaviere by turning on the gas jet in Xaviere's room.

The murder is indispensable for Françoise for freeing from her unhealthy dependence on Pierre. The murder of Xaviere is a means to assert Françoise's individuality. This goal can be achieved only by committing a crime; de Beauvoir believed:

Ever since Sartre and I had met, I had shuffled of the responsibility for justifying my existence on to him. . . The only solution would have been to accomplish some deed for which I alone and no one else must bear the consequences . . . Nothing, in fact, short of an aggravated crime could bring me true independence. (*The Prime of Life* 316)

To assert her individuality and to regain her life partner, it becomes necessary for Françoise to commit the crime. By doing it herself she feels victorious:

Alone. She had acted alone: as alone as in death. One day Pierre would know. But even his cognizance of this deed would be merely external. No one could condemn or absolve her. Her act was her very own. 'It is I who will it'. It was her own will which was being accomplished, now working all separated her from herself' - 'She had at last made a choice. She had chosen herself'. (*She Came to Stay* 408-09)

Conclusion

For de Beauvoir each individual defines herself by freely recognizing responsibility for her own projects and the woman can only be defined by her own project, not by anybody else. Jean Heath proposes that the murder of Xaviere, which is explained by Barnes as a "completion of Beauvoir's philosophical exploration of being—for others becomes a phallic backlash, an act of repression of the hysterical feminine undertaken by the masculine-identified Françoise, in the interests of maintaining the phallic order" (Fallaize 171). Whereas Catherine R Montfort in her review of Toril Moi's *Simone de Beauvoir: The Making of an Intellectual* focusing on de Beauvoir's philosophical and psychological underpinnings in *She Came to Stay* observes: "Her psychoanalytic inquiry makes for suspenseful reading as she investigates why Françoise after going through the illusion of communion with Pierre feels the need to assert her independence from Xaviere by killing her" (125).

Thus in the triangular crisis, the woman who should be the genuine partner of the protagonist emerges victorious though a brutal crime became necessary to assert her individuality. ■

Works Cited

- Ascher, Carol. *Simone de Beauvoir: A Life of Freedom*. Beacon Press, 1981.
- Barnes, Hazel E. *The Study of Literature of Possibility: A Study in Humanistic Existentialism*. Tavistock, 1961.
- Bauer, Nancy. *Simone de Beauvoir: Philosophy and Feminism*. Columbus University Press. 2001.
- Butler, Judith. "Sex and Gender in Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*." *Yale French Studies*, Vol. 72, 1986, 35-49.
- De Beauvoir, Simone. *She Came to Stay*. Trans. Yvonne Moyse and Roger Senhouse, Flamingo, 1989.
- . *The Second Sex*. Trans. H. M. Parshley, Picardor Classics, 1988.
- . *The Prime of Life*. Trans. Peter Green, Penguin, 1965.

- Fallaize, Elizabeth. *The Novels of Simone de Beauvoir*. : Routledge, 1988.
- Fullbrook, Kate., and Edward Fullbrook. *Simone de Beauvoir and Jean-Paul Sartre: The Remaking of a Twentieth-Century Legend*. Harvester 1993.
- Heath, Jane. “*She Came to Stay: The Phallus Strikes Back.*” *Simone de Beauvoir: A Critical Reader*, ed. Elizabeth Fallaize, Routledge, 1998.
- Moi, Toril. *Simone de Beauvoir: The Making of an Intellectual Woman*. Blackwell, 1994.
- Montfort, Catherine R. “Review of Toril Moi’s *Simone Beauvoir: The Making of an Intellectual.*” *The French Review*, Vol70.No.1, Oct. 1996.
- Simons, Margaret A. “Beauvoir and Sartre: The Philosophical Relationship”. *Yale French Studies*, Vol 72, 1986, 165-176.
-

Dr. Ameer Ahmad Khan, Assistant Prof. of English, G.F. College, Shahjahanpur, U.P.

From Traditional to Modern: An Analysis of Women in Mamta Kapur's Novels

Gargee Chakraborty

Women in Mamta Kapur's novels are an amalgamation of traditional and modern. On the one hand we have women like Tapti's mother, Mithari, Gulabi, Himmat's first wife who stuck by the traditional expectations from a woman whereas we have women like Tapti, who look beyond marriage to find happiness. Her women are vulnerable too. Mamta Kapur's women are not afraid of pursuing their dream of happiness and fulfilment outside the boundaries set for woman traditionally. They became transgressors but were vulnerable too. Dreams of happiness, desire for freedom, love and longing set them apart. But their protests at times were feeble too, compelling them to obey the wishes of their love interests (in the long run). Tapti might protest but ultimately she had to do as Himmat said. Tapti could not resist Himmat's calling knowing fully well the consequences of her action. But we see women like Guddo, Mithari, and Gulabi or for that matter Tapti's mother as women upholding and perpetuating patriarchal norms governing the society.

Key Words: Traditional, Modern, happiness, freedom

Introduction

Mamta Kapur's incorporates a gradual development in her women characters from tradition to modern. Women like Tapti's mother, Mithari, Gulabi, Himmat's first wife, Guddo are trapped in the patriarchal demands which expect women to play the traditional role within the four walls of her home- from being the caretaker of the family to giving birth to male child, a role chiefly designed for her within the context of marriage, as her ultimate destiny. On the contrary to them, we have women like Tapti, who look beyond marriage to find happiness. Her women are vulnerable too.

Objective:

Objective of the study is to understand Kapur's women and their sensibility in the light of her novel *Brothers*.

Brothers started on a striking note, ‘she was used to sleeping alone’, referring to Tapti. The line gives us hints about the disharmony in the marital life of the female protagonist of the novel, Tapti. Her home, stability and security of her life were being destroyed by the rottenness within. She is tainted in the eyes of the world. Caught between two brothers, with one she is married, and for the other she being the object of desire, Tapti Gaina has transgressed her role of a wife, daughter and mother.

To begin with Tapti was a simple middle class girl who was brought up under the strict vigilance of her mother. Public attention On a fateful day, in a public meeting Tapti’s beauty caught the attention of Himmat Singh Gaina and from then onwards her life was never the same. Everything was planned for her by Himmat- her marriage to his younger brother, her husband’s business, her job, her home, and even her own life. Practically her life was dictated by his wishes and hidden agenda to win her over. Himmat encouraged her from the beginning, “Marriage should not mean the end of public service. Even for women.” Thus he slowly created space for himself in Tapti’s life through his show of care and support. The web he had created in and around Tapti was invisible to her and she slowly got carried away by it as “ she had longed for love all her life , and like a famished fledgling abandoned from its nest , has found herself hopping from tree to tree, hoping to find it”. Though Mangal had loved her in the beginning, different circumstances had led to cracks in their marriage and fractures in their marriage were slowly visible. At times she regretted her marriage and considered it to be a mistake to marry out of her class and station. In spite of the fact that her feelings had led her elsewhere, she could not escape from her marriage though thought of escaping remained a fantasy. Visiting her husband in the prison was a sign of her loyalty.

Procreation is the role expected of a woman and that too a male born is the priority. Other than satisfying her husband in bed at night, the women are not expected to have a voice or rather allowed to have one. “...men were to be bread winners and custodians of property and of women and children who depended on them. Women were to produce heir, socialize children, be ‘home-makers’ and thus be confined to the domestic arena while men dealt with the world outside. A set of norms was associated with these roles to which a status was assigned, according to a person’s position in the hierarchy” (Mair,1972:59). Gulabi, the wife of Dhanpal who was leaving for war was concerned, “through her veil she sees her three little daughters playing about. If her husband leaves how will she ever produce a son?” the day before her husband Dhanpal leaves for war, Gulabi obeys her husband silently without any visible evidence of husbandly attention. Dhanpal says quietly, “have I called you here to talk? Lie down. It may be for the last time”. Desire for son is so strong that Dhanpal’s survival was taken as a sign that Gulabi would bear sons. Himmat Singh Gaina, thus was born, opening the door for more, referring to the line of male progeny.

Mithari, wife of Virpal was asked to live with her husband in the city. The greatest encouragement for this village woman was the desire to have a son. She was told, “You

don't want to be a mother, *Hain?* Now you will have a son. Many sons." Mithari gave birth to Kishan Singh Gaina. But soon after his marriage Kishan died in a road accident, leaving his helpless wife Guddo at the mercy of her mother-in-law Mithari. "Die!" screamed Mithari, "you sucked his life...." Guddo, Kishan Singh's widow failed in the most basic duty of a woman, to ensure that her husband's seed was transmitted. Thus incurring hatred and torture for herself. The widow accepted all the blames levelled against her, not even questioning for once why her mother-in-law's love turned into hatred. It seemed too natural for her. Her sorrow moved none.

Already been married twice, Himmat, by then a successful politician, had chosen Tapti for his brother Mangal, but it was evident from the very beginning that here too he was motivated by his secret desire for Tapti. He had shown concern for Tapti, her family and for their reputation much to the liking of her mother. Mangal could not go against the wishes of his brother, one who had helped him in establishing his business.

"I too want to do something significant", Tapti was not ready to sit around at home doing nothing. She is not willing to accept the boundaries set for woman. But public attention was not welcome to girls of Tapti's age and upbringing. She was asked to be careful day in and day out as after her father's death circumstances made her vulnerable. As a young, fatherless, poor girl Tapti was expected to adjust with the family she would be married into. That her family was small meant there would not be too many hangers-on. After her marriage, Himmat kept on impressing Tapti indirectly. Meanwhile Mangal's greatest desire to have a male-child was denied by Tapti. Already they had two daughters. She needed space to distance herself from Mangal's desire. Tapti wanted a career for herself, to "become someone who could not even remotely be construed as a stay-at-home breeder of children". "Nothing in her marriage was as she had expected. The ache, the dissatisfaction, the yearning for something more refused to be contained within boundaries..." her mother who is anxious to hold on to the proper values and norms set for women, used to console her "Beta, first comes family, then the outside world". On the other hand Mangal was lonely; the thought of a son still bothered him. "Girls-marry-go away- make their own homes. Now if I had a son..."

Dissatisfied with her life Tapti secretly started maintaining an illegal, amorous relationship with Himmat. Every time she had felt she should avoid meeting him further, but couldn't resist his call, "every turn of the wheels suggesting the transgressed". She could not resist Himmat's showering of love towards her. She had felt agitated, but didn't feel ashamed. With Himmat, although for a brief treacherous moment she could visualize a life of fulfilment instead of misery. But happiness was not for her. It came to her with a heavy price. It came as a thief in the night, clandestine, stealthy, and unacknowledged. In search of happiness and fulfilment, she had crossed all limit of marital bonding. But there was no regret as such on her part. "With Himmat, she feels most herself, because from him she has no secrets, she can chatter, laugh, flirt, she can display her body, she can demand

attention, love, caresses, promises, all unfettered”, whereas her own husband had grown totally indifferent towards her day by day. Tapti’s mother feared the inevitable. She was worried about the day Mangal gets to know about this illicit relationship as honour killing was so common in their society to uphold the family prestige. But Tapti on her part was unmoved by her concern. Rather she justified her action saying should she be living a miserable life throughout? She asserted herself in front of her mother, “I am a grown up woman. Mama, I do not need permission for what I do”.

Expectation from a woman is to become one of the finest examples of womanhood with proper education. But deep inside she needs to remain loyal and obedient irrespective of her education. “No questions, no assertion” was the basic guiding principle governing women. She is always made to remember that marriage is her destiny. She must know how to please her in laws. She should master all the household chores including cooking, knitting, child rearing, sewing etc. to secure her place in her marital home. Idea behind all these is that if a girl is gentle and tranquil, beautiful and modest she would be rewarded with a good husband. Women in our traditional societies are judged by their activities and capabilities in managing household affairs. Gulabi was one such obliging woman who got ready for a life of continuous child bearing after her marriage. After giving birth to three daughters she knows that she must give birth to a son to fulfil her husband’s expectation. Desperate as she was she slept with her husband the night before her husband Dhanpal left for war. There wasn’t any love or care during that physical intimacy. She didn’t expect it either. She had fitted herself into the family as expected. Karen E.Rowe while arguing on that said that to sustain a schema for femininity based on passivity, dependency and self-sacrifice suggests “culture’s very survival depends upon a woman’s acceptance of roles which relegate her to motherhood and domesticity” (Rowe, 1991: 348

In “The Reproduction of Mothering”, Chodorow attempts to show how gender differences are created within the psychodynamics of the family. “Women are prepared psychologically for mothering through the developmental situation in which they grow up, and in which women have mothered them” (Chodorow,1978:49). Thus). Thus after her husband’s death Guddo, the widowed daughter in law of Mithari became a victim of her mother in law’s continuous abuse. Her fault was that she could not give birth to a child, an heir to the family lineage.

As Nandita Gandhi and Nandita Shah Points out, “in India women’s self-worth and value is usually dependent on their reproductive function”(Gandhi and Shah 1991:138). India’s obsession with a male child is the result of our religious obligations where ‘*putra*’ connotes to the one who can bring the parents out of hell. The rescuer from *put* or hell happens to be the son because there are certain religious rites which have to be performed by the son only. Women simply do not have any space there. Moreover it is believed that the male child upholds and carries forward the family line. Thus a woman is always under pressure to deliver a male child. We can see this pressure of expectation in both Gulabi and

Mithari. These village women are under perpetual pressure from family and society and her own expectation also adds to it. They were taught from the very childhood that a woman's greatest success and encouragement was the desire to give birth to a male child.

Mamta Kapur's Tapti is a woman who dreams of happiness and fulfilment outside the boundaries set for woman traditionally. They became transgressors but were vulnerable too. Dreams of happiness, desire for freedom, love and longing set them apart. But their protests at times were feeble too, compelling them to obey the wishes of their love interests (in the long run). Tapti wanted to protest and at times she protested too but that was too feeble an attempt on her part in front of Himmat and finally she had to oblige to his demands. Tapti could not resist Himmat's calling knowing fully well the consequences of her action. But we see women like Mithari, and Gulabi or for that matter Tapti's mother as upholding and perpetuating patriarchal norms governing the society. Patriarchy as we have seen is successfully sustained and perpetuated through the participation of women themselves. Women were given education, allowed to study but that education was meant to make her an Ideal daughter, daughter in law and a wife. She was properly trained by her mother in every household activity before her marriage. She belonged to the brigade of 'weeping brides' who had known that they were only but guests in their parents family and one who accepted the child bearing role of a woman as the priority. Typically the middle class, educated Indian woman was encouraged to perceive herself as the ideal homemaker, who would devote the benefits of her 'modern' education to the service of her family.

Tapti, educated and boasting a career of her own did pursue her happiness, though secretly. She could never find the freedom she wanted. She found happiness and fulfilment in her lover, although their relationship would remain illicit in the eye of the society, thus would have to remain unacknowledged. She was one such woman who was pretty clear about her wants and needs and wasn't afraid to fulfil her dreams. It's not that Tapti had not tried to be happy with her husband Mangal. She in fact tried so hard and always had his interest at heart. But the gap between them had widened with every passing day. They were incompatible, a fact mostly unrecognized in Indian Marriages. Compromises and adjustments are considered to be the solution of any problem in marriage. Tapti's mother too never considered the incompatibility factor or her daughter's unhappiness as a serious issue. As a mother she tried to warn her daughter. But when she was unable to control her daughter she became a party to her crime by secretly protecting her. Finally all hell broke loose on the day Mangal had discovered the diamond solitaire. Everything became clear to him. He decided that Himmat would have to face the consequences. "Where their honour was concerned, *Jats* were willing to sacrifice everything. It didn't matter who they had to kill, how close the family member, it was only through asserting their manhood that their reputation was preserved". He did not regret his act of killing his elder brother for once. He justified his action, "we get what we deserve". The outrageous social custom of honour killing is also supported by society to uphold the patriarchal values.

If we take into account the characters of Mithari, Gulabi, Guddu and then Tapti, we see Kapur's portrayal of women has undergone a change. From dependent, submissive women cowed down by societal and family pressures like Guddo, Gulabo, Mithari to women like Tapti who did not hesitate to pursue her happiness. Feminist writer Adrienne Rich had said, "A thinking woman sleeps with the beast". She pointed out the fact that a woman is not even allowed to think and her views and opinions are rejected on crucial matters. And if she continues do so, she would be termed a rebel, one who transgresses the traditional norms and her spirit would be curbed in many different ways.. Inquired by her mother, Tapti had the guts to say that she knew well what she was doing as a grownup woman and for that she didn't require anyone's permission. Thus in spite of knowing well that she had transgressed her boundary set by the society, Tapti was not at all ashamed. ■

Works Cited:

- Chakraborty,Gargee. *Tribal Folktales and Women-The Rabhas and The Garos*. Mittal Publications(New Delhi), 2016
- Chakravarty, Radha. *Feminism and Contemporary women Writers*. Routledge,2008
- Chodorow, Nancy. *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender*. Univ. of California Press(Berkeley), 1978
- Gandhi, Nandita and Nandita Shah. *The Issues at Stake: Theory and Practice in the Contemporary Women's Movement in India*. Kali for Women and the Book Review Literary Trust (New Delhi),1991
- Jain, Jasbir(ed.) *Women in Patriarchy-Cross Cultural readings*.Rawat Publication(New Delhi),2005
- Jordan, Rosan and Susan Kalcik (ed.) *Women's Folklore, Women's Culture*. Univ. of Pennsylvania Press(Philadelphia), 1985
- Kapur,Manju.*Brothers*.Penguin Random House India,2016
- Lee Edward R. *Psyche as Hero: Female Heroism and Fictional Form*. Wesleyan Univ.Press(Connecticut), 1984
- Mair,Lucy Phillip. *An Introduction to Social Anthropology*. Clarendon Press(Oxford), 1972
- Rich, Adrienne. *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution*. Bantam(New York), 1976(1977)
- Rowe, Karen E. "Feminism and Fairy Tales" in *Folk and Fairy Tales*.Peterborough: Ontario, Breadview Press, 1991

Dr. Gargee Chakraborty, Associate Professor, Dept. of English, Dakshin Kamrup College, Mirza, Kamrup, Assam.

Revisiting Bhima Bhoi and Gopabandhu

Chittaranjan Bhoi

The world experienced a new dawn with the emergence of two legendary poets in Odisha whose personal lives elevated to Global. These two great souls by virtue of their vision and creation chanted the “Maha Mantra” of humanity which has been echoing in the entire world regardless of country, time and person. The maxim of one has been displayed at the entrance gate of the United Nations: “Let my life suffer in hell, let the universe be saved”. Another aphorism- “Hindu is not born for his own happiness; every drop of his blood is for the wellbeing of the nation” too drew the attention of millions. The first one was a saint born in Western Odisha was none other than Bhima Bhoi and the other one was born in a small village of Eastern Odisha and crowned as Utkalamani Gopabandhu Das.

How do we name these great souls? Leaders? Wise philosophers? Social reformers? Poets or divine individuals? or merging all these can we call them poetic persona drenched with poetic vision. While getting illumined with the poetic insight the universality of life became the part of the whole society and reformation. No difference is found between life and the world. Well! Life’s symphony gets musical with the inner and outer nature.

Bhima Bhoi, the saint poet of late 19th century is beyond all description. Having religious conviction for a particular religion, he vehemently dissented against the then religious tradition. He was a saint despite having family. His heart was filled with love but on the contrary there was a fire of protest within. Whether he is blind or Kandha, saint or worldly, materialistic or sacrificing; all such discourse and argument carry no meaning. He is such a fortuitous individual who is not confined to the usual principle of human life and death. He is much beyond the ordinary human identity. He is a religious identity turned into a crusader of life.

The great literary critic of Odisha, Chittaranjan Das speaks out “Bhima Bhoi is first a devotee and then a poet; first a creator and then a creative writer”. Being awakened by the shapeless almighty there tickled a series of bhajana, janana from his sweet-toned voice which were captured by his followers on the palm leaves. Being an ardent devotee of

a tutelary deity if one does not propagate the virtues of the deity and meditate on the lotus feet then life is futile.

Search for nectar from the mortal, search for light in darkness, emotion from the ocean of the poignant world are the in fact practised religion of a great poet. This expression of poetic sanctity and sensibility is reflected in Bhima Bhoi's "Stuti Chintamani", "Chautisa Madhu Chakra", "Adi-Anta Gita", "Brahmanirupana Gita" etc..

But Bhima Bhoi is the only poet in this modern era whose single line has not been printed during his life time. But the most popular literary stuff that obtained readers' approbation after Jagannath Das's *Bhagabat* is Bhima Bhoi's poetry. After long years of his death, his poems got published and came to the lime light and to the vicinity of discourse. An ardent devotee and propagandist of Mahima Cult, his commitment has been reflected in the intimacy of his poetry.

In the midst of numerous adversities, Bhima Bhoi has appeared as a flame of protest. He has structured and designed words amid the flame of his torturous life. So his life and poetry has become the weapon for self-defence in the hands of helpless million. For the abolition of varied superstitions and religious radicalism he has coined the constellation of words of his own. Protest, belief, love for life, religious longing are the fundamental themes of Bhima Bhoi's poetry. The propulsion of his poetry is like hymn. He can be acclaimed as a meditated poet. Glorification of humanity was in the core of his poetry and that probably led him to visualise cast-less society. Cast and society do not go together. If you search for caste then salvation goes far, if you quest for salvation then you have to keep castism a far is the doctrine of "Mahima Dharma". Cast discrimination was anti-religious for him.

There is no castism in Godly devotion and feeling. There is no discrimination between higher caste and lower caste. Bhima Bhoi and the saints of Mahima Cult attempted to establish a truthful and pious society by spreading truth amalgamated with godly experience. They voiced their protest against the illegality and exploitation in Jagannath Dham, Puri. They too protested against all sorts of exploitations; religious, salvation, pilgrimage, sacredness etc.

Bhima Bhoi's combat was not only against the illegality in the socio-religious field but also against the audacity and arrogance of imperial power. He had a long history of difference of opinion with the king of Redhakhhol and Sonpur. For that he wrote

"We don't remain under anyone's rule but Sriguru's
Don't carry anyone's dictation but Guru's
We are neither subjects to the King nor the customers of the debtor
We follow whatever Guru directs, who we are to object"

When a king considers himself the monarch of the whole world and shows despotism, ego and arrogance in executing power, poetry makes him conscious about his land, makes him calm and quiet. John F. Kenedy, the Ex-president of America justifiably says:

“When power leads man towards arrogance, poetry reminds him of his limitations. When power narrows the area of man’s concern, poetry reminds him of the richness and adversity of his existence. When power corrupts, poetry cleans”.

Bhima Bhoi’s poetry had the authority to make the imperial powers conscious about their limitations. The sharp voice of rebellion was heard in his poetry.

World vision and universal love have been illuminated in his poesy. Embracing others sorrows and even the sorrows of the whole world is Bhima Bhoi’s unparalleled and unsurpassed poetic vision. He invokes:

“How can withstand the miseries and
Sufferings of the countless around,
Let my life suffer in hell and
Let the world be saved.”

Without caring for his hellish life, the poetic persona suffers for the miseries of the countless creatures of the universe. The poet further opines: “I have dedicated my life and soul before the lotus feet of “Alekhya Purusha”. “Oh! Lord I am praying for the universe”.

For the wellbeing of the universe, folding hands and falling prostrate under the feet of Shree Guru, Bhima Bhoi speaks wiping out tears.

In the poet’s tearful eyes reflect the picture of sorrows and sufferings. This pure sadness in the poet’s heart and the reflection of the same in poetry is unparalleled in the world of poetry.

There is a great resemblance between Bhima Bhoi’s poetic vision of truth, religion and universal love with Gopabandhu’s poetic vision. The only difference is that Gopabandhu surrenders completely to Lord Jagannath and says:

“Lord Jagannath, the saviour
I surrender before you in life and death”

Bhima Bhoi considers himself the devotee of the formless almighty. He narrates God his father and mother, *adishakti* and keeps his mind, heart and soul on the sacred feet. Indeed, the same sight and the same devotion. Truth has triumphed through the religious practices and devotion. Nevertheless, Bhima Bhoi expresses his discontentment and regretfully speaks out- “give up truth and walked on the un-trodden path with lots of intricacy. Accepting hip of lies and spreading its market.”(Stuti Chintamani)

During that time the imprisoned but determined Gopabandhu attempts to establish self-govt. and thus in his “Kara Kabita” he says:

“Injustice, impious, sin and torture
Admits defeat before truth at the end
Let everybody be bold with this belief
Let us practise national religion.”

Further he says: “I may be commanded to die with truth and be saved

Let there be fame and defame on this earth, says Bhima Bhoi”

For the aforesaid assertion of Bhima Bhoi, Gopabandhu’s poetic expression was:

“This life is truth and pure, the principal essence
Affiliated essence is human right. . .
Human being became grateful cultivating essence
Accept death with blissful life
God is eternal truth
Make my soul mighty this way.”

Like Bhima Bhoi who sharpened his voice against racial discrimination, Gopabandhu too had not accepted racial discrimination in Nilachal. Therefore, he has clearly stated in his poem:

“No racial discrimination, no religious distinction
The ‘Veda’ that chants the mantra of equality and friendship
We will make no discrimination in this world, neither God nor human.

Nilachal is prohibited for him.” (Nityadhama Nilachal)

Bhima Bhoi disobeying the order of the kings raised his protest against the injustice of imperial power. Unlike him Gopabandhu has warned the monarchy of the then British-ruled India.

“Principle of rule, creating fear will be broken
The nation will run by people’s opinion”

Gopabandhu has also sharpened his voice in favour of democracy and writes:

“Butterfly is created for the subjects
Indra showers water for the people
River flows interminably for the people
The sun and the moon pour their rays
The wellbeing of the universe is for people’s wellbeing.
People! Remember this maxim. . .
No one will suffer from starvation
No poor will die of rich oppression.”(Bandira Atma Katha)

Keeping aside his own life’s suffering, the Kandha poet, Bhima Bhoi dreamt of the emancipation of the universe. Like Bhima Bhoi, being elated with the universal love, Utkal Mani Gopabandhu also wanted that the principle of love for the people of the world should be the principle of all Utkalias. Gopabandhu thus dared chanting a song showing universal love:

“Hindu is not born for his own happiness

Every drop of his blood is for the wellbeing of the nation

Practise this truth in your own life

Spread this message to everyone

We all are the children of God

Do the wellbeing of the nation giving up all arrogance” (**Abakasa Chinta**)

“He, whose heart is filled with love, the hearts of other creatures is drawn in his own. The world is a family in his eyes. He himself is the world and he is in the world. No one is beyond him.”

From the illustrated poetic expressions we can visualise poet Bhima Bhoi’s and Gopabandhu’s universal life and love. Both were ideals in propagating truthfulness, religion, the dream of casteless society and the life philosophy of universal wellbeing. ■

Works Cited

Bhoi Bhima, *Stutichintamani*, Dharmagrantha Store, Cuttack, 2018

Das Gopabandhu, *Kara-Kabita*, Gopabandhu Sahitya Mandir, 2010

Eschmann, Hermann Kulke & Gaya Charan Tripathy, *The Cult of Jagannath and the Regional Tradition of Odisha*, Monohar Publications, New Delhi, 1986

Sahoo Harischandra, *The Philosophy of Bhima Bhoi & Mahima Dharma*,(edt.) Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences(KISS), Bhubaneswar, 2021

Dr. Chittaranjan Bhoi, Associate Prof. of English, KISS Deemed University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Sustainable Development through Education

Simanchala Pradhan

The philosophy of infinite economic growth and infinite growth in consumption are completely unsustainable. Such a tendency will have serious repercussion on human civilization. The planet where we sustain with our heart and soul has its own limitation so also its resources. Hence there should be growing awareness about the sustainability of natural phenomena among the students by imparting them Environmental Education without which development cannot sustain, a stable healthy economy through equitable growth, conservation of Biodiversity, climate change and its effects on eco system. Sustainable development means using resources in the way that they are allowed to regenerate fully, i.e., giving future generations access to the same resources as we enjoy today. Massive Industrialization and subsequent felling of trees for urbanization and mining activities are constantly posing threat to life and global climate. Nitrous oxide, methane chlorofluorocarbons, Carbon dioxide and other industrial gases used in industries are resulting greenhouse effects. These greenhouse gases are adversely affecting the environment. Hence sustainability and sustainable development has been infiltrated deliberations for prolong economic policy in the last few years. Sustainability is a term preferred to bridge the gulf between development and environment. The major discussion initiating sustainable development is found in the report of World Commission of Environment Development (WECD) a body created by United Nation General Assembly in 1983. The Brundtland Commission Report defined “Sustainable Development” as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to cater their own needs. During last few years progress has been done in all walks of life, be it in industry, economy, education, medicine and agriculture. But the saga of development is done by vitiating the environment leading to injustice, unemployment, social chaos, poverty, pandemic disease, hunger, drought, flood and ozone depletion.

-Sustainable development through education helps us to develop knowledge, skill, understanding, values and actions to create a sustainable world which ensures environmental protection and conservation. It facilitates social equity and encourages economic

sustainability. It also encourages environmental education which aims at to develop the knowledge , skills, values,, attitudes and demeanours in people to care for their environment .The aim of education for sustainable development is to train people to make deliberations and carry out actions to improve quality of life .To promote education for sustainable development the United Nation’s Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, 2005-2014 (DSED) was adopted By the United Nation’s Educational , Scientific and Cultural Organization. The goal of the decade is to integrate the principles, values and practices of sustainable development into all aspects of education and learning. Hence Sustainable Development conceptually seeks to avoid environmental degradation while using the natural resources for economic resources for economic development in a manner that ensures both intra-and inter-generational equity. It consists of three pillars namely economic development, social development and environmental protection.

Introduction:

Education is a means to social change and sustainable development. Education for sustainable development is a United Nation’s Programme which emphasises it is through education changes in knowledge, skills, values and attitudes of the people could be possible so as to enable them to build a more sustainable and just society for all. This programme is an interdisciplinary learning methodology covering the integrated social, economic and environmental aspects of formal and informal curriculum. It recognizes modern days’ environmental changes and provides new methods to adjust to a changing biosphere and also engage individuals to address societal issues. It is an attempt to shift consciousness towards an ethics of life-giving relationship that respects the interconnectedness of man to his natural world. Environmental ethics is related with the morality of human actions as they affect the natural world.¹ In 1987 Brundtland commission defines sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs.” It implies that through development it may be necessary to meet human needs to improve the quality of life, it must be done without depleting the capacity of the natural environment to meet present and future needs. Sustainability aims to protect both the interest of future generations and the earth’s capacity to regenerate various environment friendly phenomena.

For UNESCO education for sustainable development involves integrating key sustainable development issues into teaching and learning process. The issues such as global warming because of greenhouse gas emissions, acidification of soil and water, reckless exploitation of natural resources stored in the soil through mining activities, drastic changes in the land use and land cover through over-exploitation of natural resources leading to desertification of landscapes associated rapid depletion of biodiversity are to be resolved – all demand a whole variety of additional pathway s for development. ²To promote sustainable development through education the United Nation’s Decade of Education (2005-2014/ DSED) for sustainable development was adopted by the United Nation General Assembly with the United Nation’s Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation. One important

aspect of Decade of Education for Sustainable Development through education must incorporate a wide range of stakeholders from Government, Private sector, Civil Society, NGOs and General Public.

Education enables us to understand ourselves and others as it links with the wider natural and social environment. Along with a sense of justice, responsibility, exploration and dialogue, sustainable through education aims to move us towards adopting behaviours and practices which enables us all to live a full life without being deprived of basic human needs. Hence the main focus of sustainable development through education is primarily environmental concerns, it also emphasis on poverty reduction, citizenship, justice, human rights, gender equality, corporate responsibility, natural resource management and to protect biodiversity, climate change, disaster risk reduction.

Education through Sustainable Development enshrines the followings:

- (i) Education for sustainable development should incorporate in the curriculum an inter-disciplinary and holistic manner, allowing for the whole institution approach to policy making.
- (ii) Education for sustainable development should share the rules and principles meant for sustainable development.
- (iii) It should facilitate critical thinking, problem solving measures and actions which develop confidence in addressing the challenges before sustainable development.
- (iv) It should employ a variety of educational methods like literature, art, drama and debate to illustrate the process.
- (v) It should allow learners to participate in decision making on the design and content of educational programmes.
- (vi) It should address local as well as global issues.
- (vii) It should look to the future, ensuring that the content has as long term perspective and uses medium and long term planning.

Works on Education for Sustainable Development: ECO-UNESCO is Ireland's Environmental Education and Youth Organisation that works to conserve the environment and empower young people who are interested in learning more about the environment, sustainable development issues and how they can take practical action to protect the environment. This organisation undertook a research project on behalf of Comber Sustainable Development Council on Education for sustainable development in Ireland. The research project on Education for Sustainable Development highlighted some examples of good practice within the formal, non-formal and informal sectors like the ECO-UNESCO's young Environmentalist Awards Programme and the Green Schools Programme. Education for Sustainable Development initiatives in further education highlighted by the research included West Cork Perma culture's Design Course, Clare Adult education centre's

“Environmental Trends and Impacts” programme, Kimmage Development Studies Centre’s “Economics of sustainability programme and ECO-UNESCO’s Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) accredited module entitled “Introduction to Sustainable Development”. In the youth sector, the National Youth Development Education Programme and the ECO-UNESCO ‘ Youth For Sustainable Development ‘ programme were acknowledged as good practice initiatives in youth work.

Other programmes and initiatives included the “Trocaire and City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee (CDVEC) Curriculum Development Unit Citizenship Studies Projects, the royal institute of the Architects of Ireland Continuing Professional Development Programme, The Just Forest’s “Wood of life”, the Global Action Plan “ Eco saver Programme”. These research projects have identified potential new opportunities for the delivery of Education for Sustainable Development within the education system. For example there are opportunities available within the Primary School Curriculum, in subjects such as Social, environmental and Scientific Education (SESE) and Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) to facilitate Sustainable Development through education. Moreover, the nature of curriculum and the flexibility of class time tabling allow the teacher to focus on the inter-relationship between subject areas which makes the integration of an Education for Sustainable Development easier. The secondary school system gives some opportunities for the integration of Education for Sustainable Development. Curriculum areas like Civic, social and Political education (CSPE), Geography, Science, Social, Personal and Health Education provide the best opportunities for Education for Sustainable Development integration.

At an international level, different works have been done in the area of Sustainable Development through Education. In 2005, UNECE member states adopted the UNECE strategy for Sustainable Development through Education (UNECE, 2005) as an operational tool to implement Sustainable Development through Education which committed governments to incorporate sustainable development themes into their formal, non-formal and informal educational systems. There are now many countries including India where national actions, plans and strategies in Sustainable Development through Education have been developed and implemented. The UK’s Sustainable Education panel developed a draft strategy in 2003, which continues to be used as a foundation for sustainable development. Among other countries which have completed implementation plans for the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development are Finland and the Netherlands (Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development, 2006). Beyond Europe, Australia, Newzealand and Canada have a strong tradition of environmental protection and conservation, with Australia having just published a new strategy for the Decade (Department of the Environment and Heritage, 2006) environmental policy.

Relationship between Environmental Education (EE), Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Development Education (DE):

The relation between these three is complex. They have more similarities than differences. All these are concerned with behavioural change through education and the promotion of values, attitudes and understanding. A core value is promoted by these three sectors, i.e., respect, respect for yourself, respect for others, respect for the world where we live in and the respect for the planet. Whatsoever, a closer examination of each sector suggests that each has primary aim that sets it apart from the others. Environmental Education developed from the concern that human development was having profoundly damaging effects on the natural environment and its primary aim is the protection and conservation of the environment including natural habitats and Eco Systems. Development Education's primary concern is the reduction of poverty, the promotion of social justice and the improvement of quality of life for people. It address human needs and links local and global actions. Education for Sustainable Development's primary concern is the improvement of the quality of life for people without damaging the environment. ESD expands upon the social and human rights dimension in development education and other educational sectors. It shares many similarities with development education and addresses issues like Climate Change, Oil shortages, water pollution, air pollution, soil pollution. So the need of the hour is to maintain biodiversity as well as poverty alleviation and protection of human rights. Education for sustainable development and development education also employ similar methodologies including critical thinking and problem solving, experimental learning, role played by the stakeholders, organising skill development programmes and participatory decision making.

Reorienting Curriculum to address Sustainability:

Reorienting Curriculum to address sustainability can take place at a class room or national level. At the class room level teachers shall commence by explicitly stating the link between the mandated syllabus and sustainability. Several tools are to be reoriented in the curriculum to address sustainability. The Education for Sustainable Development tool kit contains eight exercises for reorienting a curriculum to address sustainability and holding community forums to gather public opinion related to curricular change. 'Project Y' has also been used widely to integrate sustainability into existing lesson plans and units. Project Y takes a gradual approach, introducing one or a few new item related to sustainability in each lesson. Over the course of a school year, the aggregate amount of sustainability can be substantial. The reorienting process can also occur at national levels or state levels in ministries of education here the mandated curriculums are written.

A national or school level process should be conducted more systematically and thoroughly than a reorienting process carried by a teacher working in isolation or by a small team of teachers making in a school. A national or state level process would include symposia, seminars by inviting stakeholders to a public participation process to gather input(e.g.,statements of needs and desires as well as opinions) related to the reorienting process. In this manner, a ministry will be modelling with public participation and transparency, which are essential elements of sustainability. Hence to orient a curriculum

is to address sustainability , educational communities need to identify the knowledge , issues, perspectives, skills, core values central to sustainable development in each of the three components of sustainability – environment, society and economy – and integrate them into the curriculum .The education community also needs to divide in the existing sustainability issues ,i.e, Biodiversity, climate change, equity and poverty which are to be the part of the curriculum. Ideally efforts are to be made to reorient education keeping in view of sustainability goals. A properly reoriented curriculum will address local environmental, social and economic contexts to ensure that it is locally relevant and culturally viable.

Teaching Techniques for Sustainable Development through Education:

Teaching Methods associates with education for sustainable development stimulate pupils to ask questions, analysis of the problem, critical thinking and make decisions. Such methods move from teacher centred to student centred lessons and form rote memorization to participatory learning. They involve discussion, analysis and application of values. Education for Sustainable Development pedagogies often draw upon the arts, using drama, play music, design and drawing to stimulate creativity and imagine alternative futures. There are some teaching techniques each of which stimulates different learning processes.

Simulations:

Simulations are teaching/ learning scenarios in which the teacher defines the context in which the pupils to interact. The pupils participate in the scenarios and gather meaning from them. Simulations give a sense of reality and thus engage and motivate learners of all ages.

Class Discussions: Class discussions allow for the transfer of information amongst pupils and from the pupils to the teacher, in addition to the traditional route from teacher to pupils, Pupils come to the classroom with a wide variety of experiences that can enrich the teaching of the mandated curriculum . Pupils can therefore contribute a great deal to discussions of sustainability with observations from their neighbourhoods about what is sustainable and what is not. Teachers can then incorporate these experiences into their lessons through class discussions that provide pupils with real life applications of concepts pertaining to sustainable phenomena .

Issue Analysis Techniques:

Issue Analysis is a structured technique for exploring the environmental, social, economic and political roots of problems that confront communities. Issue analysis helps pupils identify major arguments related to a community problem as well as key stakeholders and their perspectives, goals and assumptions related to that problem.

Story Telling Method:

Telling stories to convey and illustrate sustainability ideas is an engaging form of teaching. Stories can be taken from current events, history, television programmes, literature,

drama and personal experience. Story telling has been practised for generations as a means of entertainment, education or cultural presentation and to instil moral values among younger generations.

Basic Components of Sustainable Development:

- (i) **Protection of Environment:** The chief cause of un-sustainability is the phenomenal growth of human population and over exploitation of natural phenomena. In developing countries resource exploitation occurs chiefly to meet the needs of ever increasing human population for food, fuel, fodder and shelter. The various human activities such as agriculture, deforestation, land clearing for urbanisation and industrialization, overfishing over use of fresh water etc. targeted to meet such needs cause environmental degradation and social disintegration. Various programmes are being carried out by various agencies to protect and restore water, land, air and other biological resources which support agriculture and animal husbandry. Land water and biological resources are intricately linked to one another, and their proper management is barely required to procure sustainability. For example land degradation is being checked through management of wind and water erosion, overgrazing and deforestation. Pressure on fuel wood and fodder is being reduced through an increase in biomass production undertaken by various government and NGO's. Similarly water management is also carried on various manners. Harnessing the water resources in India was identified as a major task at the time of independence. The runoff of water during rains is to be managed to check erosion, flooding etc. and to increase ground water recharge. This has been done through River Valley projects for construction of large dams, seen as a solution to water management. But Jawaharlal Nehru's apprehension of 1957 has today become major environmental issues. There has been much debate with regard to large dams pertaining the issues of resettlement and rights of affected people, impact on biodiversity and fragile ecosystems, sanitation, drainage and water logging are the central issues. For conservation of Biodiversity various plans and programmes have been made, i.e., to restore fragile eco system and enhancement of biosphere reserve including establishment of National Park, Sanctuaries, Projects for individual animals such as tiger, elephant, rhino, crocodile etc.
- (ii) **Economic Growth:** Keeping in view of sustainability the growth of economy is equally needed as to the quality of the environment. A healthy economy meets demands for job creation, economic security and improved living standard.³ Reconciling development and environmental quality necessitating paying particular action to integrated decision making. The integration of environmental and economic considerations, along with the consideration of equity is a fundamental underpinning of the concept of sustainable development. The affinity among economic, social and environmental objectives need to be acknowledged, any

conflicts among them that may emerge should be dealt with openly, i.e., on the basis of full information and taking advantages of the best tool available.

- (iii) **Equity:** Sustainable Development requires both cleaner environment and a healthy economy. To deliver more sustainable economy, we need to do more with less by making better use of resources, increase investment, promote stability and competition, develop skills and reward work. Hence sustainable development requires us to take a long term view of economy, rather than adopting short term fixes.
- (iv) **Climate Change:** This takes place due to man-made erratic activities such as forest cleaning, acid rain, marine pollution, agrochemicals and urban expansion followed by rapid industrialization. In response to scientific predictions of global warming, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) was adopted and signed by 162 countries in 1992 at the Rio Earth Summit. With 26 articles comprising objectives, Principles, commitments and recommendations, the FCCC became a blueprint for precaution action against the threat of climate change. The convention highlighted the fact that human activities, like the burning of fossil fuels, are releasing large quantities of gases into the atmosphere. These gases including carbon dioxide are enhancing the natural greenhouse effect. There are many concerns that increase of such greenhouse gases in the atmosphere is causing global warming which is threatening humans and ecosystem. The objective of the convention was to render an international framework within which future actions could be taken to reduce the threat of global warming . The convention indicates that participating nations have the right to exploit their own resources, but they have a responsibility to ensure that their activities do not cause any environmental degradation. However the ultimate goal of the convention was to stabilize greenhouse gases in the atmosphere at a level that would not pose undue risk to the global climate system. Developing nations whose economies are based on fossil fuels may have obscurities in reducing their greenhouse gas emissions. It was therefore recognized that developed nations will need to offer technological and financial assistance to the developing nations to encourage their transition towards more sustainable form of economic development.
- (v) **Forest Management:** One of the major agreements arrived at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit was the principle of forest management. The principles of forest management enshrines that forests , with their complex ecology are essential to economic prosperity and the maintenance of all forms of life. Forests provide wood, food, and medicine and contain a biological diversity as yet not fully uncovered. They also act as reservoirs for carbon dioxide, a greenhouse released into the atmosphere by human processes , which may be contributing for global warming . Keeping in view of the scientific benefits of the forest , they also provide a home to wildlife and fulfil our cultural and spiritual needs . The principle of forest management state that the right of nations to profit from their own forest resources

but recommend that this should occur within a framework of forest protection, management and conservation.

Principles of Forest Management include the following points:

All nations should take part in “greening of the world” through planting and conserving forests.

Forests should be managed in order to meet the social, economic, ecological and cultural needs of present and future generations.

Unique examples of forest should be protected, e.g., ancient forests and forests with cultural historical, spiritual and religious importance.

Pollutants that harm the forests should be checked.

Forestry plans should consider the non-economic values of forests and the environmental consequences of their management. Forest deterioration should be averted.

Agenda 21:

Agenda 21 seeks to achieve two objectives on a global scale, i.e., a high quality environment and a sustainable development. The Rio Declaration contains the basic principles that must underline future state of decisions and policies. A decade later, the world summit on sustainable development in Johannesburg gathered more than 50,000 participants, including heads of states, leaders and representatives of international NGOs and Business Groups. Attention was focused on the need to sustainable development in modern societies to alleviate poverty and disease, to manage natural resources rationally, to promote responsible consumption and production and to use the benefits of globalization to strike a balance between economic development and that of the environment. Aggressive and irrational human activities can upset the natural process. This gives rise to the irreversible changes to ecosystem which need to be checked by applying modern technology.

Conclusion:

Sustainable Development through education is a holistic concept as it gives stress on present and future perspectives of development. Development should be carried on keeping in view of social equity, environmental sustainability and people’s participation. For this reason steps are to be taken to popularize the means to retain sustainability of the phenomena of nature through Education Pedagogy. Due to erratic exploitation of natural resources the ecology has been severely scared. Hence all over the world it has been seen that in schools, colleges and universities levels environmental teaching has been incorporated in the curriculum. In most of the cased teaching s are being rendered through experimental basis so as to enable the students to be more practical to protect the environment. Students are being taught about the usefulness of plantation, the use of solar energy to avoid fossil fuel, the necessity of rain water harvesting, how to protect the biodiversity in order to maintain a balanced ecology, the soil fertility management, the cultivation of multiple species

necessarily entails biodiversity issues. Hence the concept of sustainability is useful in building up the necessary linkages between natural and social sciences by using adaptive and innovative methodologies in school and college curriculum. India's new education policy after a gap of almost three decades with the last major revisions done in 1986, cometh. It is touted as a move towards a more holistic, inclusive and futuristic educational system , geared to meet the need of the 21st century educational aims , aligned to the sustainable development goals 2030. India has already taken various measures to balance development plans with economic and environmental concerns. Measures are being taken in coal, oil and gas sectors, renewable energy, transport and residential, power and industry sectors to lower the emission of greenhouse gases. The major energy consuming industries in India are steel, cement, caustic soda, aluminium and electric power generation. In these industries along with the power sectors, promotion of energy efficient practices and equipment are being incorporated through technology up- gradation and energy conservation measures.

In Kyoto, in 1997, bulk of nations had agreed that the clean development mechanism was a competent way to combat climate change. The process was supposed to help the developing countries in reducing their burden of excessive greenhouse gas emissions and the developing nations to move towards a less polluting growth trajectory. According to the National action plan to materialize clean development mechanism in India, 2003 "It is important the country should gear up get readyto take maximum advantage of the clean development mechanism which will not only benefit the industries , the farmers and project promoters, but will helpin achieving the objectives of Sustainable Development, reducing pollution and promoting environmental protection." ■

Works Cited:

Pradhan, S ; Applied Ethics, Cha. IV, P. 76, Kitab Mahal, CTC, Odisha

Ramakrishna, P.S ; Ecology and Sustainable Development, Cha. II , P. 14-15, National Book Store, New Delhi.

Biswa, I Tapan ; Human Rights Gender and Environment, Cha. IV, P.373, Viva Books Private Limited.

Global Action Plan, 1999. Achieving a Better Quality of Life. London, Global Action Plan
United Nations.1992. Earth Summit 1992', The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro 1992. London, The Regency Press Conference.

United Nations Environment Programme.1993, the Global Partnership for Environment and Development: A Guide to Agenda 21. New York, United Nations.

Dr. Simanchala Pradhan, Lecturer in Philosophy, Barpali College, Barpali, Odisha.

The New Waves of Feminism and Doris Lessing as its Exponent

Krishna Nand Yadav

From the early onset of civilization, woman has been treated and projected in two extremes only. She could be either good or bad. There has been no middle ground. Even in literature also there has been only duality of presentation. It is only after the World War II that the real woman started registering her existence other than only black or white.

The emerging new woman started challenging the existing unjust socio-moral codes and conventions of evaluating women. Empowered with education and economic independence the insurgent woman is passionately aware and alive to her rights as being half of the populace and the life giver of the other half. Writers and activists like Simone Beauvoir Virginia Woolf, Kate Millet, Betty Friedan, Elaine Showalter and numerous more have started re-evaluating and judging existing literature and studying sexual, social and political issues in relation to women. In the hands of feminist writers worldwide, its chief aim has become to expose the patriarchal premises behind the social, cultural and psychological contexts of literature.

In the post-modern literary horizon, the emergence of a multitude of female novelists raising the female question has become a noticeable phenomenon. The fiction of Jeanette Winterson, A.L. Kennedy, Fay Welden, Angela Carter, Iris Murdoch, Muriel Spark, Doris Lessing, Margaret Drabble etc. have raised the issue of real women most emphatically and successfully. Partly autobiographical and partly fictional, they have captured the feminine life in a neo-imaginative way.

Out of them, Doris Lessing is really amazing. On a broader canvas of the great Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, she has worked upon the factors of colonization and patriarchy *vis-a-vis* women. The present paper aims to find out how Lessing, with her authentic and visionary power, has become the voice of womanhood across cultural boundaries.

Key Words: *Patriarchy, Colonization, Emerging Woman, Socio-moral Codes, Real Woman, Liberalism.*

Ever since the dawn of civilization, woman has been a myth and a legend, a metaphor and a symbol, a deity or a devil, but, she has never been a real woman. The real woman with an identity of her own, as the originator of the half of the human populace of the world has

disappeared somewhat under the dominant veneer of the male society. Woman as an achiever, as a leader, or a strong individual, by and large, remained non-existent or rare till the first decade of the 20th century. In literature also, there has been a duality in projection of the image of women. They have been either venerated as archetypal supernatural beings or debased and degraded as fallen women. Even if a few insurgent women have been projected in literature who protests against the existing ills, they are treated as demagogues and not as real beings. It is only after the second world was that the new woman appeared on the world horizon questioning the conventional socio-moral codes.

As Simone de Beauvoir has said: “Much more interesting are the insurgent females who have challenged this unjust society, a literature of protest can endanger sincere and powerful work,” (*The Second Sex* 42) Society started recognizing virtue, merit and talent of woman whenever they existed. The emerging new woman is empowered with education and economic independence, and passionately conscious of her rights. Feminist critics and writers like Virginia Woolf, Rebecca West, Simone de Beauvoir, Kate Millet, Betty Friedan, Elaine Showalter and many more started revaluating existing literature and studying sexual, social and political issues in relation to woman, once considered to be “outside” the preview of literature. Irrespective of class, culture, race and sexual orientation, feminist literature all over the world has but one goal - to expose the patriarchal premises and resulting prejudices, to promote discovery and revaluation of literature by women, and to examine social, culture and literary criticism.

It is no wonder then that, in the post World War II context, the growing awareness of feminism and emergence of numerous women novelists has become a parallel phenomenon which has influenced each other in a very forceful way. Since most of the fictional works of these writers embody the woman’s view of life and probe women’s experience, consciousness and problems from a purely feminine angle, they can be safely termed as feminist fictions. The fictions of Jeanette Winterson, A.L. Kennedy, Fay Weldon, Kathy Acker, Angela Carter embody, what came to be termed as “the *Écriture féminine*”. Its goal is to do away with the established notions of language, form narrative order, organization, theme etc. It is truly marching towards a feminist poetics, Part autobiographical and part fictional, it captures feminine fluidity in a neo-imaginative way, and of course negates the privileged father figure in favour of the mother figure. Novelist like Iris Murdoch, Angela Carter, Muriel Spark, Doris Lessing, Margaret Drabble have raised the issue of womanhood most successfully and emphatically through their fiction. For Doris Lessing, Muriel Spark and Iris Murdoch, who had come of age during World War II the utopian politics of the sixties was not viable to explore the issues of female consciousness in the broader ethical and political commitments. For Lessing - communism, liberalism for Murdoch, and Christian doctrine for Spark became the point of vision. But even that was not enough.

In face Doris Lessing comes before us as a woman writer who shared the epic vision of the great 19th century social realist like Dostoevsky and Tolstoy. Although she has taken the whole of civilization within the scope of her writing, the two specific cultural

forces that inspire and shape her fictional world are colonization and patriarchy. Being a much travelled and transcultural writer, her major areas of deliberation in her novels is very authentic and creditable. The most prolific of contemporary British writers and the recipient of more than twenty national-international literary award and prizes, Doris Lessing, with her fire and visionary power has become the voice of womanhood. Her novels *The Golden Notebooks*, *The Marriages between Zones Three, Four and Five*, *A small Personal Voice*, *The Grass is Singing*, *The Fifth Child*, *The Diaries of Jane Somers* etc. have put a divided civilization to scrutiny. She proves to be a writer who is forever restless, moving probing and exploring, who surpasses the limits of possibility and seeks for change. Margaret Drabble has rightly said,

She is one of the very few novelists who have refused to believe that the contemporary world is too complicated to understand. She is not afraid of ideas. (Young 341)

During the nineties, Doris Lessing's popularity as a novelist reached a high peak internationally. All her works ranging from *The Grass Is Singing* to *The Fifth Child* started to be analysed in details from the point of view of theme, style, language structure symbolism and personal experience. It was found that Lessing had made various changes and exploration in her novels for many years until it got resolved and the artist within her was satisfied with the final product. If the *Diaries of Jane Somers* was for final atonement and new romances, *The Marriages between Zones Three, Four and Five* was an enquiry, a remaking and an inspiration for the novelist. If *The Grass is Singing* is against the racial prejudices of privileged white working class, *The Golden Notebook* explores mental and societal breakdown in a very poignant way. Some critics have even unearthed perspective and impact of Sufism in the works of Doris Lessing. The point is that, the evolution of Lessing as a novelist, a critical observer of social process and systems and as a demystified has been a regular process. She has been able to establish herself as a writer of universal consciousness beyond culture and boundary.

Through her novel *The Grass is Singing*, Doris Lessing has established the fact that, even an outsider can see through the inside and present the real picture of slavery and suffering of the Afro-English community. She has been successful in exposing that. within the white community, which sees itself as a vanguard of civilization, it is the women who have to bear the crucifix of moral guardians of the society. For the South African feminism it is actually the 'domestic sphere' where the poor white women start to work to establish themselves as part of the privileged white working class. Set in southern Rhodesia (Modern Zimbabwe), *The Grass is Singing* explores the viability of transgressive relationship between the white settlers and the aborigine Africans. Mary Turner, the wife of farmer Richard Turner, portrayed as the symbol of privileged white settler abuses and mistreats Moses, the black cook. But later on forced by economic hardship and sapped by the unbearable heat of their tiny brick and iron house, Mary, feeling lonely and frightened, turns to Moses for kindness and understanding. By doing so, she becomes the symbol of seductive cruelty of colonialism

and sexual hypocrisy. And by killing her finally in cold blood, Moses secured freedom and revenge for himself and his tribe:

His enemy, whom he as outwitted, as asleep. Contemptuously the native turned away, and walked back to the house... This was his final moment of triumph.(TGIS, 206)

Lessing has portrayed the wounded human affection, the rage the regret and pity of Moses, the symbol of colonial exploitation in a very poignant way.

Doris Lessing has busted many a question raised by critics like Engels, Bergmann, Ruddick etc. on the role of women as simply biological producer in the family. Like the typical feminists, she did not simply discuss the injustice meted to woman just for being women. Lessing tried to explore the possibility of transgressive relationships between the 'weak links' among Southern African Settlers and Africans. She has tried to break away from the boundaries of conformist sex roles, political affiliations, racial and class issues. Through the novel *The Golden Notebook* (1962) she has tried to present the fragmentation, the continued societal pressure. The heroine Anna Wolf has to suffer the compartmentalization of her life, as represented by the four different coloured notebooks, which finally ends in her mental breakdown and madness. Woven with the personal dilemmas of Anna Wolf are the issues of gender, love sex, power communism and disillusionment, and also the dichotomy between fact and fiction. Through her golden notebook the protagonist attempted to reconcile all the links and parallel images of her life but she fails tragically. Doris Lessing has tried to give her women characters a power of politics, a stance to grow and sustain in developed society perhaps this is the reason that made *The Golden Notebook* to be hailed as the 'feminist bible'. The boldness of ambition and theme, and the passion of presentation in the novel have certainly shaken the 20th century literary world. She has declared shockingly but truthfully through Anna Wolf, that "every woman believes in her wart that if a man does to satisfy her she has a right to go to another." (*The Golden Notebook*, 150)

Doris Lessing did see that the problems women writers face as being different from those faced by men. Throughout the *Golden Notebook* it is the women who do all the cooking and household chores between her works as a writer and yet it seemed liberating and satisfying. Although, Lessing vehemently objected to the feminist label yet we read her today as a feminist, a demystifier of womanhood.

Works Cited:

- Lessing Doris :*The Grass is Singing*, Fourth Estate, London, 2019.
Lessing Doris :*The Golden Notebook*, Fourth Estate, London, 2019.
Ruth Whittaker: *Doris Lessing*, London, Macmillan, 1988.

Dr. Krishna Nand Yadav, Department of English, T.M. Bhagalpur, University, Bhagalpur, Bihar.

Intertextuality and History-Fiction Interface in Richard Flanagan's *The Narrow Road to the Deep North*

Darshana Goswami

In recent decades, the study of intertextuality has gained much momentum especially after Julia Kristeva coined the term 'intertextuality' which proclaims that a text is deeply embedded in its society and history. The idea of intertextuality also reaffirms the postmodern stance that resists the totality of a text, or its undisputed autonomy and insulation. Again, the interface of history with fiction provides much interesting scope to interpret recorded and unrecorded history within fictional narratives. Australian novelist Richard Flanagan's Booker Prize winning novel *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* (2013) is intertextual and self-referential in design and it also questions the credibility of 'history' in general and other specific historical documents in particular and then undertakes to tell some episodes of unrecorded history. The narrator of the novel proposes to tell the untold stories of a group of Australian Prisoners of War (POW) employed in the construction of the infamous Thai-Burma Railway during the Second World War. At the centre of this group is Dorrigo Evans, a young surgeon, who leads this group of prisoners. The novel opens with the narration of the boyhood days of Dorrigo Evans in a remote village in Tasmania and ends at his death after a long life of success and fame on the one hand and an irrecoverable sense of failure and hopelessness on the other. This paper undertakes to examine how the intertextual design and history-fiction interface are inseparably linked in the narrative stratagem of the novel that inquire into the complex relations that exist among reality, fiction, identity, memory, etc.

Key Words: Intertextuality, self-referential, narrative, history, fiction, truth, reality

The idea of intertextuality reaffirms the postmodern stance that resists the totality of a text, or its undisputed autonomy and insulation. It contends that a text cannot be an isolated entity, which is self-contained and complete in itself. According to the proponents of intertextuality, each text is a product of a given linguistic system and its extended system of cultural codes. And therefore, it is inevitable that numerous voices and echoes from

literature and other discourses make free inroads into the periphery of a literary text. Thus all texts are interlinked with one another directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly. It was Julia Kristeva, the Bulgarian-French feminist and post-structuralist critic, who coined this term ‘intertextuality’ to highlight this inherent feature that links one text with the other texts, in her essays like ‘Word, Dialogue and Novel’ (1966) and ‘The Bounded Text’ (1966-67). Regarding Kristeva’s postulations on intertextual nature of texts J. A. Cuddon comments:

“Her (Kristeva’s) contention was that a literary text is not an isolated phenomenon but it made up of a mosaic of quotations, and that any text is the ‘absorption and transformation of another’. She challenges traditional notions of literary influence, saying that intertextuality denotes a transposition of one or several sign systems into another or others. But this is not connected with the study of sources. ‘Transposition’ is a Freudian term, and Kristeva is pointing not merely to the way texts echo each other but to the way that discourses and sign systems are transposed into one another– so that meanings in one kind of discourse are overlaid with meanings from another kind of discourse.” (Cuddon 424)

According to Selden *et al*, Kristeva’s idea of ‘intertextuality’ is based on the work of Mikhail Bakhtin and the Russian Formalists. They state, “Thus she writes of a “‘text’ as comprising ‘a permutation of texts, an intertextuality’, and of how ‘in the space of a given text, several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another.’” (Selden *et al* 171)

However, it is not Kristeva alone who believes in this ‘interdependence’ (Cuddon 424) of literary texts. John Barth, in his essay ‘The Literature of Exhaustion’ makes an extensive survey of American, Latin American and European literature to find that literature repeats itself. In the essay he emphasizes that this fusion and mutual cross-references is only a natural feature of all works of art and this fusion can take place either within the genres or between them. Post-structuralist critic Roland Barthes too extensively writes about the intertextual nature of texts in his celebrated essay ‘The Death of the Author’ (1967) and other writings. Intertextuality is also the reader’s references to other texts while reading a text.

In his novel *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* (2013), Australian novelist Richard Flanagan uncovers some unrecorded incidents that took place during the Second World War in the remote terrains of Thailand. During the Second World War, while fighting the Allied Powers, Japan had to build a railway from Thailand to Burma, and in order to build it in a humanly impossible time span, Japan employed thousands of POWs (Prisoners of War) in building the railway. In order to meet the deadline, the Japanese officers had to take atrocious measures while making the POWs work. The sufferings of these POWs make up the major part of the story. The narrative of the novel is primarily divided into five books – each indicated by a haiku and renumbering of chapters. All throughout, intertextuality and history-fiction nexus remain integral parts of the narrative structure.

The novelist builds up the context of intertextuality primarily through the reading habit of Dorrigo Evans, the protagonist of the novel, and also that of the officers of the Imperial Japanese Army, Dorrigo's antagonists. The novel opens with Dorrigo Evans' boyhood days in a remote village in Tasmania, Australia. His father is a petty railway workman and can provide for the family with the bare necessities only. Dorrigo alone, among all his siblings, manages to get a scholarship to read in high school and then another scholarship to study surgery. From his boyhood Dorrigo develops a fascination for books, especially the old classics and forms the habit of reciting the poems that he loves. Victorian poet Alfred Tennyson's "Ulysses" is one of his most favourite poems and he remembers how as a boy he read the poem to his elder brother Tom and his helper in hunting, Jack Magurie.

The poem has such a deep influence on him that, later in his life, whenever he comes face to face with himself, he recites the poem, irrespective of the situation, not without a comic effect at times. It constitutes a part of Dorrigo's consciousness and in moments of crisis Dorrigo finds himself going back to it again and again. In a way the poem overarches the whole narrative of the novel from the beginning to the end – from Dorrigo's boyhood, through his youth and his days in the POW camp, to his old age, "Dorrigo Evans had grown up in an age when life could be conceived and lived in the image of poetry, or, as it was increasingly with him, the shadow of a single poem." (77)

However, it is not Dorrigo Evans alone who loves reading and lives under the influence of what he reads, but the officers of the Imperial Japanese Army too are profoundly influenced by the haikus (a type of traditional Japanese poetry) and they go back to the poems in their leisure time amidst the harrowing, inhuman jobs that they do in the POW camp in the name of duty, and in the name of the Japanese spirit, embodied by their Emperor. They witness the death, disease and starvation of the POWs, yet they unleash all atrocities on them to do their duty. The whole scenario in the camp seem so irrational and unreal to them and they need to recite haikus to keep themselves sane, or take intoxicating drug for temporary relief from the 'unreal' situation:

"And as they talked of *renga* and *waka* and haiku, of Burma and India and the railway, both men felt a great sense of shared meaning, though exactly what they had shared neither would afterwards have been able to say. Colonel Kota recited another haiku by Kato, and they agreed that it was this supreme Japanese gift – of portraying life so concisely, so exquisitely – that they, with their work on the railway, were helping bring to the world. And this conversation, which was really a series of mutual agreements, made them both feel considerably better about their own privations and the bitter struggle that was their work." (127)

Their longings, frustrations and contradictory thoughts are summed up in this parody of haiku:

“Even in Manchukuo
When I see a neck
I long for Manchukuo.” (128)

Later in life, Major Nakamura begins a new life as Mr. Kimura after escaping the judgment of the war criminals. He tries to justify his criminal acts in the POW camp by consoling himself that as one part of him loves poetry, the other part loves the Emperor, and whatever he did, it was only for the Emperor. However, the undeniable truth remains that in spite of all justifications, Nakamura is haunted by the shadows of the dark past, from which he can never escape till his death. Towards the end of the narrative, Nakamura is diagnosed with throat cancer and as a lover of poetry and as an “amateur poet” (394) himself, he sits to write his death poem. But he finds that there is no need to improve upon the death poem written by the famous poet Hyakka and repeats it word to word:

“Winter ice
Melts into clean water—
Clear is my heart.” (395)

Nakamura’s former colleague, Colonel Kota too manages to escape trial and verdict; but unlike Nakamura, he fails to find any meaning in his new life altogether, and commits suicide. His mummified body is found in a suburban apartment by a group of journalists and they discover Japanese poet Matsuo Basho’s famous travel book *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* on his bedside table. Flanagan uses the title of Basho’s book as the title of his own novel that exploits the trope of ‘journey’ to narrate the stories of Dorrigo Evans, the Australian POWs under him and the Japanese army officers. This specific way of using the title of a text for that of another is defined as ‘paratext’ by Gerard Genette, as mentioned by Susana Onega (Onega 277).

From this discussion we find that Flanagan sets his novel in the broader context of the Second World War, when the Far East and the West came together. Through extensive use of quotations from the Western and Japanese literature, both the worldviews are juxtaposed against one another. On the one hand, “Ulysses” represents the realistic, optimistic spirit of the ever expanding Victorian imperialism, where everything is knowable and conquerable. The haikus, on the other hand, are elusive in their meaning, and have a mystic aura around them.

This general contrast of worldviews is further deepened by the way the personas of Ulysses and Dorrigo are set against one another. The narrator categorically says that reading is not mere a pastime for Dorrigo, and that he ‘lived in the image of poetry’ (77) and more especially, “in the shadow of a single poem”(ibid); yet Dorrigo is far from being a reflection of the mythical hero, and in reality he is only a caricature of Ulysses. The overt parallelism between Ulysses and Dorrigo only highlights the ‘difference’ between them instead of

similarity. The dominant sense of achievement and optimism of Tennyson's 'Ulysses' is subverted by Dorrigo Evans' personal crisis and his sense of failure and emptiness in life. This sense of failure is primarily caused by his separation with his beloved Amy, and his failure in saving the lives of many POWs in the camp, in spite of being a doctor. Later on, in an interview, when he says that he has come to Penelope, or his wife, Ella, in actuality he cannot get over the loss of Amy all his life.

Yet, by reading and rereading 'Ulysses' Dorrigo continues his quest for Ithaca: "A great book compels you to reread your own soul. Such books were for him rare and, as he aged, rarer. Still he searched, one more Ithaca for which he was forever bound." (27) Finally, Dorrigo is struck by a death poem, written by the eighteenth-century Japanese poet Shisui, in which the poet draws only a circle, bringing the beginning and the end together. The overwhelming void of the circle astounds Dorrigo. He finds that instead of chasing life to an unlimited goal, the poet here accepts the limits of life:

"Shisui's poem rolled through Dorrigo Evans' subconscious, a contained void, an endless mystery, lengthless breadth, the great wheel, eternal return: the circle – antithesis of the line." (28)

Besides intertextuality, history-fiction interface too remains very crucial to the structural lay out of the novel. While bringing in the issue of history-fiction interface, the narrator of *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* first declares the purpose of narrating the story as Salman Rushdie does it in *Midnight's Children*. Besides, the novel frequently refers to the process of 'writing' in general, and comments on the way 'history' is written and historical documents are preserved. The eighth chapter of the first book presents the 'history' behind the 'story' of the novel and states that it begins specifically "on 15 February 1942" (23) and the events following it.

A decisive moment of history occurred on this day as the British Empire surrendered before the Japanese Empire in the battle of Singapore. Though Japan was still underequipped to conquer the world, it already set its eyes on it. As has been mentioned above, Japan needed to build the railway without much money, machinery and time, and it employed hundreds and thousands of Asian and European slaves, and twenty-two thousand Australian POWs in building the Death Railway, which was completed "on 25 October 1943"(24). The first locomotive carriage that ran along the railway is displayed in a shrine in Tokyo and the shrine also has the *Book of Souls*, where there is a list of all who died in the service of the Japanese Empire, including those who were convicted of war crimes for inhuman treatment of the POWs. But the narrator of the novel claims that there is no mention of the "horror of building of the railway" (25) and also no mention of "the hundreds of thousands who died building the railway." (25) While there is "no agreed numbering" of the people who died there, "Some historian say 50,000 of these slave labourers died, some say 100,000, some say 200,000. No one knows. And no one will ever know. Their names are already forgotten. There is no book for their lost souls. Let them have this fragment." (25)

Thus, while proposing to tell the story of the Australian POWs, the novelist stresses that history is very much selective in its approach like any other narrative and therefore, it is about forgetfulness as much as it is about memory, about gaps and silences as much as about sequencing events. Here arises the problem of fictionality of non-fiction and reality of fiction. Paul Copley, in his chapter on 'Narrative and History' refers to Hayden White's position on this issue,

“For White, then, fictional and factual representation both partake of the same rhetorical devices or tropes. It therefore follows that the devices of narrativity play a large part in facilitating human apprehension of the world.” (Copley 31)

'Re-presentation' (Copley 31), thus, remains a major preoccupation of the novel in question. It categorically states that some experiences of real life are so irrational and incomprehensible that even memory cannot look back at them and grasp them. Since the actual horrors of the Second World War have been forgotten like ghastly crimes, Richard Flanagan's narrator argues that those memories can be preserved only in the pages of a book. And then the narrator offers to tell the story of the prisoners as well as the war criminals.

Interestingly, history is also presented from the Japanese point of view in *The Narrow Road to the Deep North*, more specifically from the point of view of the Japanese war criminals. The Japanese were monsters as viewed by the Allied Powers; but then, for a Japanese like Nakamura, whose name appears in the war criminals' list, has his own story to tell. In order to escape the verdict of the Tokyo Trials, Nakamura changes his name to Kimura, leaves the district of Shinzuko Rashomon and starts a new life in a new place. He tries to imbibe all 'good' human qualities, though he cannot escape the horrors of the memories of his past deeds. The more he is overtaken by guilt, the more he tries to justify his crime. He equates his loyalty for the Emperor to his love for poetry. And he finds that as poetry is neither good nor bad, the Emperor too is beyond all judgment. From the cruel major in the Burma POW camp to a loving father who would not kill a fly, Nakamura undergoes total transformation. He escapes judgment to tell his side of the story with a humane touch. It is an irony that had he been publicly condemned according to the war criminals' 'most wanted' list, Nakamura would not have lived to tell his tale.

However, the remarkable point here is that though the narrator comments on the blank spaces and silences in historical narratives, and the failure of history in recording the 'truth', (Flanagan 432), the difficulty of writing history too is not dismissed here altogether. For instance, Dorrigo Evans' own failure to 'recreate' the memories of the POW camp in written documents raises the difficulty of accurate retelling of the 'truth' (ibid 432). Like Dorrigo, Jimmy Bigelow, another survivor of the POW camp, too finds it difficult to recall the real events in the camp and narrate them. His children and acquaintances ask him to give first hand details of his experiences as a prisoner slave, but every time he tries to narrate something, he mixes up things. Ironically, he needs to be corrected by others,

“His sons corrected his memories more and more. What the hell did they know? Apparently a lot more than him. Historians, journalists, documentary makers, even his own family pointing out errors, inconsistencies, lapses, and straight-out contradictions in his varying accounts. Who was he meant to be? The Encyclopedia bloody Britannica?” (432)

This is how the novelist repeatedly draws our attention to the difficulty of re/presenting the “unrepresentable”, (Waugh 30) as Patricia Waugh quotes Jean Francois Lyotard in her essay entitled ‘The Poetics of the Sublime: Representing the Unrepresentable’. This intention of the novelist can also be viewed as a resistance against perceiving something in its “totality” (ibid 32). Waugh states that a narrative that refuses to see the text from outside, only offers a “radically fictional sense of the truth” (ibid 33).

Thus, the journey of the mythical hero Ulysses is set against the journey of Dorrigo Evans, only to reveal that Dorrigo’s world has changed drastically and the values that represent Ulysses no more hold good for Dorrigo in particular and the world he lives in, in general. Likewise, the values and qualities of fineness of Japanese sensibility and the exquisiteness of its art, represented by the haikus, are in stark contrast with the atrocities and aggressiveness of Japanese Imperialism. Thus, through a set of contrasts, contradictions and conflicts, and a continuous playful shifting between fictiveness of reality and reality of fiction, the narrative of *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* destabilizes meaning altogether and underlines the blurred distinction between history and fiction and between life and literature. ■

Works Cited:

Cobley, Paul. *Narrative*, Routledge, New York, 2001

Cuddon, J.A. *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, Penguin Books, London, 1976

Flanagan, Richard. *The Narrow Road to the Deep North*, Penguin Random House, London, 2013

Selden, Raman *et al* (eds). *A Reader’s Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*. Pearson, New Delhi, 2005

Waugh, Patricia. *Practising Postmodernism/Reading Modernism*, Edward Arnold, London, 1992

Waugh, Patricia (ed). *Literary Theory and Criticism*, Oxford University Press, 2006

Dr. Darshana Goswami, Assistant Professor, Dept of English, Nalbari College, Assam

Mulk Raj Anand's *Two Leaves and a Bud* and Rasna Barua's *Seuji Pator Kahini*(*The Partings*) : A Postcolonial Critique

Anuradha Chaudhuri

Indian writings in English and in its regional languages make an attempt in capturing Indian ethos in its diverse shapes and forms, colours and hues, represented in different modes of expression. For a postcolonial reader, there cannot be a better and more potential area of study than that which deals with the representation of the multi-faceted life of tea gardens in Assam as depicted in two pioneering novels *Two Leaves and A Bud* (1937) written in English by Mulk Raj Anand and *Seuji Pator Kahini* (1959) by Rasna Barua (Birinchi Kumar Barua) written in Assamese but later translated into English by Mrinal Miri as *The Partings* (2004). Written from two different cultural and linguistic backgrounds and moral perspectives, both Anand and Barua have shown their extra-ordinary proficiency in dealing with the marginalised and the subalterns, not, at the same time overlooking the real nature of the dominant groups altogether. Their gifts of imagination and the gentle and humane sympathy for their subjects along with their critical perception and dynamic representation add a new dimension to contemporary postcolonial and ecocritical literature as their works explore questions of identity, belongingness, space, class and caste, love and lust, race, gender and religion, drawing the contrast between innocence and experience, the enviable, fun-loving free life of the tea gardens, Nature's favourite, the morally oppressive typical Assamese village life and the life imposed on the unalloyed natives by the ruthless outside forces with a view to realising all human deceptions and cruelties. With an unflinching critical eye, the authors seem to have been able to delineate the negotiation taking place at various levels between opposing forces stranded in an ambivalent situation as the colonisers and the colonised, the self and the other and the dominants and the dominated. Keeping aside the undercurrents of the sagas of exploitation and oppression, marginalisation and deprivation, pain, suffering and the sense of indignity, revolt and resistance, the colonial encounters in the novels under study establish the supremacy of human relationships, the

intense urge for fulfilment in life, the quest for identity and the travel undertaken at various levels-physical, mental and spiritual, the present paper thus attempts to look into human drama played in the background of tea gardens from a postcolonial perspective in the light of its metaphorical representation in the texts under investigation.

Key Words:- Tea Garden, Identity, Marginality, Space, Travel, Post colonialism.

The novels, *Two Leaves and A Bud* and *Seuji Pator Kahini (The Partings)* delineate the incredible and variegated India in their own ways. Subaltern studies as these novels are, there has been an attempt on the part of the authors to bring the periphery to the centre so that the stories can be evaluated from the point of view of the other. It might be interesting to bring out not only the colonial agenda but reverse colonialism as well somewhere sometime into focus. Moreover, positioned in the background of Nature, the tea garden stories create a platform for negotiating eco-critical analysis of the texts. The typical rural life of Assam including gardens of British planters run by the coolies, brought to the prison without walls by way of temptations by the middlemen culminating in utter disillusionment, failure and tragedy get a poignant representation in both the novels written in two different languages by two different writers situated in different social backgrounds but the issues handled are quite pertinent and more or less alike with some obvious variations and here lies the universality of the texts. Though The politics of village life, the mentality of its people, particularly of women with their pointed and effectual missiles of gossiping, back-sliding, rumour spreading, narrow criticism, sorcery, black magic, unscientific methods of treatment at the village level and many such bigotries and superstitions get a detailed description in both the texts, not to mention the exposure of colonizer-colonized, master-slave and self-other dichotomy, very common during pre-independence and even post-independence era, which after all reign supreme in subaltern texts.

Just as the proponents of post colonialism and subaltern ideology listen to the voice of the human 'others', eco-critics probe a bit deeper and listen to the voice of the non-human 'others'. Eco-criticism evaluates a work of art from the perspective of representation of Nature, human-nature relationship, and human accountability to Nature, environmental ethics etc. There is every possibility to define and evaluate the texts under consideration from the eco-critical point of view as it would not be wrong to see the presence of Nature as a powerful entity in these texts and the entire drama of exploitation, subjugation, coercion and injustice of different forms, perpetuated by different forces takes place in the background of vast and all engrossing Nature, a silent observer and witness to throw its impression on the whole affair in opportune moment. There is thus a distinct blending of ecology and literary criticism in the term eco-criticism which desires to find environmental significance of a given text in order to develop an eco-consciousness among readers to the end of ensuring a balanced earth, suitable for a healthy, safe and dignified life for all living beings, a fight for the marginalised, the deprived, the persecuted and the powerless lot. Thus an eco-critical angle of vision is significantly present in both *Two Leaves and A Bud* and *Seuji Pator Kahini* or *The Partings*. An eco-text places the earth at the centre, revolves round the

environment in a language of Nature with a view to ensuring a sustainable home. In the analysis of the texts, it is found that Nature itself becomes a fertile critical category to be investigated in the context of the plot development of the narratives. *Seuji Pator Kahini*, a story of green leaves documents marginality in its various forms, acknowledges the note of affirmation in the way the author projects the philosophy of existence of the tea garden community as opposed to the almost obsolete feudalistic village set-up. The sharp contrast is being drawn between the complicated creed of the traditional village set-up absorbed in superstition, bigotry and dogmatism, not entertaining change in any way, and the easy-going garden life, restless, craving for unshackled life, with sexual promiscuity now and then, making the best of the life allotted to them amidst heart-rending melodies. The hybrid identity of Sonia, a product of forced union between the authoritarian Armstrong and a domestic help Mohua finds herself in an ambivalent situation, unable to shift either way, struggling with identity crisis. She becomes an orphan after her biological father is murdered by Feku, the lover of Mohua and her mother dying unfortunately in child birth. She grows up under the supervision and mentorship of the Christian missionary Mr. Andrews and her colour becomes an object of gossip and ridicule in the school which ultimately terminates in her leaving school altogether, opting for staying with her maternal relations finally. Though she very soon adopts her maternal customs and rituals, yet there is a 'but'. She is not satisfied either way. Her parting remarks to Nareswar that in her body runs neither poison nor blood sharply vindicate the crisis of identity which is self-explanatory. Her life seems to be a traumatic experience as she is agreeable as well as repulsive towards the tea garden realities at the same time. If she is in love with each and everything associated with the tea garden, she expresses her utmost resentment against it, willing to demolish the system and liberate those who are trampled by colonial masters like Miller Sahib. She struggled with herself and also with the outside forces before taking the drastic step of joining a travelling circus troupe in the quest of her real 'self', makes her own identity, detached from the past and Nature is a silent witness to all these developments, taking share in human activity. She even returns the amulet of her cross to priest Andrews signifying her renunciation of Christianity though it is also a fact that her behavioural attitude towards her maternal roots might have been conditioned by the mission school she studied in and the lessons it taught. Her sense of committing sins being in tune with the tea garden community and following its rituals and customs might have been nurtured by her religious affiliations. Sonia's predicament, her indecisiveness to choose nature or culture, her decision to be isolated from a space which could not give her mental peace and contentment could best be illustrated with reference to Homi K. Bhabha's notion of hybridity as stated in his outstanding work *Location of Culture* and Franz Fanon's concept of whiteness as depicted in his *Black Skin, White Mask*. Sonia's whiteness does not award her with any power, rather it becomes a stigma causing further alienation. She comes to realise the ambivalence created because of her hybrid identity and her status in her mother's world when mother herself is absent and thus decides upon voluntary exile. There lies the critical turns in the novel leading to a state of self-annihilation and self-proclamation also on the part of Sonia. The rest of the women,

Alumoni, the country liquor seller and Aloti, Nareswar's sister, despite being a part of patriarchal structure try to establish their individual rights. It arouses curiosity in our mind about the pseudonym of Rasna Barua taken by the author. There is no-doubt about the fact that women have been provided substantial voice and space in the novel. Even the white woman Mrs Miller also bursts out in the process of asserting her inner self when she approaches Nareswar, a village boy, a helper for gratifying her sexual instincts. Tea estate, at some point of time seems to flag off the wave of modernity, being administered by highly civilized nations, the western colonisers whereas the rural India or Assam is keen in maintaining the rigidity of the conventional lifestyle and ideology creating problem of understanding and adjustments. But to combat the pitfalls of modernity, disciplinary and coercive measures had to be taken by the British authorities which amounted to persecution and injustice on a number of occasions. Sometimes there is resistance and fearless retaliation as can be found in Roto's response to Jonathan when the latter was trying to heal the wounded souls of the suffering masses by the kind words of God's love to them. Roto says, "Eh! Why do you always speak of God? We work from morning till night-back breaking work-thinking that God will be pleased. And what do we get for it? We don't even get two proper meals a day, only the Cain rains on our back." (146) This is the scenario of ecological imperialism in the tea gardens of Assam where so called civilization and so-called savagery face each other to appropriate each other and the conflict ensues to culminate in tragedy or bitterness. Not only political and economic forces, even religion was also equally responsible for creating the history of brutality in the tea gardens, situated in the periphery of the country. The issues of caste and class are also determining factors in building a colonial hierarchy in a distant land, even in the tea gardens, led and controlled by their own ideology, practices, beliefs and socio-cultural norms and laws. Thus Rasna Barua (Birinchi Kumar Barua) has succeeded in focussing on diverse aspects of colonial regime in tea estates of Assam, trying to create some memorable individualistic characters in the process, leaving the readers in some sort of introspective disposition.

A writer, the prince of pen, Mulk Raj Anand is the true voice of the million mass, particularly of the untouchable and the vulnerable, victimized by undeserved tyranny and injustice from time immemorial. This is what prompted Mulk Raj Anand to present the deplorable description of the destitute when he writes:

'The world I know best was the microcosm of the outcaste and peasants and soldiers and working people. In so far as, however, as my works broke new ground and represented a departure from the tradition of previous Indian Fictions, where the pariah and the bottom-dogs had not been allowed to enter the sacred precincts of the novel' (Anand, 1988: Preface).

The historical background of Indian Society unfolds that subaltern issues are inseparable part of this society because of the presence of extreme categorization and marginalization. Therefore, the pains and miseries of the society affected the sensitivity of Anand which get heart-rending expression in his novels. *Two Leaves and A Bud* is a popular novel of Anand

which tells the pathetic story of a coolie, named Gangu who with his family were forced to leave their house in premises of Hoshiarpur district of Amritsar. Buta, an agent of tea planters appeared before them as a saviour and promised them money, land and security in the distant Macpherson Tea Estate in Assam, a microcosm of colonial India. Gangu failed to detect his hypocrisy and believed him true which ultimately brought tragedy to his entire family consisting of his wife Sajani and children Leila and Buddhu. Gangu, the stereotype, representing the colonized India was lured to the hideous world of serfdom, thanks to a number of circumstantial realities like native blood-sucking money-lender, the guileful lawyer, Gangu's own advanced age, and of course (as has already been mentioned) the eloquence of the barber-turned-recruiter Buta Singh, just as the case of the enslavement of any country by an alien race. The postcolonial followed by subaltern study of the novel illustrates poverty and hunger to be the root cause of all the multifarious exploitations undergone by the family of Gangu in particular.

Colonial world as depicted by Anand in the novel is thus a world in which the innocence has to bend down before cruelty, where the wives and daughters of the workers have to satisfy the lust of the white Sahibs, guiltless workers have no right to raise their voice against their masters, where the insulted and the injured have also to be the victims of pestilence, hunger and poverty, where a man like De la Havre, a sympathetic and ideal protector of the underprivileged has to lose his job only because of his sympathy for the oppressed and suppressed. Anand, therefore, finds imperialism as a dangerous part of capitalist exploitation.

However, where there is suppression, there is resistance at one period of time and it affects not only the natives but the masters also as is reflected in the protests raised by Dr. Havre. For example, on learning the high-handedness of Reggie in dealing with the coolie uprising, Havre volunteers to lead them to the Burra Sahib. Though he is aware of the implications of his action, he emboldens himself to face the anger of the bosses. Havre is ashamed at the inhumanity of his fellow Englishmen. He sacrifices his job at Macpherson Tea Estate for the sake of the coolies, just to prove that Indians have the ability to rule themselves better than the British. What can be a better example of the registration of a self than this, particularly when a text written during colonial period about colonial situation is receiving a postcolonial treatment, the voice of a coloniser launching against the fellow colonisers is a matter to be appreciated and critically handled, a deviation from the tradition. So, human beings are, after all, human beings- neither British, nor Indian, nor Japanese, nor American. They are just two categories-good and bad. Throughout his stay, Havre is found constantly thinking about the welfare of the coolies but it is always met with cynicism and mockery from the other sahibs like Croft Cooke, Macara and Reggie Hunt. He is also criticized for his outspokenness against the policies of the British. He avoids the parties and week-end get-together enjoyed by the sahibs in the plantation. Thus the irony of Havre's life is that he tries to protest on many occasions as he does when Dr.Chunni Lal was insulted by Reggie Hunt and Mr. Croft Cooke did not help Gangu in performing his wife's funeral

but as he himself is involved, though unwillingly in the process of colonialism, he is unable to go directly against the authority but does not hesitate to call spade a spade.

A strong individual self erupts in Gangu, the protagonist of the story who has been submissive so long and a symbol of extreme endurance when he joins Narain, a fellow Gorakhpuri labourer and the Bhutia coolies to raise choral voice against the highhandedness demonstrated by Reggie Hunt in suppressing a sudden uprising among the coolies causing much injury to them. But because of guiding the coolies, Havre is dismissed from his job and Gangu is fined fifty rupees for being the ring leader of the mutiny. It does not matter as the main point of contention is that there has been a rise in the inner self against the reign of domination and suppression.

Even Leila, the daughter of Gangu does not submit to the animal lust of Reggie like Chambeli and Neogi's wife who serve as Reggie's mistresses which, if argued would give rise to a strong debate on the issue of ethics and the division created by the British colonisers even among the natives as well as the role of socio-political environment in shaping an individual's mindset. As rightly pointed out by Said of the binaries existing in colonial situation, the struggle between human egos, the perpetrators of exploitation and the exploited, centre and margin, occident and orient and self and the other persists which gets a befitting representation in the character of Reggie and his dealings with the tea labourers and their families culminating in the raising of the voice of protest by the victims leading to the tragic doom of Gangu, the tragic hero of the novel under consideration. But a postcolonial study of the novel *Two Leaves and A Bud* cannot ignore the heinous and notorious role played by the nasty opportunists and the parasitical class which emerged in between the two groups of exploiters and the exploited which could not evade the piercing eyes of the author, the characters of Babu Sashi Bhusan, the sahuikars, Dalals like Buta, chowkidars in the Tea Estate, grocers like Dhanu Mal, the catalytic agents, the force behind the perpetuation of colonialism in the Tea Estates of Assam.

The strong registration of self is also marked in Narain who fights for the injured coolies of the mutiny and allows his friends to hold secret meetings in his hut every evening. He speaks to Croft Cooke overlooking the anger of the Sahib and is also fined for his role in the uprising of the coolies. Gangu once bursts out against Buta saying 'The liar, he killed my Sajani with his lies!' (Anand, 143)

De la Havre reminds the coolies of their rights when they came to beg for some suggestion with regard to the uprising following the quarrel between Chambeli and Neogi's wife and says 'You want a coolie raj, you people. Why do you let them beat you? Why can't you beat back-all of you together?' (200), an indication of possible situation of reverse colonialism with the opening up of blind folded eyes, rusted and dormant strength of the natives. The colonial situation is reflected in his helpless condition when Havre says 'I am not your mai-bap, I am like you, a slave of the planters....They and their like beat the workers of Vilayat in the same way as they beat you.'(200) So the cruelty of the Britishers

is exposed by one of their brethren in a quite touching manner and his sense of oneness with the victimized subalterns also comes out distinctly. Havre does not hesitate to open up his heart and thus bursts out against British colonizers and colonialism as such. He, therefore further reiterates:

“You take courage Gangu. You take courage, all of you. Get together, and go and tell the Burra Sahib the whole story. And tell him you won’t work till he gives you justice.’(201)

When Leila is approached by Reggie with the comment ‘come to my bungalow’ (272), Leila shrieks and raises her protest as such:

‘Go away. I will call my father. I don’t care who you are, whether you are a sahib or....’ (272)

A novelist with some unique modernized notions, Mulk Raj Anand has taken a hammer in his hand to blow hard on the dead customs and misleading traditions. He is a novelist who pleads for those unnoticed pearls and diamonds which ‘the dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear.’ The voice of the subalterns has always raised a wave in the heart and mind of the writer which is reflected time and again in most of his literary creations. A postcolonial reader will not find it less fascinated while going through his works including the novel under study (though written in pre-independent period) because the seeds of resistance and protest as well as the resurgence of individual souls are already sown in those writings. Mulk Raj Anand went ahead of his time and his progressive thoughts and pathos inherent in his writings have definitely made his creations immortal. C.B.Christesen writes, “He (Anand) is one of the most stimulating men I have ever met.....Above all, he has insisted on the need for VALUES – the civilizing values which help nourish an enlightened and humane society.” Indian English Literature originated as a necessary outcome of the introduction of English education in India under the colonial rule. It is one of the most authentic voices of India. Among the prolific writers of 1930s, along with R.K Narayan and Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand deserves special mention. Among the trio, Anand took up the cause of social reform through the depiction of the malaise of the impoverished class thereby paying back the Europeans with their weapon, namely the language. In his “Apology for Heroism” (1943), Anand points out that the modern writer has to play a constructive role in the reconstruction of the human society. Anand’s novels cover the entire cultural perspective of India. Indian society experienced a qualitative structural transformation during the British rule. The British economic policies, blatantly imperialistic, were mostly exploitative and suppressive, designed for ethnic subordination. At home Gangu, the innocent Punjabi peasant is exploited by Seth Badri Das, the moneylender and in Assam he is exploited by the imperialist machinery of the Tea Estate. Soon after their arrival, Gangu is shrewd enough to realize that they have been doomed forever. But he makes up his mind to fight back. In the context of the *Two Leaves and a Bud*, Gangu’s spirit of rebellion reaches its culmination when he pounces upon Reggie to prevent him from molesting his daughter,

Leila. It does not matter whether Gangu was victorious or not but the fact remains that being the protagonist of the story, Gangu has been able to register his name in the domain of postcolonial treatment of literature in general and literature created by Mulk Raj Anand in particular. Gangu very often indulges in self-discovery and a war goes on within him about his pathetic situation and the prospects of a better life. His desire to live keeps him going and at the same time makes him alert about the safety of his family. To end, it can be said that though the white man is always legally right as is being projected by the colonizers and even perceived by the author in the novel as well, in every hut of poverty and suffering, there lives a Gangu, of course fighting to prove his existence as a human being. In the words of Boehmer, “The European in the Empire rejects the native, yet he also requires the native’s presence in order to experience to the full his own being as a white colonialist”, an assimilation amidst segregation and seclusion, quite an ambivalent situation which makes the postcolonial reading of a text rather interesting and meaningful.

Thus the postcolonial perspective of the paper has been able to prominently focus on the novels concerned bringing out certain pertinent issues regarding tea garden realities under colonial power structure problematising the self-other dichotomy even further, delving deep into the multiple layers of identity lying dormant among the characters of the novels, when situating themselves in various positions generating critical thinking among the readers leading to an addition of new dimension to the existing knowledge on fictional world in general and colonial regime in tea gardens in particular. ■

Works Cited

- Anand, Mulk Raj. *Two Leaves and a Bud*. New Delhi: Arnold Publishers, 1988.
- . “Apology For Heroism”. New Delhi: Arnold Publications, 1986.
- Barua, Birinchi Kumar. *Seuji Pator Kahini*(pseudonym Rasna Barua). Nalbari: Jarnal Emporium, 1986 (Third Edition). Print.
- Bhabha, Homi K. “Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse.” *Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 1994. Print.
- Boehmer, Elleke. *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature*. Hampshire: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Dawan, R.K. *The Novels of Mulk Raj Anand*. New Delhi: Prestige Books, 1992.
- Fanon, Franz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York: Grove Press, 2008.
- George C.J. *Mulk Raj Anand – His Art and Concerns*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers & Distributors (P) Ltd, 2008.
- Gupta, G.S Balarama. *Mulk Raj Anand: A Study of His Fiction in Humanist Perspective*. Bareilly: Prakash Book Depot, 1974.
- Iyengar, Srinivasa K.R. *Indian Writing in English*. Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1973.

- Kumar, Gajendra. *Indian English Literature: A New Perspective*. New Delhi: Sarup and 99Sons, 2001.
- Kumar, Satish. *A Survey of Indian English Novel*. Bareilly: Prakash Book Depot, 1996.
- Marak, Dr. J.C. *Mulk Raj Anand: From Literary Naturalism to Hopeful Humanism*. Guwahati: EBH Publishers, 2010.
- Miri, Mrinal. *The Partings* (trans.of Rasna Barua's Seuji Pator Kahini). New Delhi: Sahitya Akademy, 2004.
- Mohan, Indra T.M.J. *The Novels of Mulk Raj Anand – A New Critical Spectrum*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers & Distributors (P) Ltd, 2005.
- Mongia, Padmini. *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Paul, Premilla. *The Novels of Mulk Raj Anand: A Thematic Study*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1983.
- Reddy, Venkata K.&Bayappa Reddy P. *The Indian Novel with a Social Purpose*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers & Distributors (P) Ltd, 1999.
- Singh, Raj Vir. *Mulk Raj Anand : His Vision and Work*. Jaipur: Pointer Publishers, 2010
-

Dr. Anuradha Chaudhuri, Associate Professor and Head, Department of English, Lanka Mahavidyalaya, Lanka, Hojai, Assam

Women in Tagore's Literature

Shreyasi Chaki

Kaviguru Rabindranath Tagore, known to the devotees, was a literary giant and a keen observer who felt the emotions very deeply and contained these emotions in his words. In the pre-independence movement it was very difficult to portray the issues of women's development. If social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar had not done this, the situation would not be as it is today. Re-discovering books written by women, challenging the representation of women as 'other', breaking the curiosity of 'wife' and 'mother' and re-discussing conventional 'norm'. The women of the Tagore family were the epitome of social change and thus there was a need to look back at that earlier era and celebrate it. This research paper paves the way for women that will improve women's lives and jobs in future. This paper would also teach how the women of the Tagore's family shaped the author's mind to create a character fighting against patriarchy, shattered the 'ideological' image of a moral wife and a pious mother and told them to defy the 'norm' and break the stereotype. Thus the 'new woman' was born.

Key Words: "new woman", women of Tagore family, social reform, breaking stereotypes, Piety, Purity, Submissiveness, Domesticity .

Introduction

Literature gives a new form to life. Life, in all its beauty and reality. Rabindranath Tagore was a literary man who was very interested in observing and capturing life in all its forms. Not only India, but one of the world's literary giants, Tagore, lived in an era of colonial oppression and nationalist rebellion. His poems, plays, short stories, novels, essays, dance dramas, music, songs and paintings have not only awakened his readers but have always touched the realities. In particular, Tagore's portrayal of women depicts his social reform and the vision of a society that holds his freedom of mind. His famous lines, "where the mind is fearless and the head is high" (Das 9) aptly resonate with his eyesight. With an alarming rate of violence against women of all ages in today's world, unfortunately, it has

left us thinking that the country that Tagore dreamed of in the “dream paradise” (Das 9) has not yet awakened. Despite the success of women in today’s society, there is still a false perspective that has resulted in discrimination against women both in their household and professionally. And the social conditioning of this confusing approach was long overdue. However, it goes without saying that the status of women could be in a more complicated situation if not for pioneers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar. Among other great personalities of this time, Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Iswarchandra Vidyasagar made outstanding contributions to women and social reform. Tagore had a greater influence on the creation of female characters which is often overlooked and less discussed; and that is the women of the Tagore family. Tagore despised the conventional and prevalent rites of femininity of the women of his house and made a mark for themselves. In this context, this paper will attempt to explore the stereotyped feminine roles that were expected by women that the women of the Tagore family broke these stereotypes.

Gender and the stereotype conundrum

As we all know that the term gender is a social structure, where sexuality is related to the biological aspect of a human being. This social structure has an underpinning of a certain social-conditioning that directs the society to think in a certain way and as a result, stereotyping changes. Moreover, “stereotypes occur when individuals are classified by others as having something in common because they are members of a particular group or category of people.”(Fiske & Stevens) Inequity, discrimination and orthodoxy based on one’s sexual orientation is called gender stereotype. Stereotyping largely depends on the type of behavior imposed by society. Overall, these concepts of gender definition have largely influenced our thinking and thus our attitudes and approaches to the core issues of gender. It also believes in what people believe and how they judge themselves and others.

At the negotiating stage, the position of women in pre-independence society can be classified as “other”., Toril Moi in her essay “The Feminist Reader” describes the term ‘female’ “as “a matter of biology “ and “feminine” as “a set of culturally defined characteristics.” (Barry 117) Very precisely, “what constituted acceptable versions of the ‘feminine’ and legitimate feminine goals and aspirations.” (Barry 117) It further indicates that the highest goal of any woman’s life and it determines her happiness. And this happiness surrounds marriage and motherhood in the Indian context. In his sub continental work *The Second Sex*, Beauvoir writes, “One is not born a woman; rather one becomes a woman.” (Barry 125) Thus, the argument aptly explains how a woman becomes a woman and mentions very strongly the social process of gender “conditioning” social that occurs within the structure of our society. Parents were in fact agents of socialization in order to transform their children into daughters with beliefs, values and behaviors according to the gender of the girls.

Women: ‘sarvagunasampanna’

Cultural concepts, values, norms and symbols play a very important role in creating the image of a woman and differentiating the gender role. The emphasis of this section is on

women as captives of the “omnipotent” and an understanding of what these images of femininity were in Indian society in the pre-independence era. The women’s home is confined to the “home” premises. This is because womanhood was the most confident representative women as only Mather and wives. These are the two images of women still feel his presence.

- Women as wives – the “Pativrata” image which accentuates on the unconditional dedication and devotion shown towards husband, and
- Women as mothers – glorified image of motherhood, as in who sacrifices everything for the well-being of her children and family.

The girls grew up with some unknown fear and a deep-sense of insecurity that crippled them to think psychologically and even independently. Society then seemed to analyze women on four bases or qualities which later strengthened their role as mothers and wives:

- Piety
- Purity
- Submissiveness
- Domesticity

Society viewed women as naturally more righteous than men, and with this righteousness came a virtue. Women were also present in comfort, gentle sensitivity and refinement. Religious tendencies were seen to be consistent with femininity and were considered appropriate for women.

Purity was considered worse evidence than mourning. When a woman loses her chastity she leaves without value or hope. Authenticity was integral and essential to a woman as down. Other than that, he was considered untrue and had to be looked at. On the other hand, men had no problem in society if they were not as pious and virtuous as their female counterparts. It was also believed that true, pure, pious and virtuous women had a high status.

The third quality of being obedient was considered to be a characteristic of women. They were expected to be weak, courageous, fearless and dependent in front of the husband. Men, on the other hand, need to be wise, strong, and who can make all the decisions at home. Husbands were undoubtedly superior and would not consider even after their wives questioned their authority.

The fourth quality of housework, virtue, purity and obedience can be combined with other three qualities. The daily chores of mothers and wives were mostly concerned with household chores such as housework, childbirth and their upbringing. Household responsibilities include housework such as cooking; Taking care of all family members even if they are sick. All in all they were confined within the perimeter of the ‘home’. However, the 19th century saw a new sun that illuminated India with social reforms and with it the “new woman” emerged.

Tagore's Portrayal of Women

Literature is a replica of society in many ways. In literary works we see that women are repeatedly stereotypically represented. An archaological role of women such as one who is very pious and gentle-spoken feels that she is inferior to their male competitors in terms of intelligence, shown repeatedly. If women are submissive daughters, wives and mothers, they will be considered dignified.

This change took place with the intervention of the Tagore family. Although the conventional image of women prevailed, the stereotypical images of women were somewhat broken. The progressive environment of Jordashanko helped Thakur to frame his characters from his own home. Most of Thakur's writings contain ideas that revolve around the rise of women in society. His writings focus on the following aspects:

- Struggle of women in the male-dominated society
- Struggle of an educated young women for freedom and equality in society
- The plight of widows in the families
- Exploitation of women in the society
- Dowry system as an integral part of marriage in Indian context
- Remarriage of widows
- Education of women
- Women participating in women struggle

Tagore created female characters in his literature with great sensitivity. A perfect woman or a woman of matter, confined within the family relationship of the household, the eyes inherent in her probably helped to observe and capture the emotion deeply through the beautiful expression of her words. Although most of the women in the Tagore family were "new women" of the era, there were some who were either unaware or vocal or were active in the politics of the day or pursued their passions. However, to get to the loci of the discussion, Tagore's travels to the West made "him aware of the freedom women were enjoying" and as a result he became interested in thinking about the status of women back home. (Charulatha 173)

There are many short stories and novels that depict the plight of women written by Tagore, but the short stories are worth mentioning here- "Giribala", "Haimanti", "Aparichita", "Tapasvini", "Streer Patra", "The Laboratory" to name a few. Be it Mrinal in "Streer Patra" who doesn't follow her husband's masculinity - eventually leaving home or Giribala, similarly, came out of the house to join the theater, after her husband cheated on her. , Fatally shows how women are breaking the shackles and talking. Kalyani, on the other hand, is the epitome of an educated woman who strives for justice and fairness in "Aparichita". Theoretically, the subject of dowry is both "unfamiliar" and "indebted" and portrays the reality in two different ways. Tagore wisely raises the issue of dowry in both "Aparichita" and "Dena Paona" and portrays the reality in two different ways. Nirupama,

a domestic worker of “Deona Paona”, was tortured for not paying dowry. The short story “The Laboratory” describes Sohini’s character as a beautiful new “empowerment”. This story also inspires a colorless society. The story of “Bodnam” is one of the notable stories where Saudamini helps a nationalist freedom fighter. Being the wife of a British Indian police officer, it was a rather challenging task, but her love for her husband surpassed that of her country’s freedom struggle. Like Mrinal in “Street Potro”, Anil’s character in “Poila Number” echoes the character of Nora in Ibsen’s doll house. Anila is freed from the shackles of domestication. The novel “Chaturanga” emphasizes widow remarriage through the character of Damini. Other notable works in this regard are Chokher Bali, Malancha etc.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper humbly tried to show that the women of the Tagore family helped him to form and shape the female characters in his literature. The “new woman” in his literature is almost a reflection of the women of the Tagore family and transcends them. Moreover, his portrayed characters inspired the society to start a discourse of reform. The characters created by Thakur not only create “new women”, many times even beyond his era. This is probably why Tagore is relevant in every aspect of life.

Works Cited:

Barry, Peter. *Beginning Theory*. Viva Books, 2013, pp. 121-138.

Bharadwaj, Karan. *Tagore Woman and Her Tales*, *The Pioneer*, 17th December 2013.

<https://www.dailypioneer.com/2013/vivacity/tagore-woman-and-her-tales.html>

Cenkner, William. *The Hindu personality in Education - Tagore, Gandhi, Aurobindo*, Manohar Book Service, 1976.

Chakravarti, Aruna. *Daughters of Jorashanko*. Harper Collins, 2016.

Charulata, H. *From Exploitation to Emancipation: The Metamorphosis of Womanhood in Rabindranath Tagore’s Fiction*. 2014. Annamalai University, PhD Dissertation.

<http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/44832/6/content.pdf>

Das, Sisir Kumar, editor. *The English Writings of Rabindranath Tagore, v.1: Poems*. Sahitya Akademi, 1994, pp. 9.

Deb, Chitra. *Women of the Tagore Household*. Translated by Smita Chowdhury and Sona Roy, Penguin Books India, 2010.

Fiske, S and L. Stevens. “What s so Special about Sex? Gender Stereotyping and Discrimination.” *Gender Issues in Contemporary Society*. Edited by S.Oskamp and M. Costanzo, Sage, 1993, pp. 173-196.

Ghosh, Amitabha, translator. *Selected Short Stories of Tagore*. By Rabindranath Tagore, Oxford University Press, 1999.

Kumar, R. *A History of Doing: An Illustrated Account of Movements for Women's Rights and Feminist in India 1800-1990*. Verso, 1993.

Naidu, Sarojini, "Women in National Life (1915)." *Documenting First Wave Feminisms: Volume 1: Transnational Collaborations and Crosscurrents*. Edited by Maureen Moynagh and Nancy Forestell, University of Toronto Press, 2012, pp. 168-172.

Nandakumar, Prema. "A Legend of Tagore Women." *The Hindu*, 11th May 2010, Chennai. <https://www.thehindu.com/books/A-legend-of-Tagore-women/article16299962.ece>

Talwar, Vir Bharat. "Feminist Consciousness in Women's Journals in Hindi 1910-1920." *Recasting Women: Essays in Indian Colonial History*, edited by Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid, Rutgers University Press, 1989, pp. 204-232.

Thapar, Suruchi. "Women as Activists, Women as Symbols: A study of the Indian Nationalist Movement." *Feminist Review*, vol. 44, 1993, pp. 81-96.

Ms. Shreyasi Chaki, Research Scholar, Dept. of English, Raiganj University, Uttar Dinajpur, West Bengal.

Frontier Literature and Mark Twain

Devarinti Sudhakar

This article is about the frontier literature with a due reference to Mark Twain, who is made immortal with his frontier novel *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. The frontier literature speaks of America's westward expansion as the new settlers kept coming to America in hordes from 1700 to 1950.

Key Words: Frontier, expansion, settlers, natives, displacement, settlements, exploration and gold rush times.

The present research article is in two parts.

I

America is a continental country. No other country can match its vast space or its resources. It is a continent in itself with its geography stretching from the East to the West. Both Atlantic Ocean and Pacific Ocean are its protecting gears and Canada in the north is safe too. Besides, America is a 'new world', symbolizing democracy.

American literature is as old as its founding colonies from 1620s onwards. The white European settlers founded America, replacing its original inhabitants, which fact was yet cruel-some. The whites from all the European nations formed this new world, making it a perfect civilization. It employed the blacks for work, creating racial problem.

The New England colony grew, followed by the growth in Mid-West, North, and South. This pushed the growth to the West in 1860. Critics think that the great Civil War (1860-65) balanced New England and the Frontier. This phenomenon is called Frontier affairs, which being ending in 1900. It is said: "From 1860 to 1914, America was transformed from a small young agricultural ex-colony to a large, modern industrial nation. A debtor nation in 1860, by 1914 it had become the world's wealthiest state, with a population that had more than doubled, rising from 31 million in 1860 to 76 million in 1900. By World War I America had become a major World Power." (VanSpanckeren 77)

The 'Frontier' refers to the American Frontier (North-West). It seems safe to say, however, that the frontier began at the place and time that westward-moving settlers found themselves separated from the Old World. This began in the colonial days (since 1700). The life in the frontier was slightly different from New England. Frontier developed fully by 1950.

The American settlers were adventurous. They developed industries in the North and plantation culture in the South. They needed lots of land resources like ore, cotton, and timber. The continuing immigration too got pushed to the West, replacing, disturbing the natives. Still the 'new settlers' of the West were not a happy lot. There flowed the people of many national origins — English, Welsh, Irish, Scots, Dutch, German, Scandinavian, French, and eastern Europeans. Rather quickly these were fused into a common stock. English became their common language, and they anglicized their names. But institutions, folklore, taste, and tradition reflected their cosmopolitan background, adapted to frontier social conditions.

Farming was the major (pre) occupation in the Frontier. The farmers sowed and harvested and sold the yields to the cities. Their tools were crude. They had their own entertainments. The sectarian preachers (the Baptists and Methodists) preached. The Bible was used to teach reading. Guthrie and Morse's geographies, Webster's spelling book, and in later years McGuffey's readers were widely used.

Daniel Boone and John Finely brought with them in 1769 a copy of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, which they read at their campfires. Bibles were brought West by both minister-missionaries and settlers. Occasionally a settler brought along Milton's *Paradise Lost*, copies of Paine's *Common Sense*, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and Shakespeare's plays. Newspapers and periodicals were in short supply, but there was a great curiosity about happenings back East and in the Old World. The early Frontier writer John Filson wrote about the war of 1812. The characteristics of frontier were determined largely by three factors: (1) the distance of the settlement from the old Eastern communities; (2) the lines of communication and transportation, and (3) the effectiveness of churches, schools and town governments.

Kentuckians, Pennsylvanians, and even New Englanders crowded up to the Ohio River ready to invade the lands beyond as soon as Indian claims were quieted by treaty agreements. Migrants filled the trails to California and Oregon in the 1840's and 1850's. They moved to Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming and the Dakotas in search of homesteads. Thousands became dissatisfied and moved southward to Missouri, or on to California, Oregon, and Washington. Boatmen like Mike Fink and Davy Crockett came to regard themselves as 'half-horses-half-alligators' and boasted immodestly of their personal attributes.

By 1800 technological advances were making rapid changes in pioneering. The invention of the cotton gin in Georgia by Eli Whitney in 1793 had made potential cotton

lands all across the south western frontier highly desirable. Settlers from Virginia, the Carolinas, Tennessee, and Kentucky moved southward to the great black belt lands of Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, and south eastern Missouri.

Thomas Clark writes, “At the end of the Civil War several technological factors speeded up the spread of population across the West.” (Clark 133)

The gold discovery at California in 1848 boosted the Frontier expansion. Likewise, beginning in the late 1860’s, ranching expanded dramatically all over the Western plains and there the cowboy reigned supreme. Another hardy pioneer was the lumberman, who followed the trail of the great pine forests westward.

Literature also grew with the civilization in the Frontier. To a large extent the last frontier was peopled by literate pioneers who wrote descriptions of their lives to families ‘back east.’ They described the endlessly long days, the incessant blowing of the wind, the dust storms, the weeks without rain, the extreme loneliness of their lives, and their lack of even basic necessities. The last settlers were helped by the 1862 Homestead Act. Each settler was given 160 acres (65 hectares) of Govt stock. Frontier literature enriched the English language with such words as ‘camp-meeting,’ ‘hickory,’ and ‘snake dance.’

The national consciousness was stirring, for this period marked the appearance of a truly American literature. Foremost among the writers of this new American school were Washington Irving and James Fenimore Cooper. Irving’s humorous *History of New York by Diedrich Knickerbocker* (1809) drew its inspiration wholly from the local American scene. Some of Irving’s best work, such as the story of *Rip Van Winkle*, is set in the Hudson Valley of New York and reveals America as a land of legend and romance. Washington Irving visited the West. His book *A Tour on the Prairies* (1835) is a vivid account. *Astoria* is based on the accounts of Bradbury, Brackenridge and others. Irving’s *Captain Bonneville* is more difficult to appraise. On the other hand, it is a much more original contribution, based upon now lost documents and upon conversation with Bonneville himself. *Astoria* stimulated Poe’s interest in the West, and one may note, as details, that in the *Narrative of Author Gordon Pym* (1838), the hero selected for his reading “the expedition of Lewis and Clark to the mouth of the Columbia,” and that his comrade Peters is described as a ‘hybrid’ Upsaroka Indian. There is Poe’s “Journal of Julius Rodman” as “an account of the first passage across the Rocky Mountains.” Bryant’s famous line ‘where rolls the Oregon’ apparently sprang from his reading of the Biddle version of Lewis and Clark.

By 1800, the Mississippi and Ohio valleys were becoming a great frontier region. “Hi-o, away we go, floating down the river on the O-hi-o,” became the song of thousands of emigrants. The tremendous shift of population in the early 19th century led to the division of old territories and the drawing of new boundaries with bewildering rapidity. Then, as new states were admitted, the political map was stabilized east of the Mississippi. Within half-dozen years, six states were created— Indiana in 1816, Mississippi in 1817, Illinois in 1818, Alabama in 1819, Maine in 1820, and Missouri in 1821. The first frontier

had been tied closely to Europe, the second to the coast settlements, but the Mississippi Valley was independent and its people looked West rather than East.

George Stewart thinks the Transcendentalists concerned themselves more with the Far East than with the Far West, although the mountain men indeed were skilled practitioners of self-reliance and really lived the kind of life which Thoreau played at living when he camped by Walden Pond. Two young New Englanders went to see the West for themselves. Richard Henry Dana, Jr., chose to call his book *Two Years Before the Mast* (1840), but it might equally well have been 'A Year in California.' Francis Parkman, like Irving, took a trip upon the plains with a view to utilizing his experiences. Both government and private surveyors like Flint, Henry Schoolcraft, Morris Birkbeck, Joseph Baldwin, Josiah Gregg, and others wrote of the Frontier. H.N. Smith thinks that during the first half of the 19th century all observers regarded the trans-Mississippi as a region remote from the normal patterns of American society. But when the Gold Rush brought a large population to the Pacific Coast almost overnight, the Far West was suddenly recognized as the area within which lay the destiny of the American people. The integration of West and North which Greeley so earnestly desired was cemented by the Civil War. Andrew Jackson, who succeeded Lincoln initiated the policy of welcoming immigration.

II

It is in this background we need to study Mark Twain as the greatest Frontier writer. There is enough theory to study the Frontier phenomenon. The American Frontier has been attracting the attention of all people. Great works like Mark Twain's *Huck Finn* (1884) and *The Journals* of Lewis and Clark speak of this phenomenon. According to the Oxford Dictionary a frontier is defined as: "A region that forms the margin of settled or developed territory, or the farthest limits of knowledge or achievement in a particular subject. (Oxford Dictionary 361)

Samuel Langhorne Clemens (Mark Twain, 1835-1910) emerged from this frontier phenomena. He grew up in the River Mississippi frontier city of Hannibal, Missouri state.

Two major literary currents of the 19th century America merged in Mark Twain's Frontier writings, and they are Frontier humor and local colour. This is described as regionalism, a literary approach that began in the 1830s, and this had roots in the oral traditions. In ragged frontier villages, on riverboats, in mining camps, and around cowboy campfires far from city amusements, story-telling flourished. The most famous frontier writers who influenced Twain included Mike Fink, Casey Jones, John Henry, Paul Bunyan, Kit Carson and Davy Crockett. Mark Twain, William Faulkner and others were indebted to such pre-Civil War humorists as Johnson Hooper, George Washington Harris, Augustus Longstreet, Thomas Bangs Thorpe and Joseph Baldwin.

This research likes to briefly give an account of Mark Twain and comment on his famous book *The Adventurous of Huckleberry Finn* as a classic of Frontier literature.

Mark Twain (1835-1910) of Missouri moved to Hannibal. This Hannibal became the setting for his novels *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*. Mark Twain travelled widely as a journeyman printer. (Even he visited India later). He worked as a reporter with Bret Harte in the West. His narratives like *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County* become impressive. He toured to Europe in 1867, and wrote *The Innocents Abroad* (1869). He married, had his family life and produced such books as *Roughing It* (1872), *The Gilded Age* (1873), and *Tom Sawyer* (1876). Then his last years made him busy with his printing press, and he wrote a lot and published too to pay the debt. He became bankrupt. *Huckleberry Finn* appeared in 1884, making him the greatest living writer in America. He saw a series of tragedies in his last years. His *Autobiography* appeared in 1924.

Mark Twain's early novel *Tom Sawyer* too made a name as a critique of America's life. Louis Rubin feels, "*Tom Sawyer's World*' has considerable unpleasantness in it, and there is a great deal about his life that involves terror, violence and evil." (Louis 199)

Huckleberry Finn appeared in 1841 as a sequel to *Tom Sawyer* (1876). Narrated by Huck Finn, it describes the flight of Huck from well-meant attempts to slaveries him, and from his feckless father, down the Mississippi where he eventually rejoins Tom Sawyer. He is accompanied by a runaway slave Jim, whose bid for freedom he supports, despite the inner promptings of a 'conscience' tell him he is stealing the rightful property of Jim's owner ('All right, then, I'll go to hell'). Huck's simplicity is used by Twain to reveal the absurdities of a family feud and the hypocrisies of shore society. His account has become a classic of vernacular narrative. The novel has continued to provoke controversy over its representation and designation of African Americans.

So, these two novels *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn* are critiques of American civilization too.

In literature, for instance, the best talents seemed to spring from young expatriates of staid communities and various brands of provincialism: Sam Clemens (Mark Twain) from Hannibal, Missouri; Bret Harte from Albany; Joaquin Miller from Liberty, Indiana, by way of Oregon; Ambrose Bierce from Horse Cave Creek, Ohio; Edward Rowland Sill from Windsor, Connecticut; Charles Warren Stoddard from Rochester, New York; Prentice Mulford from Sag Harbor, Long Island; George Horatio Derby ('John Phoenix') from Dedham, Massachusetts, and Ina Coolbrith from Illinois, by way of Los Angeles. Flung into the heady life of the frontier, they were immensely stimulated—often reaching powers they never attained before.

George Stewart observes, "The process of informing the East was gigantic in proportions. The book titles alone constitute a formidable list. The West was described to the East in numerous volumes based upon the notes of official explorers—Lewis and Clark, Pike, Long, Fremont. Many other notable accounts were written of the journeying of travellers and unofficial explorers—Brackenridge, Catlin, Leonard, Gregg. Some highly

interesting books, like James Pattie's *Personal Narrative* (1831) and D. H. Coyner's *Lost Trappers* (1847), lay along the line between fact and fiction." (Patil 127)

In conclusion: Ernest Hemmingway's famous statement that all of American literature comes from one great book, Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, indicates this author's towering place in the tradition. It is said, "Early 19th-century American writers tended to be too flowery, sentimental, or ostentatious – partially because they were still trying to prove that they could write as elegantly as the English. Twain's style, based on vigorous, realistic, colloquial American speech, gave American writers a new appreciation of their national voice. Twain was the first major author to come from the interior of the country, and he captured its distinctive, humorous slang and iconoclasm." (VanSpanckeren 78) ■

Works Cited:

OE Dictionary. Oxford: OUP, 2010.

Clark, Thomas. Qt. Howard Zinn. *A People's History of the United States*. New York: Harper perennial, 2003.

Kathryn, VanSpanckeren. *American Literature*. New York: US State Dept., 1994.

Patil, Mallikarjun. *American Literature*. New Delhi: Authorspress, 2016.

Rubin, Louis. "The Ad of Tom Sawyer," *Landmarks of American Writing*. New York: Dent and Sons, 1969.

Dr Devarinti Sudhakar, Assistant Professor of English, S.G. R.C.M. Govt Com and Management College, Ballari, Karnataka.

Subscription Form

Type of Subscription : Individual / Institution

Name of the Subscriber (Capital Letters) : _____

Correspondence Address: _____

District _____ State : _____ PIN Code

--	--	--	--	--	--

e-mail _____ Tel / Cell. No: _____

B.D./Cheque No: _____ Dt: _____ Amount : _____

Bank : _____ Branch: _____ I am/we

are interested to subscribe Rock Pebbles Journal for 1 year / Life time. (12 years).

Signature of the Subscriber with date

N.B: - Annual Subscription fees = Rs. 1000/-
Life Subscription (12 years) fees = 10,000/-

We accept A/c payee Bank Draft in favour of ROCK PEBBLES payable at Canara Bank, Rambagh Branch, IFSC - CNRB0001676 / Bank of India, JAJPUR TOWN Branch, IFSC - BKID0005120 / Indian Bank, Ankula Branch, IFSC - IDIB000A080 / Indian Overseas Bank, JAJPUR TOWN Branch, IFSC - IOBA0002629. Outstation cheques must be added with Rs. 100/- extra towards bank charges. BD/Cheque must be sent by Regd. Post to our Head Office as per the address given at page 1 of the journal.

- Chief Editor

SUBSCRIPTION WITH PAPER PUBLICATION

We have 2 types of subscription for Research Scholars and Faculties interested in publication of paper in ROCK PEBBLES. (a) **Long term subscription @ Rs. 8000/-**. It includes 5 years subscription with 2 papers to be published. (b) **Short term subscription @ Rs. 4000/-**. It includes 2 years subscription with 1 paper to be published. Single paper publication @ Rs. 2500/-. Subscription fees to be deposited in the following account:- Account No: 33668978088 State Bank of India, Personal Banking Branch, JAJPUR, at Gariapur, IFSC – SBIN 0016136. Name – Udayanath Majhi

Our Guest - Referees

Dr. P C Kambodia, B S R Govt. College, Alwar, Rajasthan

Dr. Kusha Chandra Pradhan, V N College, Jajpur Road, Odisha

Dr. Arun Kumar Mishra, Lajpat Rai P G College, Sahibabad, U P

Dr. Nandini C. Sen, Bharati College, Delhi University

Dr. J. Jayakumar, Govt. Arts College, Salem, Tamil Nadu

Dr. Bikram Kumar Mohapatra, Brahma Barada College, Dist. Jajpur, Odisha

Dr. Sajal Dey, EFL University, Shilong Campus

Dr. Namita Laxmi Jagaddeb, Mahima Degree College, Jharsuguda, Odisha

Dr. R C Sheila Royappa, Seetalakshmi Achi College for Women, Pallathur, Tamil Nadu

Dr. Dhruvajyoti Das, Cotton University, Guwahati, Assam

Dr. Amrendra Sharma (retd), C M College, Darbhanga, Bihar

Dr. Sayeed Abubakar, Sirajganj Govt. College, Bangladesh

Dr. Amar Singh, Govt. P G College, Chhindwara, M P

Dr. Radhashyam Dey, Yogoda Satsang Mahavidyalaya, Ranchi, Jharkhand

Prof. K. Sripad Bhat, Goa University, Goa

Dr. Binu K. Devasy, Govt. Law College, Thrissur, Kerala

Dr. Syed Wajahat Hussain, Govt. Degree College, Poonch, J & K

Dr. Anuradha Chaudhuri, Lanka Mahavidyalaya, Dist.- Nagaon, Assam

Dr. M.S. Wankhede, Dhanwate National College, Nagpur, Maharashtra

Dr. Rajendra Padhi, B.B. College, Chandikhole, Dist.- Jajpur, Odisha

Dr. Prakash Bhadury, Sri Sri University, Cuttack, Odisha

Prof. Neeraj Kumar, Magadha University, Bodh Gaya, Bihar

Prof. Pinaki Roy, Raiganj University, Uttar Dinajpur, W. B.



THE HINDU

Dt. 12.09.2018

Peer-reviewed Journals are at par with UGC Approved Journals

In a bid to make it easier for university and college teachers to earn points to enhance their research score for recruitment and promotion, the University Grants Commission has decided to treat all peer-reviewed journals at par with its own list of approved journals.

The recently-notified UGC minimum qualifications regulations make the point amply clear. The methodology for calculating academic/research score offers points for "research papers in peer reviewed or UGC listed journals". For each paper in languages, humanities, arts, social sciences, library, education, physical education, commerce, management and other related disciplines, teacher will earn 10 points.

The regulations say: "Assessment must be based on evidence produced by the teacher such as copy of publications..." This step has been taken to make recruitment and career growth easier for college and university teachers.