

ISSN 0976-299X

# LITERARY ENDEAVOUR

A Quarterly International Refereed Journal of  
English Language, Literature and Criticism

VOL. VIII

NO. 1

JANUARY 2017

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### Editorial...

Writing in English literature is a global phenomenon. It represents ideologies and cultures of the particular region. Different forms of literature like drama, poetry, novel, non-fiction, short story etc. are used to express one's impressions and experiences about the socio-politico-religio-cultural and economic happenings of the regions. The World War II brings vital changes in the outlook of authors in the world. Nietzsche's declaration of death of God and the appearance of writers like Edward Said, Michele Foucault, Homi Bhabha, and Derrida bring changes in the exact function of literature in moulding the human life. Due to Globalization and liberalization, society moves to the post-industrial phase. Migration and immigration become common features of postmodern society. These movements give birth to issues like race, ethnicity, gender, crisis for identity, cultural conflict, dislocation, isolation and many others. Thus multiculturalism becomes the key note of new literatures written in English. The colonial legacy, immigrants and migrated authors attempt to define Britishness in literature and the result is postethnicity in English literature. The writers like Salman Rushdie, Hanif Kureishi, Andrea Levy and many others attempted to redefine and reevaluate the singular authority of text and plead for the plurality of themes. There is another form of literature growing consciously in the country like India. This literature is called as Fourth World Literature or the literature of protest. The marginalized sections of society attempt to protest against upper caste ideologies in Dalit Literature. All these issues are reflected in the present issue of Literary Endeavour.

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*Literary Endeavour* (ISSN 0976-299X) is a scholarly Refereed journal which publishes articles and notes on English literature, Criticism and the English language. Literary criticism rooted in historical scholarship is welcome, especially if it arises out of newly discovered material or a new interpretation of known material. The chronological range of the journal extends from Platonic period to the present day. For guidance on the preparation of typescripts, please refer to latest edition of MLA Style sheet. The journal is published quarterly in **January, April, July and October**.

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For Individual	Rs. 2000/-	Rs. 3500/-	Rs. 6000/-
For Institutional	Rs. 2500/-	Rs. 4500/-	Rs. 8000/-
Foreign subscribers	\$ 100	\$ 150	\$ 400

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01

## EXPLORING STUDENTS' NEEDS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD BUSINESS ENGLISH PROGRAM CURRICULUM IN THE FACULTY OF LANGUAGES, ADEN UNIVERSITY

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### **Abstract :**

*Business English is a rapidly growing field within the area of English Language Teaching and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The study aims to explore the needs of students pursuing the BEP and how they think about teaching materials, teaching methods and teachers of the BE courses. Because needs analysis provides a means of obtaining wider input into the content, design and implementation of a language programme. Moreover, the study investigates to what extent the BEP courses equip the students with knowledge that will help them to meet their future needs. To collect the required data a questionnaire was used. A total of 40 students (35 females and 5 males) who were randomly selected from the fourth level at the Faculty of Languages, University of Aden participated to respond to the questionnaire. The findings of the study confirmed that nearly all the participants overvalued the need of all the activities and related topics of the business jobs, the courses that are taught, and the courses that are not taught as well. Additionally, it is found that most of the participants have no enough knowledge in such courses that might help them in future careers. It was also found that the majority of the participants (77.5%) mostly interested in the Business English textbooks concerning learners' needs in various business fields. This research recommends that needs analysis should be conducted to make a review of the contents of the current program courses, as well as selecting effective methods to implement such courses.*

**Key words:** *Business English, attitude, Needs analysis, Business English Programme (BEP)*

### **Introductions**

The flourishing of business has been a great influence on the development of Business English and the demand for Business English grows noticeably. Even though Business English teaching has become popular, for years the instruction has been limited to an approach which fundamentally focuses on the language skills and ignores the social needs and learners' personal interests. This often leads to students' low motivation in Business English study and their poor performance of language use in their future profession. In Yemen, to the knowledge of the researcher, Business English Program (BEP) is taught only at the Faculty of Languages at Aden University. However, due to the influence of traditional teaching opinions and limited knowledge of needs analysis theories, in Yemeni context, needs analysis is either neglected or cannot be carried out effectively. In order to shed more light on these phenomena, a closer look at BEP courses, and pedagogical and professional ins and outs should be done. The aims of this research are to explore the students' needs and their expectations that motivate them to enroll in Business English Program, and try out their attitudes regarding the curriculum of this program as well. Exploring students' needs and attitudes makes us offer some important insights supporting effective Business English program curriculum.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Business English is a rapidly growing field within the area of English Language Teaching and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The topic of this research is to explore Students' Needs and Attitudes toward Business English Program Curriculum in the Faculty of Languages, Aden University. Business

English is a four year program which is the only program taught by the Faculty of Languages, Aden University in Yemen. However, no study has been conducted to analyse the needs of students who study at Business English Program. As a result, Business English teaching in the Faculty of Languages is facing many challenges including developing program courses, setting teaching objectives, updating teaching methods, and training teachers. Identification and analysis of learners' needs, interests, and their purpose for ESP learning will facilitate setting learning objectives, and goals, setting up a positive language learning environment, enhancing learners motivation, and evaluating their progress. The importance of needs analysis is to help teachers, administrators, and students to develop learning materials, curriculum, and teacher trainings. Therefore, this review study is conducted to fill such a gap in the BEP.

### **Significance of the Study**

In Yemen, the literature on English language needs, as perceived by students and employers, is limited. This paper might be considered important; it provides at least some empirical information on specific needs of students enrolled at the BEP, since there is no other study has been conducted in this respect. This will help to review the current BEP curriculum content to meet the students' expectations. Moreover, the study explores the students' attitudes towards the program courses and the resources used in teaching. It also positively contributes to recommend to add other courses that might be useful and related to Business English field.

### **Limitations**

The focus of this research is to explore the students' needs of the BEP. The attitudes of the students and their proficiency level of various business activities, topics or taught courses of the program are investigated as well. Identifying the English language needs of the learners alone is not enough; employers' language needs must be identified and put into consideration. Therefore, a needs analysis study must be conducted to identify real needs of labor market in Yemen.

### **Research Questions**

- What are the needs of students pursuing the BEP as perceived by the students?
- What do business English students think about teaching materials, teaching methods and teachers of the BE courses?
- From the students' point of view, to what extent do the BEP courses equip them with knowledge that will help to meet their future needs?

### **Aims of the Study**

- Identifying the students' needs who pursuing the BEP and providing such identified needs to the principals of the program to revise the curriculum in order to support an effective Business English program curriculum
- Exploring the opinions of the students concerning materials, teaching methods, and teachers of the program courses
- Recognizing the students' proficiency level with reference to some business activities and topics as well as the core courses of the BEP

### **Review of the Literature**

Language needs analyses have been widely used since the 1970s, yet not very much studied, though they can provide vital information for the benefit of language policy and language program planning and of curriculum content design. Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 8) succinctly indicate that 'tell me what you need English for and I will tell you the English that you need'.

There are many definitions of ESP. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) define ESP as “an approach to language teaching, course design and materials development in which all decisions as to context and method are based on learners' reason for learning” (p.19). ESP is an important branch of English as a Foreign/ Second Language (EFL/ ESL) and there are various branches of ESP, for example English for Academic Purposes (EAP), and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), etc.

There are features that distinguish ESP courses from the other courses and these help an ESP practitioners to judge whether a course is tailored to meet learners' specific needs or it is just a duplication of a general English course. They include the following:

1. Authentic materials: Use actual text from the discipline or occupation in modified or unmodified form (books, forms, charts, graphs etc.)
2. Purpose related orientation: Simulating real tasks required of the target setting such as reading of papers written by others, practice note-taking, etc.
3. Self-direction: Learners must have a certain amount of freedom to decide what to study and how they will approach the topic. Facilitating this freedom might include teaching specific learning strategies related to the discipline or occupation. (Carver, 1983; Gatehouse, 2001).

In addition to such features, Hutchinson & Waters (1992) argue that if learners, sponsors, and teachers know why learners need English, that awareness will have an influence on what will be accepted as reasonable content in the language course and what potential can be exploited.

### **Defining Business English**

Business English is a rapidly growing field in the area of ESP. It has become the major branch of English for Specific Purposes. Business English is a branch of ESP, according to Johns and Dudley-Evans' (1991, p. 298) definition: "ESP requires the careful research and design of pedagogical materials and activities for an identifiable group of adult learners within a specific learning context."

Business English is an area of ESP, and must be seen in the overall context of ESP, as it shares the important elements of needs analysis, syllabus design, course design, and materials selection and development which are common to all fields of work in ESP. However, Ellis and Johnson (2002) claim that Business English differs from other varieties of ESP in that it is often a mix of specific content (relating to a particular job area or industry), and general content (relating to general ability to communicate more effectively, especially in the business situations).

### **Needs Analysis**

The role of needs analysis in any ESP is important. Needs analysis refers to "the activities involved in gathering information that will serve as the basis for developing a curriculum that will meet the learning needs of a particular group of students" (Brown, 1995, p.35). Nunan (1994, p 54) states that "needs analysis is a set of procedures for specifying the parameters of a course of study. Such parameters include the criteria and rationale for grouping learners, the selection and sequencing of course content, methodology, course length, and intensity and duration". Moreover, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998, p 125) assert that "needs analysis is also considered as one of the key stages in ESP, the others being the syllabus design, selection and production of materials, teaching and learning, and evaluation." Brown (2001 cited in Li, 2014) claims that once identified, needs can serve as the basis for designing tests, compiling materials, designing teaching activities, and evaluating strategies, as well as for reevaluating the precision and accuracy of the original needs analysis. It is regarded as an indivisible part of systematic curriculum design. Regarding the importance of NA in language teaching, Richards et al. (1992, pp. 242-243) define needs analysis as:

...The process of determining the needs for which a learner or group of learners requires a language and arranging the needs according to priorities. It makes use of both subjective and objective information. The analysis seeks to obtain information on the situation in which a language will be used including whom it will be used with, the objectives and purposes for which the language is needed, the type of communication that will be used, and the level of proficiency that will be required... (pp. 242-243).

Awareness for the language needs of learners based on the analysis of the linguistic characteristics of their specific area of learning and occupational language purposes gained broader acceptance that mostly focus more on learners. Rodgers (1969, as cited in Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p. 8) indicates that "taking the

various needs, interests and attitudes of the learner in the teaching learning process and these will have a paramount significance in motivation of learners". Supporting these ideas, Richterich (1984, p.29) states that "... a need does not exist independent of a person. It is people who build their images of their needs on the basis of data relating to themselves and their environment". Moreover, Richards (2001) states that need analysis in language teaching can be used for a number of different purposes, for example:

- To find out what language skills a learner needs in order to perform a particular role, such as sales manager, tour guide or university student
- To help determine if an existing course adequately addresses the needs of potential students
- To determine which students from a group are most in need of training in particular language skills
- To identify a change of direction that people in a reference group feel is important
- To identify a gap between what students are able to do and what they need to be able to do
- To collect information about a particular problem learners are experiencing (p.52)

There are a lot of advantages of implementing needs analysis, Mousavi (2002) has argued that needs analysis also aids teachers in detecting students' weaknesses in their overall academic achievement, and helps schools to decide the needs of teachers for additional training.

The teachers of ESP are basically language teachers and despite the multiplicity and diversity of roles, they must be viewed within the broad context of ELT pedagogy. Robinson (1991, p. 1, as cited in Yasin, 1999) claims that ESP teachers are "researchers, course designers, materials writers, testers, evaluators as well as classroom teachers" (p. 67).

The various roles of the ESP teachers give rise to challenges and problems are faced when teaching ESP classes. Hutchinson & Waters (1993, p. 158) draw attention to three problems which face the ESP teachers, such as the interdisciplinary nature of ESP in which they need to be familiar with the students' subject knowledge. The second problem is the change of the role from a general English language teacher to ESP practitioner, and the final problem is that ESP is relatively new and it therefore, lacks traditions. Due to these factors an ESP teacher often needs to exert more effort to prepare more authentic materials and choose the suitable methodology to teaching.

The answer to how educators and practitioners develop effective curricula often lies in needs analysis, which is recognized as a very powerful tool that helps clarify true needs of the learners (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Tarone & Yule, 1989; Seedhouse, 1995; Long, 2005; Akyel & Ozek, 2010; Basturkmen, 1998). Additionally, need analysis enables educators to develop a curriculum that bases the content of language courses on the needs and interests of the learners (Lepetit & Cichocki, 2002). Without needs analysis, curriculum designers might have difficulties in identifying true needs of the learners, leading to the formulation of an ineffective language program that does not address both the learners' and employers' language needs. Needs analysis provides a means of obtaining wider input into the content, design and implementation of a language programme; it can be used in developing goals, objectives and content; and it can provide data for reviewing and evaluating an existing programme. (Richards, 1984, p.5)

To sum up, needs analysis aims to know: language users and language learners; how language learning and skills can be maximized for a given learner group; the target situations and learning environments so that data can be appropriately interpreted. All these are done with the interest of the learner at heart.

### **Empirical Studies on Needs Analysis**

Students' needs analysis has been the focus of a number of recent studies (see for example, Atai, 2000; and Mazdayasna 2008). While these studies highlighted the significance of considering not only the learners' perspectives but also their instructors' perspectives, they raised lack of needs-based course design, instruction time, materials and methods, and evaluation of learning, "the challenges will necessarily involve developing true specific-purpose curricula based on learners' needs which would provide the appropriate context for sustainable language programs". (Eslami Rasekh, 2010 as cited in

Fatemeh and Amir, 2014).

Chia et al. (1999) conducted study on English language needs for medical college students and faculties in Taiwan, trying to identify the perceptions that medical college students and faculties had of the English language needs in medical contexts. Survey information included respondents' opinions on the importance of English language use in students' studies and their future careers, and suggestions for development of an English curriculum. Results showed that students wanted a Basic English language course at the freshmen level, naming listening as the most important skill to improve.

Seng (2015) illustrates that other researchers also confirm that English needs analysis is a vital tool used for preparing an appropriate language program that meets the needs of the labor market (Stevens, 2005; Kassim & Ali, 2010; Smith, 2000; Lan, Khaun, & Singh, 2011; Moslehifar & Ibrahim, 2012). In 2011, Lan, Khaun, and Singh did a study to determine language skills and competencies which a group of university students need at the workplace and to investigate if their career needs are being met by the existing English language programs at the university, using a survey questionnaire with students and structured interviews with representatives of related industries. They found English to be widely used in the surveyed organizations because tasks and transactions are performed in English. They also stress that all the four skills, namely speaking, listening, reading, and writing, are required for these tasks. Findings show that there are lacks of proficiency in and mastery of English language. The problems encountered are speaking and writing skills. Based on these findings, they suggest that English courses for the workplace provided by the university should include learning and teaching materials for speaking and writing skills.

Zainol-Abidin (1992) (as cited in Alharby, 2005) investigated English language needs for business purposes in Malaysia for science graduates. A questionnaire was distributed to the science students at the University of Malaysia and another questionnaire was distributed to personnel managers and employees in different companies in Malaysia. The most important findings were that the participants ranked the use of English and the important of each language skill. The findings indicated that students ranked reading as the most important skill, while employees ranked each skill differently based on the nature of their jobs. However, all skills were needed to perform basic tasks. The study recommended that 1) university courses should consider students' needs, 2) reading skills should be emphasized more in the academic environment, 3) students should participate in the identification of study texts, and 4) teachers should pay close attention to individual needs.

All these studies were aimed at identifying the needs of students pursuing particular courses in order to either improve an existing curriculum or come up with a course that takes into consideration perceptions of all stakeholders who were the respondents in the studies carried out. In addition, these studies are anchored on the language skills; have collected data from students, English instructors, departmental instructors, professionals and employers; recommended the methodology to be used in the teaching and learning of the respective courses; compared the needs as articulated by the students with the perceptions of the stakeholders who were part of the respondents with an aim of designing an all-inclusive and comprehensive course. It is worth noting from the literature that needs analysis can be done on one or on all the language skills depending on the scope of a particular study.

All previous studies above confirmed the importance of identifying students' needs and this can be implied that needs analysis is crucial before any courses are designed. However, learner needs should be analysed on an ongoing basis because they are likely to change over time, depending on contextual and human affective variables (Brown, 1995; Hutchinson and Waters, 1987).

This study aims to explore the students' needs and attitudes toward the curriculum content of BEP taught at the Faculty of Languages, University of Aden.

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Design of the study**

Based on various studies on needs analysis and questionnaires of needs analysis for non-native

students of BE, the researcher has designed a fairly large-scale questionnaire survey administered to undergraduates at the fourth level.

### **Participants**

A total of 40 students (35 females and 5 males) who were randomly selected from the fourth level at the Faculty of Languages, University of Aden participated to respond to the questionnaire. The rationale of selecting fourth level students is that they are able to provide feedback on which aspects of English language they perceive is needed and what knowledge they lack despite they have studied for four years, as well as to specify other BE courses that they were expected or wish to study, however, they were not covered in the BEP study plan.

### **Research Instrument**

To collect the required data a questionnaire was used. The questionnaire was designed to obtain the target information with emphasis on the objectives of the study. It was prepared based on findings of previous studies (Basturkmen, 1998; Balint, 2004; Akyel & Ozek, 2010) and forms of needs analysis questionnaires for non-native students of BE. The students' questionnaire was conducted with 40 students at level four in the second semester of the academic year 2015/2016.

The students' questionnaire was divided into three parts. The first part consists of 36 closed-ended items. The participants were asked to select one of a six-point Likert scale for each item. One aim of this section is to check the participants' proficiency level on various activities or topics that might be their own concern in the future; the other aim is to estimate their knowledge on some core subjects of their BEP.

The second part 41 includes closed- ended items. The participants were asked to select one of a three-point Likert scale for the same items in section one as well as some other courses that are not taught in their BEP. The aims of this section are to check the students' needs of different future topics and activities, the students' needs of some courses taught, as well as the needs of some courses that are not taught in their BEP, however, they are taught in other BEP.

The third part comprises of seven open-ended items. Each item has its own aim such as the participants' motivation to study at BE, their attitudes toward materials used in teaching BE courses, and finding what challenges they encounter in Business English Program. Six items have a number of multiple options. The participants were asked to choose one or a number of them in some items. The participants were also asked to add their point of view regarding each item. Item seven is an open one. The participants were asked to suggest how to improve the curriculum content of the BEP.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

Once the first drafts of the needs analysis' questionnaire was prepared, it was given to five PhD experts who teach at the BEP. A pilot study was performed on five students at level four, at the Faculty of Languages to elicit information concerning the content of the items, and clarity of instructions. After revising the questionnaire based on modifications of the experts and the pilot study, the final version of the students' questionnaire was administered to the participants. The study was conducted after receiving approval from the dean of the Faculty of Languages, Professor Dr. Gamal Mohammed Ahmed. The students' questionnaire was distributed during lecture time. The researcher had explained the aims of the questionnaire and clarified all parts. Forty copies of the questionnaire were distributed. All of them were collected and analyzed.

### **Data Analysis**

#### **Students' Questionnaire Data Analysis**

All responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics (i.e. mean of measures of central tendency, and standard deviation of measures of variability), frequencies and percentages were also obtained by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) programme. The data from open-ended questions were tabulated based on the options of each item. Frequencies and percentages were calculated. Students' viewpoints, which have been added in some items, were gathered and discussed.

### **Reliability Statistics of the Questionnaire Results**

Cronbach's alpha consistency analysis was used to verify the reliability of the questionnaire results. The result shows high reliability (i.e. 0.93).

### **Results**

The questionnaire for the undergraduates was divided into three parts. The first part is closed-ended items which has 36 items divided into two sections. Section one comprises 23 items that were designed to check the participants' proficiency level on various activities or topics that might be their needs in the future. Section two consists of 13 items seeking to estimate the students' knowledge of some core subjects of their business English Program. The participants were asked to select one of a six-point Likert scale for each item. ( i.e. 0 = I can't do this at all; 1= I try but I am not very good; 2= I can do it but I make a lot of mistakes; 3= I'm OK at doing this but I make a few mistakes; 4= I 'm quite good at doing this. I don't make any mistake; and 5=I'm very good at doing this hardly make any mistake).

#### **Section One: English Related Activities or Topics**

This section involves items 1 to 23, which are pertinent to check the participants' proficiency level on various activities or topics that might be related to their future careers.

The participants' results, as presented in Table 1, indicate that the result of item 13 (interpreting and translating business documents) (57.5%) was the highest result of option number one, (i.e. I can't do this at all), and (37.5%) of the participants chose item 3 (giving products presentations). This is followed by the result of item 22 (taking notes during meetings, conferences, etc); and result of item 23 (English to write business report) (i.e. 25%). Table 1 displays that the participants' result of item 20 (getting ability of doing research in English) (40 %) was the highest result of option number two, (i.e. I try but I am not very good.); followed by the result of item 19 (synthesizing information from more than one source) (37..5 %). It was also found that (32.5%) of the participants' responses revealed that items 5 (participating in formal meetings) and item 23 (English to write business report) were considered as activities or topics that they try but they are not very good at. The participants' responses indicated that (30%) of them selected item 18 (accurate Pronunciation).

As displayed in Table 1, it was found that giving item 1 (communication strategies) (60%) was the highest result of option number three, (i.e. I can do it but I make a lot of mistakes). It is followed by the result of item 4 (using the telephone conversation) (37.5%). Thirty five percent of participants chose items 5 and 22, namely, participating in formal meetings, and face to face conversation with clients; followed by (32.5%) of them selected item 21 (preparing brochures, advertisements, announcements). They were reported as activities or topics that they can do but they make a lot of mistakes.

Table 1 reveals that the highest result of option number four, ( i.e. I'm OK at doing this but I make a few mistakes) was (27.5%) where the participants selected items 7, 8, and 11, (i.e. your fluency and confidence in speaking, your understanding of other speakers, and writing business letters) respectively. The other participants' results were weak ranging between (22.5%) to (5%).

As shown in Table 1, (25%) participants reported that item 2 (dealing with visitors) was the highest result of option number five (i.e. I 'm quite good at doing this. I don't make any mistake). The other participants' results were weak ranging between (20%) to nil.

With reference to option number six, (i.e. I'm very good at doing this hardly make any mistake), the participants' responses, as represented in Table 1, indicate that (22.5%) of them selected item 2 (dealing with visitors). The other participants' results were weak ranging between (12.5%) to nil.

Findings of all items, as shown in Table 1, indicate that all the means scores are less than three. This confirms that such future related activities or topics seem to be difficult tasks for the students. The frequencies and percentages of all items also reflect that the participants have no good knowledge related to such business activities and topics.

**Table 1: English Related Activities or Topics**

No.	Items		Options						M	SD
			0	1	2	3	4	5		
1	Communication strategies	Fre	0	4	24	4	8	0	2.40	0.92
		Per%	0	10	60	10	20	0		
2	Dealing with visitors	Fre	2	9	4	6	10	9	3	1.63
		Per%	5.0	22.5	10	15	25	22.5		
3	Giving products presentations	Fre	15	7	8	5	2	0	1.75	1.29
		Per%	37.5	17.5	20.0	12.5	5	0		
4	Using the telephone conversation	Fre	2	8	15	5	10	0	2.32	1.20
		Per%	5	20	37.5	12.5	25	0		
5	Participating in formal meetings	Fre	5	13	14	6	1	1	1.70	1.11
		Per%	12.5	32.5	35	15	2.5	2.5		
6	Participating in informal meetings in small groups	Fre	2	7	12	5	9	5	2.67	1.45
		Per%	5	17.5	30	12.5	22.5	12.5		
7	Your fluency and confidence in speaking	Fre	5	6	10	11	3	5	2.60	1.78
		Per%	12.5	15	25	27.5	7.5	12.5		
8	Your understanding of other speakers	Fre	5	6	10	11	3	5	2.40	1.49
		Per%	12.5	15	25	27.5	7.5	12.5		
9	Your accuracy when writing	Fre	2	11	4	10	10	3	2.60	1.44
		Per%	5	27.5	10	25	25	7.5		
10	Writing faxes, email, and memos	Fre	6	12	8	7	5	2	1.97	1.44
		Per%	15	30	20	17.5	12.5	5		
11	Writing business letters	Fre	3	11	9	11	2	4	2.25	1.39
		Per%	7.5	27.5	22.5	27.5	5	10		
12	Writing legal contracts	Fre	7	10	10	5	4	4	2.02	1.56
		Per%	17.5	25	25	12.5	10	10		
13	Interpreting and translating business Documents	Fre	23	6	8	0	2	1	2.25	1.85
		Per%	57.5	15	20	0	5	2.5		
14	Taking notes during meetings, conferences, etc.	Fre	10	7	10	10	0	3	1.72	1.30
		Per%	15	17.5	25	25	0	7.5		
15	Using English to contact in airports, hotels, etc.	Fre	4	8	10	9	5	4	2.37	1.46
		Per%	10	20	25	22.5	12.5	10		
16	Having discussions about general topics	Fre	3	10	9	8	4	6	2.45	1.53
		Per%	7.5	25	22.5	20	10	15		
17	Reading instruction, manuals, technical articles, etc.	Fre	7	9	11	6	2	5	2.05	1.56
		Per%	17.5	22.5	27.5	15	5	12.5		
18	Accurate Pronunciation	Fre	7	12	8	6	3	4	1.95	1.55
		Per%	17.5	30	20	15	7.5	10		
19	Synthesizing information from more than one source	Fre	1	15	6	9	1	8	2.60	1.51
		Per%	2.5	37.5	15	22.5	2.5	20		
20	Getting ability of doing research in English	Fre	8	16	12	3	0	1	1.32	0.97
		Per%	20	40	30	7.5	0	2.5		
21	Preparing brochures, advertisements, and announcements	Fre	7	12	13	7	0	1	1.57	1.05
		Per%	17.5	30	32.5	17.5	0	2.5		



22	Face to face conversation with clients	Fre	10	9	14	3	2	2	1.60	1.35
		Per%	25	22.5	35	7.5	5	5		
23	English to write business report	Fre	10	13	7	6	3	1	2.52	1.44
		Per%	25	32.5	17.5	15	7.5	2.5		

### Section Two: Core Courses Taught in BEP

This section includes items 24 to 36 aiming to estimate the students' knowledge of some core subjects of their Business English Program. The results in Table 2 reflect that the participants' responses varied from one option to another in all items.

Table 2 displays that in option number one, (i.e. I can't do this at all), it was found that the results of items 26, 29 and 36, (i.e., grammar, human resources management, and computer skills and designing web sites) reflected the highest result (27.5%). The other results were ranging between (25%) and (2%).

Concerning option number two (i.e. I try but I am not very good.), Table 2 reveals that items 32, 31, and 34, namely, (English for tourism), (English for accounting), and (French language) had the highest results (42.5%), (37.5%), and (35%) respectively.

As shown in Table 2, that the participants' results of option number three, (i.e. I can do it but I make a lot of mistakes.) indicated that the result of item 24 (Business English vocabulary) was the highest result (40%). This is followed by (30 %) of the participants' responses to item 25 (Reading comprehension), and item 33 (English for marketing).

Table 2 shows that the highest result of option number four, ( i.e. I'm OK at doing this but I make a few mistakes.) was of item 33 (English for marketing) (30%); followed by the result of item 29 (human resources management), that is, (27.5%). The other results were weak ranging between (20%) to (5%).

The participants' results, as shown in Table 2, display that the participants gave items 31 (English for accounting) the highest result (15%) of option number five, (i.e. = I'm quite good at doing this. I don't make any mistake). The other results were weak ranging between (12.5%) to nil of a number of items.

The results, as revealed in Table 2, indicate that item 27 (English for mass communication) had the highest result (17.5%) of option number six, ( i.e. I'm very good at doing this hardly make any mistake); followed by (15%), that is, the result of item 24 (Business English vocabulary). The other results were weak ranging between (12.5%) and (5%).

Findings of all items, as shown in Table 2, reflect that all the mean scores are less than three, as well as the frequencies and their percentages of all items confirm that the participants lack sufficient knowledge in such core courses of Business English Program.

**Table 2: Courses Taught in BEP**

No.	Items	Option								M	SD
			0	1	2	3	4	5			
24	Business English vocabulary	Fre	2	7	16	4	5	6	1.72	1.55	
		Per%	10	17.5	40	10	12.5	15			
25	Reading comprehension	Fre	10	10	12	5	0	3	1.87	1.74	
		Per%	25	25	30	12.5	0	7.5			
26	Grammar	Fre	11	10	6	4	4	5	2.47	1.63	
		Per%	27.5	25	15	10	10	12.5			
27	English for mass communication	Fre	4	10	7	8	4	7	1.92	1.50	
		Per%	10	25	17.5	20	10	17.5			
28	Business English correspondence	Fre	8	10	7	11	0	4	1.67	1.50	
		Per%	20	25	17.5	27.5	0	10			

29	Human resources management	Fre	11	10	8	5	4	2	1.92	1.36
		Per%	27.5	25	20	12,5	10	5		
30	English for finance	Fre	5	12	12	6	2	3	1.97	1.65
		Per%	12.5	30	30	15	5	7.5		
31	English for accounting	Fre	7	15	4	4	6	4	1.72	1.56
		Per%	17.5	37.5	10	10	15	10		
32	English for tourism	Fre	8	17	4	3	5	3	2.27	1.98
		Per%	20	42.5	10	7.5	12.5	7.5		
33	English for marketing	Fre	2	9	12	12	3	2	1.50	1.39
		Per%	5	22.5	30	30	7.5	5		
34	French language	Fre	10	14	8	5	0	3	1.47	1.56
		Per%	25	35	20	12.5	0	7.5		
35	Principles of business administration	Fre	14	12	2	8	1	3	1.47	1.33
		Per%	35	30	5	20	2.5	7.5		
36	Computer skills and designing web sites	Fre	11	12	8	7	0	2	2.35	1.64
		Per%	27.5	30	20	17.5	0	5		

The second part of the Students' questionnaire consists of 41 closed-ended items. The participants were asked to select one of a three-point Likert scale for the same items in section one, as well as some other subjects/ courses that are not taught in their BEP.

**Table 3: The students' Needs**

No.	Items		1 Don't Need	2 Might Be Useful	3 Need	M	SD
1	Communication strategies	Fre	1	4	25	2.85	0.42
		Per%	2.5	10	62.5		
2	Dealing with visitors	Fre	3	12	25	2.55	0.63
		Per%	7.5	30	62.5		
3	Giving products presentations	Fre	4	15	21	2.42	0.76
		Per%	10	37.5	52.5		
4	Using the telephone conversation	Fre	7	9	24	2.42	0.78
		Per%	17.5	22.5	60		
5	Participating in formal meetings	Fre	2	13	25	2.57	0.59
		Per%	5	32.5	62.5		
6	Participating in informal meetings in small groups	Fre	2	13	25	2.57	0.59
		Per%	5	32.5	62.5		
0.7	Your fluency and confidence in speaking	Fre	3	4	33	2.75	0.58
		Per%	7.5	10	82.5		
8	Your understanding of other speakers	Fre	2	1	37	2.87	0.46
		Per%	5	2.5	92.5		
9	Your accuracy when writing	Fre	0	4	36	2.90	0.30
		Per%	0	10	90		
10	Writing faxes, email, and memos	Fre	2	6	32	2.75	0.54
		Per%	5	15	80		
11	Writing business letters	Fre	2	6	32	2.75	0.54
		Per%	5	15	80		
12	Writing legal contracts	Fre	3	4	33	2.75	0.58
		Per%	7.5	10	82.5		

13	Interpreting and translating business documents	Fre	5	11	24	2.47	0.71
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	12.5	27.5	60		
14	Taking notes during meetings, conferences, etc.	Fre	4	9	27	2.57	0.67
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	10	22.5	67.5		
15	Using English to contact in airports, hotels, etc.	Fre	2	14	24	2.55	0.59
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	5	35	60		
16	Having discussions about general topics	Fre	4	8	28	2.60	0.67
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	10	20	70		
17	Reading instruction, manuals, technical articles, etc.	Fre	4	8	28	2.60	0.67
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	10	20	70		
18	Accurate Pronunciation	Fre	10	10	20	2.25	0.83
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	25	25	50		
19	Synthesizing information from more than one source	Fre	4	6	30	2.65	0.66
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	10	15	75		
20	Getting ability of doing research in English	Fre	6	15	19	2.32	0.72
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	15	37.5	47.5		
21	Preparing brochures, advertisements, and announcements	Fre	2	6	32	2.75	0.54
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	5	15	80		
22	Face to face conversation with clients	Fre	5	11	24	2.47	0.71
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	12.5	27.5	60		
23	English to write business report	Fre	0	5	35	2.87	0.33
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	0	12.5	87.5		
24	Business English vocabulary Using	Fre	4	5	31	2.67	0.65
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	10	12.5	77.5		
25	Reading comprehension	Fre	4	13	23	2.47	0.67
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	10	32.5	57.5		
26	Grammar	Fre	3	6	31	2.70	0.60
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	7.5	15	77.5		
27	English for mass communication	Fre	3	4	33	2.75	0.58
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	7.5	10	82.5		
28	Business English correspondence	Fre	2	6	32	2.75	0.54
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	5	15	80		
29	Human resources management	Fre	2	6	32	2.75	0.54
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	5	15	80		
30	English for finance	Fre	1	8	31	2.75	0.49
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	2.5	20	77.5		
31	English for accounting	Fre	8	3	29	2.52	0.81
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	20	7.5	72.5		
32	English for tourism	Fre	4	8	28	2.60	0.67
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	10	20	70		
33	English for marketing	Fre	1	4	35	2.85	0.42
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	2.5	10	87.5		
34	French language	Fre	10	10	20	2.25	0.83
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	25	25	50		
35	Principles of business administration	Fre	0	4	36	2.90	0.30
		Per <sup>o</sup> %	0	10	90		

36	Computer skills and designing web Sites	Fre	7	3	30	2.57	0.78
		Per%	17.5	7.5	75		
37	General English Vocabulary	Fre	3	6	31	2.70	0.60
		Per%	7.5	15	77.5		
38	Business ethics	Fre	5	10	25	2.50	0.71
		Per%	12.5	25	26.5		
39	English for political context	Fre	10	5	25	2.37	0.86
		Per%	25	12.5	62.5		
40	Culture training	Fre	6	6	28	2.55	0.74
		Per%	15	15	70		
41	International trade	Fre	3	11	26	2.57	0.63

Descriptive statistics, as represented in Table 3, indicate that the mean scores of participants were close to each other in all items, for instance: the mean scores and (standard deviations ) for items 1, 2, 3, 10, 20, 27, 30, 33, 37, and 41 are: 2.85 (0.42); 2.55 (0.63) ; 2.42 (0.76) ; 2.75 (0.54); 2.32 (0.72); 2.75(0.58); 2.75(0.49); 2.85 (0.42), 2.90 (0.60); and 2.57(0.63) respectively. The percentages of all items also confirm that most participants overvalued the *need* of all the activities and related topics of the business future jobs, the courses that are taught, and the courses that they do not study. Nearly all participants were prone to the option 3= *need*, and 2= *might be useful* in the most items of the questionnaire.

### Part Three

The third part of the students' questionnaire consists of seven open-ended items. Each item has its own aim such as motivation to select BE to study, attitudes towards materials used to teach BE courses, and challenges they face in business English Program. Six items have a number of multiple options. The participants were asked to choose one or more than one option. The participants were also asked to add their own viewpoints regarding each item. Item seven is an open one where the participants were asked to suggest how to improve the curriculum content of the BEP. The results of the items are as follows:

Findings in Table 4 reveal that the majority of the participants (77.5%) selected option c, that is, to work in business field; and (20%) of them indicated that they selected to study at BEP because they would like to prepare themselves for business English certificates. No one of the participants added why they selected to study at BEP.

#### 1. Why do you select Business English Program?

**Table 4: Students' motivation to study BE**

Options	Responses	
	Number	Percentage
a. Out of personal interest	2	5%
b. To prepare myself for business English certificates	8	20%
c. To work in business field	29	72.5%
d. To prepare myself for overseas study	1	2.5%
Other. Please specify.		

Table 5 reports the participants' results regarding their interest in the business textbooks used in teaching BE courses. The result indicates that the majority of the participants (77.5%) mostly interested in the Business English textbooks concerning learners' real needs. Such a result implies that the largest part of the participants were likely to have courses textbooks that would prepare them for the workplace in the future. No one of the participants added other resources of teaching BE courses.

## 2. What kind of business textbooks interests you most?

**Table 5: Kinds of BE Textbooks**

Options	Responses	
	Number	Percent
a. Overseas Business English textbooks	9	22.5%
b. Business English textbooks concerning learners' real needs	31	77.5%
Other. Please specify.	0	

Table 6 reports the participants' results regarding the ways of teaching business English either business-English-knowledge-oriented teaching, business-English-language-skill oriented teaching or both of them. The results reflected that (75%) of the participants mostly liked the mixture of both ways of teaching. No one of the participants specified and other method of teaching.

## 3. Which of the following ways of teaching do you like most?

**Table 6: Ways of Teaching**

Options	Responses	
	Number	Percent
a. Business-English-knowledge-oriented teaching	3	7.5%
b. Business-English-language-skill-oriented teaching	7	17.5%
c. The mixture of both	30	75%
Other. Please specify.	0	

When the participants were asked what aspects of business English knowledge or skills they think students are lacking of, (77.5%) of them, as shown in Table 7, stated that they lack of business English listening and speaking skills; (40%) of the participants considered that students lack of business professional knowledge, and (22.5%) of them reflected that students lack of business English writing. No one of the participants added any aspect of business English knowledge or skills.

## 4. What aspects of business English knowledge or skills do you think students are lacking of?

**Table 7: Business English Knowledge**

Options	Responses	
	Number	Percent
a. Business professional knowledge	16	40%
b. Business English listening and speaking	31	77.5%
c. Business English reading	3	7.5%
d. Business English writing	9	22.5%
e. Business English translating and interpreting	4	10%
Other. Please specify.	0	

The participants were asked what they think is/are the biggest challenge/s to them in this Business English Program. As presented in Table 8, the participants' responses scattered among all options. The majority of participants (52.5%) stated that a shortage of suitable textbooks or materials, a shortage of teachers expertise in both business professional knowledge and business English, and a shortage of enough practice are the main challenges they encounter with; and (25%) of them thought that a shortage of enough practice

is the biggest challenge they face in BEP.

**5. What do you think is/are the biggest challenge/s to you in this Business English Program?**

**Table 8: Business English Program Challenges**

Options	Responses	
	Number	Percent
a. A shortage of suitable textbooks or materials	3	7.5%
b. A shortage of teachers expertise in both business professional knowledge and business English	6	15%
c. A shortage of enough practice	10	25%
d. All of them	21	52.5%
Other. Please specify.	0	

Asked about what expectations the participants have of their teachers of the BEP, it was found that, as Table 9 displayed, (55%) of the participants expected that their teachers do their best to convey the subject matter of business English subjects of the program, and (45%) of them anticipated that their teachers are qualified to teach business English subjects of the program. No one of the participants reported any expectation with reference to their teachers.

**6. What expectations do you have of your teachers of the program?**

**Table 9: Participants' expectations of Business English Program Teachers**

Options	Responses	
	Number	Percent
a. They are qualified to teach business English subjects of the program.	18	45%
b. They do their best to convey the subject matter of business English subjects of the program.	22	55%
Other. Please specify.	0	

The last open-ended item of this part aimed at eliciting the participants' opinions concerning improving the curriculum content of Business English Program.

**7. Is there anything else we should know to improve the curriculum content of Business English Program?**

The participants offered some valuable opinions, most of them focused on practical aspects, types of teaching resources, and methods of teaching. Here are some of them: Three participants suggested that the curriculum content of Business English Program should involve students in real experience in the field of business. Teachers of the program should be qualified is another idea added by them.

A participant suggested that the teachers should use different textbooks that make them aware of business professional knowledge. Another participant suggested that business English terms should be translated into Arabic, because, as he stated, it is very difficult to understand all business English terms.

One participant indicated that some business English courses should be taught more than one semester, as he's indicated, such courses are related to their major more than other courses. Another expressed that teachers of the BEP should change the methods of teaching to help students grasp the content of the courses.

**Discussion**

The main aim of this research is to explore the students' needs and their expectations that motivate them to enroll at Business English Program, it also tries to explore the students' attitudes regarding the curriculum content of this program as well. Based on the literature of needs analysis, exploring students' needs and attitudes help educators offer some important insights supporting effective Business English

### Program curriculum content.

The results of the current study revealed that the participants lack proficiency of English language skills, and have no enough comprehensive knowledge of activities and business topics, which are considered as their main roles in the future. Additionally, based on the findings related to the types of Business English courses, which are taught in the program, it is found that most of the participants have no enough knowledge of such courses. Nunan (1991) argues that needs analysis composes the procedures for identifying true language needs of the students so that pertinent goals, objectives, and content in courses can be planned. If there is no needs analysis carried out, it is really hard to know the real needs of the learners. Moreover, without needs analysis, teachers of the courses may not know the learners' English proficiency level, mainly students' difficulties in learning the language. As stated earlier that no study has been conducted when BEP was started at the Faculty of Languages, University of Aden. Due to such reasons, the participants have low level of proficiency and knowledge that will help them in their future careers regarding business field.

To explore the students' needs of language activities or topics, which are considered as the participants' main roles in the future, the taught courses, as well as the other courses that are not taught in BEP at the Faculty of Languages. The findings of the study confirmed that Nearly all the participants overvalued the need of all the activities or related topics of the business future jobs, the courses that are taught, and the courses that are not taught. This reflects that students not just think about their future Business English needs, but also their learning needs. Li's (2014) study referred that over 1000 universities and colleges have Business English courses to help English majors or Business English majors to meet the competition in future career. L adds that in order to cultivate multi-discipline Business English talents and offer better Business English courses, it is necessary to take need analysis theory as a guideline that put the needs of various stakeholders into consideration when designing Business English curriculum. This result supports the findings of this study where the participants assured their needs of various topic and activities related to business field. Need analysis is no doubt an effective way for the Business English curriculum design.

Many learners are studying BE for a specific reason. They may be students at university, preparing for a future job, or they may already be in the workplace, or to get a certificate. To explore the participants' expectations that motivate them to enroll at Business English Program, at the Faculty of Languages/ Aden, the findings of the study revealed that the majority of the participants (77.5%) indicated that they selected to study at BEP in order to prepare themselves to work in business field. It is also found that (20%) of participants indicated that they study BE to prepare themselves for business English certificates. The authors of this paper are teachers of BE students; they have found that some of the students do not have a clear view of what they will do or even what they like, the deeper reason being that students may not know what they will work in the future.

The participants' results regarding their attitudes toward business textbooks used in teaching BE courses. The findings of the study indicated that the majority of the participants (77.5%) mostly interested in the Business English textbooks concerning learners' needs in various business fields. Such a result implies that majority of the participants are likely to have courses textbooks that would prepare them for the workplace in the future.

With reference to the methods of teaching business English either business-English-knowledge-oriented teaching, business-English-language-skill oriented teaching or both of them. The findings of the study reflected that (75%) of the participants mostly like the mixture of both ways. This implies that students would like to acquire business English knowledge and various skills that help them perform the expected tasks in their major. The result of this study is similar to what indicated by Zhu's (2008) study that there is no 'best' methodology---any teaching situation is an interaction between the learner, the trainer and the activity itself. As a general rule, methodologies which put the learner at the center of the learning

process are likely to be the most effective.

When the participants were asked about the aspects of business English knowledge or skills which they lack, the findings of the study reported that the majority of the participants (77.5%) believed that they lack of business professional knowledge. The result is similar to the findings of various studies, which stated that the students should be equipped with subject-specialist knowledge and specific English language of their chosen fields during their study periods at higher learning institutions that would prepare them well for the workplace (Venkatraman & Prema, 2007, Al-Tamimi & Shuib, 2010 and Md. Momtazur Rahman, 2012).

The current study found that (52.5%) of participants believed that the biggest challenges to them at the Business English Program are unavailability of suitable textbooks or materials, a shortage of teachers expertise in both business professional knowledge and business English, and no enough practice. Such a result reflects the participants' attitudes towards the textbooks or materials used in teaching BE courses. This happens because nearly all textbooks are provided by the faculty, and BE books are rare or not available in the market. With reference to the shortage of teachers expertise in both business professional knowledge and business English, actually most of the teachers of BEP have Bachelor of Arts, and a few of them are PhD holders. Concerning the shortage of enough practice, the BEP courses are taught only in classrooms; the availability of enough practice to bridge the gap between what is taught in the classroom and what really happens in the business field seems to be absent.

Asked about what expectations the participants have of their teachers of the BEP, the findings displayed that (55%) of the participants expected that their teachers do their best to convey the subject matter of business English subjects of the program, and (45%) of them anticipated that their teachers are qualified to teach business English subjects of the program. The result indicates that most of the participants satisfied of what their teachers offered. This result agrees with Ellis and Johnson's (2002) point of view, which holds that the first requirement for any Business English trainer is to be an expert in language teaching. However, other participants (55%) think that their teachers are not qualified to teach business English subjects of the program. This result supports what the participants stated in item 5 that teachers expertise in both business professional knowledge and business English seems as one of the biggest challenges to them in this Business English Program. Business English teachers should have a good master of language and rich experience. According to Hutchinson & Waters (1987, p163), ESP teachers have a good understanding of the subject matter, and good attitude towards the ESP content.

When the participants were asked about their opinions concerning improving the curriculum content of Business English Program. Some of them offered valuable opinions, they focused on experience, types of teaching resources, and methods of teaching, and teachers' qualifications. Three participants suggested that the curriculum content of Business English Program should offer enough experience in the field of business, and teachers of the program should be qualified to teach BEP courses. Regarding types of resources, a participant suggested that the teachers should use different textbooks that make them aware of business professional knowledge. The findings also revealed that one participant indicated that some business English courses should be taught more than one semester, because, as he's stated, such courses are related to their major more than other courses. Another expressed that teachers of the courses should change the methods of teaching to help them grasp the content of the courses. These results indicate that needs analysis is a must to know what is relevant to the students, and how the content of different courses should be implemented and the duration of each course.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

This paper tries to explore the students' needs of Business English undergraduates with a view to provide a basis for the design and implementation of curriculum contents. It also tries to investigate the students' attitudes toward teachers, the teaching methods, and the courses which are taught; the participants' knowledge and their abilities to perform some business activities and topics have been



checked aiming at offering some recommendations to help the principals of the program construct an effective curriculum.

The findings of the study revealed that the participants lack proficiency of English language skills, and have no comprehensive knowledge of activities and business topics which are considered as their main roles in the future. Additionally, based on the findings related to the Business English courses, which are taught in the program, it is found that most of the participants have no enough knowledge at such courses. The findings of the study confirmed that nearly all the participants overvalued the **need** of all the activities or related topics of the business jobs, the courses that are taught, and the courses that are not taught as well.

The findings revealed that nearly the majority of the participants fall in the class of either weak, (they can't do that at all.) or average (I can do it but I make a lot of mistakes.) in terms of their ability in most of BE English activities or topics, or the Business English courses, which are taught in the program.

To explore the participants' expectations that motivate them to enroll at Business English Program, at the Faculty of Languages/ Aden, the findings of the study revealed that the majority of the participants (77.5%) indicated that they selected to study at BEP in order to prepare themselves to work in business field.

Relating to the students' attitudes toward business textbooks used in teaching BE courses. The findings of the study indicated that the majority of the participants (77.5%) mostly interested in the Business English textbooks concerning learners' real needs.

With reference to the participants' attitudes toward the methods used in teaching business English course. The findings of the study reflected that (75%) of the participants mostly like the mixture of both ways, business-English-knowledge-oriented teaching, and business-English-language-skill oriented teaching. There is no 'best' methodology, as a general rule, methodologies which put the learner at the center of the learning process are likely to be the most effective.

It was also found that the majority of the participants (77.5%) believed that there is a lack of business professional knowledge.

The study found that the biggest challenges to them at the current Business English Program are a shortage of suitable textbooks or materials, a shortage of teachers expertise in both business professional knowledge and business English, and a shortage of enough practice.

Relating to the participants' attitudes toward their teachers, the findings displayed that (55%) of the participants expected that their teachers do their best to convey the subject matter of business English subjects of the program, and (45%) of them estimated that the teachers are qualified to teach business English subjects of the program.

Pertaining to the participants' views on how to improve the curriculum contents of Business English Program, some participants suggested that the curriculum contents of Business English Program should offer chances for students to practice what they learn in real sectors of business, they added that activities should be employed to make the students feel as if they are in real situations. Moreover, the findings also reported that the teachers should be qualified to teach BEP courses, and the techniques of teaching should be appropriate to implement the contents of the courses.

Based on the findings, the study offers the following recommendations:

1. Needs analysis study should be conducted to make a review of the current program courses. Because needs analysis provides a means of obtaining wider input into the content, design and implementation of a language programme; it can be used in developing goals, objectives and content; and it can provide data for reviewing and evaluating an existing programme.
2. The programme curricula should be revised every three or four years. Based on the literature, there are two forms of change: Long-term change and short-term change. Long-term change is the change which is done to the curriculum every three or four years. Short-term change is the change which is

done to the curriculum at any time when such assessment necessitates or dictates the incorporation of new elements into the curriculum in the unit, or into a section.

3. Students' proficiency level should be checked before admitting to study at the BEP. This will help when materials and teaching activity are selected. Furthermore, Business English learners should have a clear view of their needs before they began their journey of study, text books and materials should target the learners' specific needs as well.
4. Teachers of BEP have not been trained to be as teachers of ESP courses, they should be qualified to be competent teachers in this field. They also should exert much effort to deal with the needs analysis, syllabus design, materials writing or adaptation and evaluation, and understanding the subject matter as well.
5. Teachers of BEP have to choose various techniques of different teaching methods that help them connect language activities and real situations. They should motivate students by using visual aids when possible because they raise awareness with the extra-linguistic reality shaping the languagelearners' needs to study BE.
6. Business English teachers, and Business English program principals should help visualize the future career by inviting business practitioners, for example, famous entrepreneurs, translators, graduates to give lectures and this may help the undergraduates have an idea how to bridge the gap between what is taught in the classroom and what really happens in real business sectors.
7. The researcher suggests that the findings of this study can be used to carry out other needs analysis studies that are related to large groups of BE students and employers in labor Yemen of regional markets.

In sum, this paper explores the students' needs of Business English undergraduates and their attitudes toward curriculum, teachers, and teaching methods, the participants' knowledge and their abilities to perform some business activities and topics have been investigated as well. The findings of the study would benefit curriculum development processes, and principals and teachers of BEP in reviewing, and designing an effective Business English curriculum based on the students' needs analysis.

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## 02

**ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN HUMAN LIFE**

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**Abstract:**

*Investigation of language functions is important on its own terms; in addition it is impossible to make progress on the topic of language evolution without a clear sense -- however speculative-- on the adaptive aspect of functionality of language in human society. Charles Darwin, for example, suggested the following: "As the voice was used more and more, the vocal organs would have been strengthened and perfected through the principle of the inherited effects of use...but the relation between the continued use of language and development of the brain, has no doubt been far more important....we may confidently believe that the continued use and advancement of this power would have reacted on the mind itself, by enabling it and encouraging it to carry on long trains of thought." Christian Butler has this to say, "I believe that all human functions the gift of speech is the most miraculous and that if speech were to stop all civilized living would suddenly vanish". Speech is the precursor of language, therefore, if there is no speech there is no language.*

**Key Words:** *Language, Experience, Information, Direction, Interaction, Evolution, Preservation, and Communication.*

**Introduction**

Language is a science which has certain rules and principles. It is the medium of communication and verbal interaction between teacher and students. Literature is an art and mirror of a society and culture. The language is the media for literature. A language has several functions in social milieu. Language plays an important role in human life. The hard fact is that human life has been made better by the use of a language. Language is a means of expression. It helps in the process of communication. The human life would have been quite different. Language plays some important functions in human life which are briefly explained here as follows.

**Expressive Function**

Every individual has some feelings, emotions, ideas and he/she wants to give an outlet to those experiences of life. By using a language, the individual is able to express his views. Language thus helps in the process of expression between the two individuals. The individual is understood by the other when they have a common language. Language develops mutual understanding. Sapir throws light on the communicative functions of language as; "...Thought...is that form of communication in which the speaker and the person addressed are identified in one person..." Language is primarily a vocal actualization of the tendency to see realities symbolically...." and it is this tendency which makes it an efficient vehicle of communication. Language is a great force of socialization probably the greatest that exists". "This means that 'significant social interaction' could have hardly existed without language. But more important than all this is that" the mere fact of common speech serves as peculiarly potent symbol of the social solidarity of those who speak the language".

Language has its aesthetic aspect also. Sometimes we have feelings or experiences of life but we either don't express or are unable to express due to one reason or the other. Later those very experiences are expressed by someone else who may be author or poet and then that very expression gives us a lot of

satisfaction. Certainly it helps in the proper growth and development of the individual. The every activity of expressing oneself helps a lot in balancing the proper growth and development of the personality of an individual. Just giving an outlet to our pent-up feelings, emotions, ideas and thoughts helps an individual in a number of ways. By expressing, a person can become a good orator, a good poet, and a writer. The way he/she can arouse the feelings of others and benefit others also.

### **Informative Function**

Language helps to an individual in giving information to others. Suppose a person has some important information in this mind and that he wants to pass on the others. It will be possible only if he is able to express himself and inform others. Only language helps in giving the information or message. Suppose I have some information with me and I ask my brother to pass on the information to the parents. He will be able to do so effectively only if he knows the language and if he can use it correctly. In the absence of language, passing on the information will become a difficult task. Sometimes the teacher in the classroom situation plays the role of information giver only. He will be able to do so only with the help of a language otherwise he fails to do his duty properly. Language has, thus an informative function.

### **Directive Function**

Language also helps in giving directions to others. Through a language, any type of direction to proceed or not to proceed can be given. The police standing at crossing shows 'red light' to the traffic. It is not just communication of information. He is rather directing the whole traffic to stop all movement. In the examination hall the super indent use a language and gives directions to the candidates sitting there whereby he draws the attention of all to certain rules and regulations which everybody during the examination hours has to follow. By using a language he is able to give directions. Thus we find the language has directive functions also. A principal gives direction to the students.

### **Interaction Function**

Language is not the one way communication. It has both ways communication. The both ways communication is known as interaction. The radio and television are the media of one way communication while telephone has both ways communication. In classroom teaching interaction between teacher and students takes place with help of verbal and non-verbal language. The question-answer method is used so that interaction may occur in the classroom teaching is known as interactive process that is face-to-face encounter between teacher and students.

It is an important function of language. The interactive process is the means of development. The classroom interaction helps in the students and teacher development. The seminars conferences and group discussion are organized for interacting in group on certain issue or problem. It is the language which facilitates the interactive process formally and informally. The exchange of views and ideas are made through interactions.

### **Communication Function**

Language is the means or medium for sending informations, ideas, and feelings to others. Prime minister of our country communicates his views, plans, projects and progress to nation on 15<sup>th</sup> August. A saint communicates his views through his speech and songs to the masses. Daily newspapers communicate events and development in written forms. The radio and television news items also communicate the news in speech form. Some code language is also used in the communicating message during war time.

### **Evolutionary Function**

The advancement of a country depends on its economic, social, and technological development. The evaluation of the country is governed by its *national Language*. A rich language of a country contributes directly in the national development. Literature is the mirror of the society. An advancement of a society is basically its language development. The English is the international language. It is also known as the window to the world. The English is a rich and advance language which has contributed in the

evolution of English society. The evolution of man and society is related to the language. The geographical conditions have significant influence on the language-such as formation of letters, pronunciation or phonemes. The similar literature or poem are composed the geographical environment. In all probability of man in the course of evolution spoken before they began to write.

### **Preservation Function**

Language is the God given gift or boon for human beings no other animal and species have this privilege. Man alone uses language for interaction and communication. The man can preserve his knowledge observation and experiences in written form. Thus, acquired knowledge and experiences are formed edifice of human knowledge. The new generation will start form own ward and make use the preserved knowledge which is available in written language. The introduction of media and technology have helped in preserving the ideas, views and artistic ability in original forms. The video recording, films display in original language, speech pronunciation, style of language. We can enjoy the songs of poet even after his death of great scholars and great personalities. Thus, the language has the most important function in pre serving knowledge ideas, feeling, and views in original forms.

### **Conclusion**

Language is a universal medium of understanding. Understanding therefore is essentially linguistic, but to be properly so, it must transcend the limits of any particular language. Language distinguishes men from the animal world. Because of language me can share ideas, educate themselves and improve their lives. Language helps the society to keep evolving. Language has allowed for societies to be built not upon strength and physical domination, but on co-operation and the exchange of ideas. Language is omnipresent throughout human society today. Without language men would have been like apes pointing fingers at what they see.

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## A PRELIMINARY STUDY ON THE ROLE OF TRANSLATION IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE: TEACHERS' ATTITUDES

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### **Abstract:**

*During the last three decades translation has been a controversial element in the teaching of English as a second and foreign language. Since several studies have revealed that translation plays an inadequate role in teaching English as a Second and Foreign language and some other studies have found that translation plays an effective role in teaching English as a Second and Foreign language. The main aim of the current study is to investigate the role of translation in teaching English as a Second Language in India (Maharashtra State) and as a Foreign Language in Yemen. The results of the study depend on my experience as a teacher of English in Yemen and some other teachers' attitudes on using translation in classrooms either in India or Yemen. The results show that the highest number of teachers found that translation plays a useful role in teaching English either as a second language (in India) or foreign language (in Yemen) but the least number of teachers found that translation does not play a useful tool in teaching English as a second and foreign language because it causes interference between the two languages and it is an artificial exercise that has nothing to do in a communicative approach to language teaching. Thus, I argue that translation plays an effective role in teaching because it facilitates a deeper understanding of the form and content of the source language text, and it increases learners' awareness of the differences between both linguistic systems.*

**Keywords:** Translation, English as a Second Language, English as a Foreign Language.

### **1. Introduction**

The issue of using translation as a means of teaching a foreign language or second language remains a controversy. Some believe that translation could be utilized as a means of developing language competency within learners; others have some suspicion about this. The studies that criticized the use of translation in classroom found that translation teaches learners about language, and doesn't really help them learn how to use it, or that it fosters the excessive use of the mother tongue.

Translation has long been neglected in teaching English as a second or foreign language classroom because it was considered as an inadequate reminder of old teaching methodologies, especially those associated with the grammar-translation method. Nowadays, translation seems to be still largely ignored and discriminated in teaching English as a second and foreign language. In fact, several scholars; foreign and second language native teachers have argued that translation should be avoided in the language classroom, since it is not a useful tool when acquiring a foreign language. Only a small number of works are devoted to translation as an aid to teaching and learning (Duff 1989, Atkinson 1993, Edge 1986, Ulrych 1986, Nadstoga 1988, Urgese 1989, Eadie 1999). Since the last decades, many of translation theorists and linguists state that translation is a form of comparative linguistics. It is reasonable, then, to say that translation can be utilized as a method of comparing and contrasting between two languages (Robins 1980).

This debate between scholars, who advocate using translation in classroom and the other team who found that translation does not make sense in teaching, leads me to summarize and assess the arguments that encourage the use of translation in the foreign language classroom, supporting the



integration of several forms of translating; and to present the preliminary results of a survey that focused on teachers' experiences and responses towards translation tasks and their effectiveness in teaching English as a second and foreign language.

## 2. What is Translation?

Translation is changing the meaning of a text from one language to another, and such changing has to account for the grammatical, textual, and pragmatic meanings of the text to be translated, taking into account that meaning necessitates reference to linguistic and non-linguistic factors embedded within the text. The non-linguistic aspects of the text include thought, situation, (cultural) knowledge, intention, and use. Any successful translation has to be based on the analysis of all these aspects of meaning within texts. Therefore, translation should yield useful information as it brings up the similarities and differences between one language and another. It is in this particular way that translation facilitates and speeds up the learner's comprehension process. The role translation plays is an effective role in teaching English as second and foreign language. The results of the study will be investigated later.

## 3. The Place of Translation in Language Teaching

Translation has suffered from lack of characterization and delimitation for the last twenty years but it is played its role as one of the important professions ever practiced. One may note that translation enriches the most vital dimension and that is being the link and mediator not only between different cultures, but also in terms of everyday business, educational programs, technology and science. The learners have to use translation once they have learned a foreign and second language for a real life communicative activity. The learners translate in class for peers, decode signs and notices in the environment, translate instructions and letters for friends and relations, etc. In addition, one should not lose sight of Duff's warning that language competence is a two-way system, that we need to be able to communicate into and from the language system. Yet little guidance is given how to communicate back into the mother tongue, something that many professionals need to do in their daily work (Duff 1989:6). As Duff states "translation happens everywhere, all the time, so why not in the classroom?" (Duff, 1989). As a matter of fact, translation is sometimes considered *the fifth skill*, alongside the four other skills of language and, therefore, it can be a valuable tool to develop and improve communicative competence (Ross, 2000).

### 3.1. The Role of Translation in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Since translation plays an effective role in teaching English as a foreign language. There is difference between the translation into the native language (mother tongue) and the translation into the second language (English). In translating into the native language, the foreign text to be translated is the point of departure. That is, the foreign text is the first thing the translator deals with and accounts for. Here, the translator runs into the problem of analysis. That is, the translator analyzes the text for the purpose of understanding it and perceiving the implicit and explicit shades of meaning behind it. But, the translating into the second language, the foreign text is the targeted one. That is, the translator aims at producing a foreign text, not native to him. Here, the translator runs into the problem of synthesis. That is, the translator goes into the process of reconstruction and the process of production. The text to be reconstructed or produced should express all aspects of the intricate meanings (explicit and implicit) manifested in the original. The effect of translation on both languages is summed up by Barhoudarov as follows:

Translation into the mother tongue appears, in the first place, to be one of the means in developing skills of understanding, perception of foreign speech (oral, in case of translation by ear, and written, if translation of a written text is meant). As far as translation into a foreign language is concerned, it is, first of all, a means of developing speech habits, that is a synthesis of foreign speech (again, of oral and written speech respectively) Barhoudarov (1983).

According to Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009, p. 13) using the native language in the classroom is "the greatest pedagogical resource" and can enhance learners' confidence and focus on meaning. Translation

always makes learners view the foreign language through their native language. Foreign language learners always have a natural tendency to use translation (Ali, 2012, p. 235) and will automatically compare both languages involved, either consciously or unconsciously, so it is pointless to try to avoid their internal thinking in the first language and code-switching between first and second language, since it is regarded as naturally developmental (Kavaliauskienė and Kaminskienė, 2007).

Liao's study (2006) explored the role of translation in Taiwanese English Foreign Language learners in terms of their learning beliefs about using translation and their main learning strategies. Students showed a medium to high level use of translation as a learning strategy. They also reported that translation played a positive role in their English learning experiences.

### **3.2. The Role of Translation in Teaching English as a Second Language**

Translation tasks facilitate in teaching English as a Second Language and are useful to develop communicative competence in the Second Language. It is an essential in teaching Second language courses. Translation practice can raise students' awareness between the languages involved. In fact, most translation tasks require students to reflect on how to achieve equivalence semantically, functionally and pragmatically, so they can put their efforts in trying to look for adequacy and appropriateness for the communicative purpose defined in a specific translation assignment they had to complete the second questionnaire and another level test.

Translation increases students' awareness of similarities and differences between the two languages, promoting their acquisition of difficult structures and elements in the foreign language and “assists students to elude the interference of the mother tongue on the first step and then further enhance their second language learning” (Pan and Pan, 2012, p. 5).

### **4. Results and Discussion**

The following section will describe the results carried out to explore the issue of using translation method in teaching English as a second and foreign language, trying to focus on what the teachers of English believe about translation, the preferred language learning tasks, especially as regards motivation and usefulness, and the reasons why they think translation tasks are useful. According to the interviews that have been done with the teachers, teachers were classified according to two levels: teachers of English in Yemen in which English is taught as a foreign language and teachers of English in India in which English is taught as a second language.

Almost all teachers subscribed to the view that using the mother tongue is a useful tool in teaching English as a foreign language and as a second language which would confirm the results presented by some of the authors mentioned in the previous studies. They also highly agreed on the fact that translation helps to contrast the students' native language with the foreign language, so their attitude affirms, in line with Widdowson (2003, p. 23), that “the activity of comparing and contrasting the native language with the target language is a manner of promoting language awareness”. They considered that translation is a skill that demands an apprenticeship, which could be an indicator of their awareness on the problems involved in the task of translating and all the competences it involves.

It is worth noting that most of the teachers agreed that there are some activities that used in the classroom such as vocabulary, grammar seemed more interesting for students and that could help them understand and use English in the way they liked more. This gives me the impression that teachers clearly tend to display favourable attitudes towards activities they find motivating in teaching their students in the classroom. Thus, Teachers of English in India and Yemen produced interesting results on using translation in teaching English. Though not all of the teachers agreed in their responses but the overall mean values of the teachers' interviews' on using translation method seems to follow the belief that translation plays an effective role in the learners' awareness in learning English language either as a first or as a second. Thus, according to the results of the study, I conclude that translation offers many beneficial issues to learners and, if properly designed, translation can be a very complete and useful task in teaching English either as a

second or foreign language.

## 5. Conclusion

The results of the study show that teachers' attitudes are surprisingly supporting the use of translation in classroom for several reasons: translation is one of the students preferred language tasks, it is motivating, it facilitates a deeper understanding of the form and content of the source language text, it increases learners' awareness of the differences between both linguistic systems, it allows them to re-express their thoughts faster and easier, and it helps them acquire linguistic and cultural knowledge.

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04

**SUDHA MURTHY'S MAHASHWETA: USE OF COINCIDENCES,  
EPISTOLARY METHOD AND INTERTEXTUALITY AS NARRATIVE DEVICES**

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*Mahashweta* is one of the important and attitudinal change bringing novels by Sudhamurthy. Before exploring the narrative devices employed in the novel, a brief plot of it is narrated here. It is fabricated around the life of Anupama, the protagonist. She is the daughter of Shamanna, a poor school teacher. She lost her mother at the early age and brought up by her grandmother whom too she lost soon. Consequently she has got step mother, Sabakka, who does not like Anupama, treats her inhumanely and favours her biological daughters. Anupama is very studious, intelligent, and sensitive girl. She continues her higher education with the help of scholarship. Along with her studies she is associated with the noble task of mobilizing money for the welfare of differently-abled children. As a part of it she is directing *Mahashweta*, drama version of Bana Bhatta's *Kadambari* and enacting the role of Mahashweta. She comes to hospital to meet Dr. Desai. There she meets Dr. Anand who at the first sight falls in love with her. Moreover, her enactment of the role of Mahashweta impresses Anand and he decides to marry her. Radhakka, Anand's mother, initially opposes marrying Anupama as the status of her family does not match with that of her. But, as Anand is the only son of her, she does not want to disappoint him. Therefore Radhakka agrees and arranges the marriage of Anand and Anupama in a grand manner at her own expense. Anupama never dreamt of getting a son of both Sarswati and Laxmi as her husband. She respects and feels grateful to her mother-in-law. After a few months of happy married life Anand goes to England for higher studies leaving behind Anupama with the intension of taking her after Deepavali. During the Deepavali celebration Laxmi Nivas of Radakka is decorated grandly, relatives and guests are invited for Laxmi Puja. Unfortunately a piece of live fire-coal falls on the foot of Anupama. Yet, bearing the pain, she participates in the puja. A white patch, which remains and keeps on expanding, causes a lot of anxiety and agony to Anupama. She consults a dermatologist who confirms that she is afflicted with leukoderma. One day Radhakka sees Anupama coming out of Rao's clinic. She asks her why she has gone to Rao's clinic. Scared Anupama falls down from stair-case, becomes unconscious and the secret revealed to all. Enraged Radhakka immediately calls Shamanna and sends her with him. At parents' home Anupama experiences insult, humiliation and teasing remarks from people as well as her stepmother. Shamanna feels deeply hurt to keep Anupama at his home and she has become an additional burden to him now. She writes letters to Anand explaining her agony and requesting to take her immediately. But there is no reply from him. She stops attending formal functions like marriages, naming ceremonies etc. to avoid mocking remarks by people. Anupama offers offerings, prays to all well-known and powerful gods and goddesses and observes many vritas to end her agony. When there is no end to her problem she thinks of suicide by falling down from the mountain top. But she thinks of implications of remaining alive seriously injured. She comes to know that Anand has come back to India to take part in Girija's marriage and he has agreed for the second marriage. This further hurts her deeply.

Anupama decides to live challengingly with the help of her education. She leaves for Mumbai and stays in the home of her close friend Sumitra. With the help of Hari, Sumitra's husband, she gets a clerk job, becomes financially independent and tries to forget her past. As Sumitra's husband once tries to abuse her sexually she leaves the house and stays in Dolly's house. Then she gets the job of a Sanskrit lecturer, trains

the students for cultural activities and becomes a popular teacher. One day, Anupama meets with an accident, admitted in a hospital and treated by Vasant, a Kannadiga. This leads to close acquaintance between the two. The other side Anand comes to know about his mother and sister's true nature. He realizes his grave mistake of not responding to Anupama when she needed him most. He decides to bring her back home and live with her. Accidentally he finds her in Mumbai when a play is being enacted by her students and directed by her. Anand begs her to excuse him and come with him. But she tells him that she has decided to live alone and independently as he did not respond to her when she needed his support and love and affection the most.

The article attempts to explore the use of narrative devices in *Mahashweta*. The novel has a simple linear plot with omniscient narration and the language is simple. The article mainly focuses on the use of coincidences, epistolary method and intertextuality as narrative devices.

The employment of coincidences is the principal narrative device used in the novel. Usually in novels we find development of plot as the result of causes, but the plot of this novel is fabricated with and develops as the result of several coincidences. Let me illustrate with episodes from the novel. Firstly, Anupama is associated with the noble task of mobilizing money for helping differently-abled children. As a part of it she is directing and enacting the role of Mahashweta in the drama version of Bana Bhatta's *Kadambari*. In order to sell tickets she has come to Desai's house. Dr. Anand too has come there accidentally to handover the watch which Dr. Desai had forgotten to carry. There he hears the sweet and alluring voice of Anupama. When she comes to hospital to meet Dr. Desai, Anand sees her for the first time and impressed by her extraordinary beauty. "He had seen countless girls over the years, but never had he seen anyone so startlingly lovely. With her beautiful large eyes, exquisite complexion and face framed by long jet-black hair, she looked like an apsara" (8). He feels she is incomparable and has an apt name. Dr. Desai introduces her to Anand and tells her: "Dr. Anand is one the most brilliant doctors who are shortly going to England for further studies and he is one of the lucky ones blessed by both Sarswati and Lakshmi" (9). Anupama sells two tickets to Anand and invites him to enactment of the play. Watching her performance he realizes that "she is not only beautiful but also a brilliant actress" (15). He decides to marry her but Radhakka wants to look for a beautiful girl from a family whose status matches that of her. So initially she opposes Anand's desire of marrying a poor school teacher's daughter. As Anand is the only loving son of Radhakka she does not want to hurt him. Moreover, Anand shortly leaves for England and she fears what it would be if he comes back with a girl of unknown race and religion. So, she consents to the marriage and arranges it in a grand manner at her own expense. Thus this accidental meeting of Anand and Anupama leads to the major development of plot in the novel.

Another coincidence that contributes to the development of plot is that after seeing off Anand at airport Anupama, Radhakka and Girija return home by car. At market Radhakka tells Anupama to buy vegetables and goes with Girija to the jeweler's shop. Anupama comes back to the car to take money to pay to the vegetables vendor. Accidentally she takes and opens Girija's purse as both Anupama and Girija's purses are of same colour. To her surprise she finds "a packet of contraceptives hidden inside with a note that said, 'after 10 p.m.'" (39). Anupama is stunned to find them because she has been taking the same tablets since her wedding because Anand has not wanted children so soon. She feels that she has misjudged Girija, thinks of family reputation and bringing it to Anand's notice. But she gives up the idea as she is known to him for barely two months. After few days Girija goes on a two day study tour to Belur and Halebeedu. Sundramma invites Radhakka for the celebration of her grandson's birthday. Since Radhakka is not well she tells Anupama to attend the function. After the celebration is over she asks Kamala, Sundramma's daughter, why she has not gone to Halebeedu. In fact college has not arranged any such tour but Girija has gone out with her boy-friend Vijay with the pretext of study tour. Without spending much time Anupama returns home and thinks over Girija's nature. One day Girija walks in to the room of Anupama and asks her: "who told you to gossip about me?...it seems you checked with Kamala about the

tour” (43). Anupama replies that she was not trying to prey her but she was in casual conversation with Kamala. Further she tells: “Girija, as your sister-in-law and as someone else older than you, can I tell you something?.... You have not chosen the right path and your behaviour does not befit the family you come from” (43). This leads to further rift between the two. Girija feels insulted and tells her: “Stop preaching. Only Avva has the right to advise me. Who are you to me? You have enacted so many love scenes on the stage. Was that all right?” (44). Noticing her mother's arrival she starts sobbing and complains that Anupama thinks she has not gone to Halebeedu. Radhakka is furious to find that a girl who had come into their house a couple months ago is making her daughter cry. She thinks Anupama is spoiling her family reputation. Thus, this incident leads to misunderstanding between Anupama and her mother-in-law and Girija.

Another coincidence that happens and leads to series of events in the novel is during the Deepavali celebration a live fire-coal falls on the foot of Anupama. In spite of severe pain she participates in the celebration. Being an Indian woman the Indian consciousness makes her to think whether it is an indication of bad omen. To Anupama's surprise after the complete cure also a white peck has remained and kept enlarging. Secretly she consults Dr. Rao, a dermatologist. He tests it with a needle and ascertains that she has vitiligo. Being an intelligent and sensitive woman she predicts its consequences. Knowing the nature of her orthodox mother-in-law she keeps it secret and begins wearing sari much lower than before to hide the patch. Once when Girija is away and Radhakka has gone to meet her friend, Anupama has come to consult the doctor. Radhakka accidentally sees Anupama coming out of Dr. Rao's clinic. After coming home enraged Radhakka asks Anupama to come down to know why she has visited Rao's clinic. While putting her foot down on the step below it has either got entangled in the folds of sari or sheer fear blinded her, lost her balance and rolls down the stairs. Anupama has got a cut on her forehead; blood trickles down, and becomes unconscious. Her sari is in disarray and what she has been struggling to hide is now revealed to everyone. Nobody is bothered about Anupama. She has got recovered soon, leant against the wall and draws the end of sari to cover the white patch. The disclosure of white patch has changed the reaction of all completely. Earlier Anupama “had taken her meals with her mother-in-law and Girija. But now food is sent to her room, implying that she was not welcome downstairs” (55). Radhakka thinks a calamity has befallen them. Girija feels a kind of vicious satisfaction and mutters, “you wanted to expose me, but now you are exposed” (53). Narayana, the family priest, was humble, subservient and had spoken to her respectfully. But now he has changed and considers it as a bad omen. When Anupama goes to puja room with flowers he reacts: “Don't come in here and pollute everything” (54). He took the flowers, threw them outside, and poured some water on the basket to purify it. Sundrakka, a friend of Radhakka, tells Radha that she feels terrible to know that she has been deceived and cautions her to “be careful. Do you know whether it is leukoderma or leprosy? It might be contagious” (55). This coincidence has led to several consequences like Anupama is sent back to parents' home. There at home Sabakka dislikes and treats her enviously. She has become an additional burden to Shamanna. Anand has stopped replying to Anupama's letters. She is not invited for Girija's marriage. Radhakka is searching for a new bride to her son. Nanda's marriage is called off. Shamanna has got transferred to other village. People weave different stories around Anupama. She cannot attend the social functions. In order find her own way, to lead a new life and to avoid hearing people, including her step mother, talk ill about her, she leaves for Mumbai there her close friend Sumithra lives.

Another coincidence is that in Mumbai Anupama stays in the flat of Sumitra. With the help of Hari, Sumitra's husband, she gets a clerk job in a firm. While working she befriends with Dolly. One day Dolly has met with an accident. Hearing the news Anupama applies for a leave and goes to the hospital. She knows from Dolly's mother that her condition is critical, she needs blood and her blood group is O+. As Anupama's blood group is also same, though she is leukoderma afflicted person, she asks doctors to check if her blood matches. As her blood matches with Dolly's, she donates blood, Dolly recovers and her life is

saved. Dolly and her parents feel grateful to Anupama. One day after attending a marriage she comes to flat. Hari has not gone to office that day. She gets into the room, begins changing her dress, feels arms clutching her from behind, to her surprise it is Hari who desires to have sex with her. Stunned and distressed Anupama leaves for Dolly's house and requests her to find a P.G. Dolly asks her to stay in one of the rooms of her bungalow without paying anything. Anupama feels relieved, stays there and becomes part of the family. When Dolly goes to Australia to join her husband she tells Anupama: "Anu, my mother and I don't want to sell this house or get a builder to develop it. It has been with our family for ages and we want to retain it as long as possible. I don't trust my cousins, but I have complete faith in you. Please stay here as long as you want and look after it. You need not give me any rent" (94). Without any documents signed and money exchanged Dolly entrusts Anupama with their precious home. In the meanwhile once there is an advertisement for a Sanskrit lecturer post. Dolly tells Anupama to apply. Since she does not have any experience she applies reluctantly. As Anupama's academic track is excellent, she is appointed lecturer in Sanskrit. She devotes her time and energy to college, trains students for co-curricular activities and very soon she becomes the favorite lecturer of students. Now she is leading a happy life in Mumbai forgetting her personal problems. She is not only economically independent but also capable of helping her step mother and sisters. Thus the friendships with Dolly and accidental matching of blood and donation have led to this change in the life Anupama.

Another coincidence that leads to further development of plot is that when Anupama is crossing the road towards Bombay Central, a taxi jumps the red light and hits her. She has got serious injuries to her leg, become unconscious and she is hospitalized. Dr. Vasant, doctor on duty and Kannadiga, gives her treatment. Since somebody is needed to take care of her, police and hospital staff try to find out contact numbers in her purse. They find a collection of Sanskrit plays. As Vasant knows Sanskrit and interested in Sanskrit literature he has carried it home to read. Based on the remarks made on the margins of pages he comes to know that she is from Karnataka and impressed by her in depth knowledge and critical ability. The feeling of regionalism and her knowledge make Vasant to take special care of her. While going out from hospital, out of gratitude, Anupama invites him to her home. Vasant visits her home and requests her to invite him to enactment of dramas directed by her. Accordingly she invites him for performance of play. Thus they become good friends. Unknowingly Vasant loves her and one fine day he says: "Now I want to go back to my village and serve people there. That is my dream. Will you be part of my life and complete my dream? Will you share my happiness and sorrow in future?" (138) But she refuses his proposal without hurting his feelings.

The final coincidence in the novel is Anand's meeting of Anupama once again. This makes Anupama's stand, nature and future life crystal clear. Now Anand regrets over his attitude towards Anupama. The incident that opens his eyes is that while arranging books he has found a love letter written to Girija by her lover. He asks his mother about it and finds that she knew everything and took it for granted. He feels that compares to Girija, Anupama is far superior and he had done grave injustice to her. His mother is insisting to remarry. "He had not found happiness after marrying a girl of his own choice; would he be happy in a marriage arranged by his mother?" (124) He asks himself 'had he done the right things? No'. Therefore he goes out looking for her. Anand comes to know that Shamanna had died and Anupama left home. He is in a chronic state of unhappiness. Feelings of shame and guilt always gnaw at him. He thinks that he has not done the right thing. When Anand is in Bombay to attend an international medical conference, his friend Dr. Prakash meets him, invites and takes him to his home. Prakash tells about the performance of *Swapna Vasavadutta*, a Sanskrit play, at Tara Theatre. Anand is scared of going for a play because it brings back memories of Anupama, his marriage, her disease, the betrayal and their separation. Finally they go there; as Anand listens to the commentary on the drama it reminds him Anupama. The drama is well performed and directed. At the end the director comes on stage and gets a standing ovation by everyone. Anand is surprised to see Anupama. After the performance is over he goes backstage to meet her



but by that time all have left the place. With great difficulty he gets her address, next day goes there and pleads her to forgive him. She is little surprised to see Anand but she is calm, controlled and dignified. She asks “which mistake are you seeking forgiveness for? Please remember saying the right thing at the right time is what makes a conversation meaningful” (146). She asks him heart piercing questions such as “did you speak when you first got to know about my condition? Was it my fault that I got this white patch? Is it my fault that I am a poor man's daughter?” (146). She tells that his mother and sister disliked her because she was poor. He was scared because she would be disfigured. They were worried about unborn daughters not about Anupama. She says that if she had known his attitude towards life she would have told him to marry somebody else. She asks him stabbing questions: “suppose you had got leukoderma, do you think I would have left for you for some other man? What guarantee is there that tomorrow your will not get this disease?” (148) Anand tells her that he has not married, begs her to forget the past and tells: “If you do not want stay with avva, we will go back to England where nobody will bother us. Let us face life together”. Anupama makes her stand very clear stating husband, children, affection, love ...are irrelevant to her. She says: “I know what my goals are and where I am heading and I don't need anyone's help to reach my destination...I have excellent friends who trust me and will not hesitate to help me if I am in trouble. My students are as dear to me as my own children would have been. Their unconditional love has never made me think of myself as blemished... I am not dependent on anyone for emotional or financial support and that has given me enormous strength. I thank God for having been so fortunate. It would be better for us to part now and never communicate with each other again. We met accidentally, but we were not made for each other. Let us part with a good grace” (148-149).

The other important narrative device employed in this novel is epistolary method. There are several letters exchanged between the characters. These letters contribute for the development of plot as well as for unfolding the nature of characters. Some of the important letters are; when Anand was in England for his higher studies he wrote letters to Anupama describing the paces there, stating how he feels separated and his eagerness to see her soon. After getting white patches, Anupama is totally disliked by her in-laws. She writes letters to Anand to take her to England soon. After she was sent to her father's home from there also she writes letters to Anand. Sumi writes a letter to Anupama telling her to come to Bombay. Anand's mother also writes letters to him about Anupama's affliction with leukoderma. Nanda's prospective in-laws write a letter to Shamanna stating the rejection of Nanda's alliance. One day, while shifting his books, Anand finds a letter written to Girija by Vijay. This unfolds the true nature of his sister and mother. Sabakka, after the death Shamanna, writes a letter to Anupama to forget her mistakes, and begs to help her daughters.

The other narrative device used in the novel is intertextuality. Intertextuality is the borrowing or use of a part of text or text within the present work. Through this device a plot is developed or complicated or given a new twist. In this novel there are two instances of intertextuality. The first one is enacting of *Mahasweta*, a drama version of the novel *Kadambari* written by the great scholar Bana Bhatta. Anupama has translated and dramatized it. The essence of the novel is the love between the heroine, Mahasweta and the hero, Pundarika. Mahasweta is an extremely beautiful princess and the daughter of the king of Gandhara. One day she goes on a picnic with her friend, Kadambari, and meets Pundarika, dazzling handsome son of a rishi. It is love at first sight for both them. She is attracted towards him so much that she cannot live without him and for his sake she is ready to renounce everything. Pundarika meets an untimely death and princess, wearing white sari and garland undertakes a severe penance in the forest. Her resolve is unshakable. Her friend, Kadambari, tries her best to dissuade her, but to no avail. Finally Mahasweta's heart-rending love for Pundarika brings him back to life and the lovers are reunited.

Another episode of intertextuality is the enactment of *Swapna Vasavadutta*. This is also a love story of handsome prince Udayana and beautiful princess Vasavadutta. They fall in love and get married. For the good of the kingdom Udayana is told to marry the Magadha princess, Padmavati; but he refuses. But for the betterment of her husband and the kingdom Vasavadutta spreads a rumour that she has died in a forest fire.

Reluctantly, Udayana agree to marry Padmavati. Vasavadutta visits him when he is asleep to console him and tells him to accept the second marriage. For her brilliant direction Anupama gets a standing ovation by everyone. Accidently Anand has come and seen this with his friend. This helped Anand to meet Anupama whom he wished to take back. The meeting of Anand and Anupama provides a clear stand point of Anupama and that is the final message of the novel.

Thus the entire novel is beautifully fabricated with coincidences, letters and intertextuality as narrative devices.

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## ECOFEMINIST PERSPECTIVES AND ECOETHICAL ISSUES IN THE SELECT NOVELS OF GITA MEHTA AND SARAH JOSEPH: A STUDY

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Women in all social set ups perform a multifarious role in upgrading social ethics and abnegate their entire life to engineer a scrupulous society. Like women in the society, nature plays a significant part in the development of human beings and their community. The relationship between women and nature is interdependent. Women cannot be separated from nature and nature from women because of their biological reproductive quality which binds up each other. Women especially in India lead their lives in harmony with nature and worship it with a great reverence. Therefore, no life on earth is possible without the existence of women and nature. But the patriarchal society superimposes on them a heavy burden and regards their contributions to the society as subservient. Man considers woman as his subordinate and exploits them for his own whims and fancies. On the other hand, the urbanizing society causes sufferings to nature. Thus, the aim of the study is to shed light on how women issues synchronize with ecological problems with reference to the select novels of Gita Mehta and Sarah Joseph.

Ecofeminism, a branch of philosophy or a movement that applies the feminist canon to ecological issues, develops from the idea that a woman's ethics are closer to nature than a man. It juxtaposes the domination and oppression of women to the social abuse of the natural environment. Man's hierarchical relationship with nature, which tries to dominate it, has created excruciating crises to the environment of today's world. It is eco-feminists who seek non-violent solutions to world problems as done by nature. Eco-feminists consider stronger values of resistance necessary for survival in the patriarchal world. Though they seek for liberalism and Marxist ideologies, their main focus lays on the invasion on environment and ecosystem.

In the book *Feminism or Death* (1974), Francois d'Eaubonne has coined term 'Ecofeminism' to focus on cultural and social concerns that deal with the similarities of women's oppression and environmental degradation. She states that the oppression of women and nature arises from the emergence of patriarchy which forms the concept of dualism that separates men from women and human life from nature. Having created dominion over both living and non-living organisms on the earth, patriarchy perceives woman to be basically passive and weak with a similarity to nature. This ideology of patriarchy leads to the emergence of the concept of ecofeminism. The success of this movement lies in its aim to connect power politics with nature and women. Man succeeds in prevailing over woman as well as nature. Hence eco-feminists clamour against oppression of women and nature.

Later the term has been widely used to name a growing political, cultural and intellectual movement, both activist and academic. Many academic writings directly state that ecofeminism is a social movement. In his book *Ecofeminism: Linking Theory and Practice*, Birkeland defines the term as:

...value system, a social movement, and a practice... (which) also offers a political analysis that explores the links between androcentric and environmental destruction. It is an "awareness" that begins with the realization that the exploitation of nature is intimately linked to Western Man's attitude toward women and tribal cultures.... (18)

Birkeland also emphasizes the interconnection between the destruction of the environment and the historical oppression of women. Ecofeminism exposes a radical challenge for environmental thinking, politics, and social ethical perspectives and considers the experience and perspectives of women dealing with ecological issues as a matter of survival. Moreover, Eco-feminists realize that the liberation of women cannot be attained without the liberation of nature because women's issues and ecological problems are one and the same, one cannot be resolved without the other.

In India, the concept of ecofeminism is stabilized through the social movement called *Chick*, which originated in the Garhwal region of Uttaranchal in Uttar Pradesh, India. The prime objective of the movement is to curb the growth of commercialization which depletes natural resources. It also serves as a key for the emergence ecofeminism activists. The writers like Vandana Shiva, Meera Nanda and Mehta Patnagar are the chief exponents of ecofeminist activism in India. Vandana Shiva, the most prominent environmental activist and physicist, advocates against the prevalent patriarchal society and claims that woman-focused system would change the current system in an extremely positive manner. Like Vandana Shiva, Meera Nanda castigates the male oriented development of the postcolonial world. Mehta Patnagar, in her writings, disputes against the contamination of the river, Narmada.

The postmodern Indian women writers, in their novels, strongly bind the doctrines of ecology with female issues. The writers like Shashi Deshpande, Arundhati Roy, Anita Desai, Kamala Markandaya, Mahasweta Devi and Kiran Desai focus on the dual aspects of women issues such as the problems of being women and the problems of being colonized women. They explore the intimation between the exploitation of nature and the oppression of women on the basis of gender, class, race, caste, colonization and neocolonisation. Even though women face a number of challenges, the minds of them are as fresh as nature. Vandana Shiva demystifies it as “women in India are an intimate part of nature, both in imagination and practice” (75). The development of post colonialism not only integrates women's status, but also burdens them with oppression and alienation.

The women writers Gita Mehta and Sarah Joseph who are chosen for the study are highly influenced by Indian culture, their love for nature, and philosophy. They have universalized the fame of Indian culture by incorporating Indian culture, history and Indian way of life into their literary works. The subjects and themes of their writings revolve around Indian women and their conflicts and predicaments in contemporary India. They also expose their deep concerns for the environment and the socio-cultural values of contemporary India. Through handling of different themes, they have greatly contributed to creating awareness about ecology and its effect on modern life.

Gita Mehta, a renowned writer and journalist, in her novel *A River Sutra* (1993), exhibits her benign interest in nature and her deep concerns for ecology. Her fascination towards nature can be seen through the mouth-piece of the narrator who admires the beauty of the river Narmada and wishes to lead his remaining life on the lap of Narmada. In this novel, she glorifies the river Narmada, one of the holiest rivers of India and which has been enumerated in the epic *Mahabharatha* and the *Puranas*, as a mental healer, purifier of soul and the giver of salvation. At present due to over population, the valley of Narmada is encountering acute social and ecological issues. Therefore, through this novel, Mehta highlights the essentialness of the river by incorporating various Indian mythologies and philosophies in correlation with women issues.

In this novel, Mehta explores the inner voice of women who encounter unspeakable mental depression and their longing for emancipation from the patriarchal social patterns. She describes the three women characters who encounter different kinds of perennial problems. The courtesan's daughter, who leads a sinful life, wants to die in the river to purify herself whereas the musician's daughter encounters the problems of physical isolation and mental depression. As the physical environment is ignored by moderns, she is disgusted by her own parents and friends because of her large hooked nose. Finally, Mehta depicts the pathetic life of an unnamed girl who is discarded by her parents. At end of the novel, all these three

women seek salvation through worshipping the river Narmada.

At the outset of the novel, Mehta focuses on how women lead their lives in harmony with nature by describing the lifestyle of the tribal women of Vano village near the river Naramda. As she describes it is a “legend of a vast underground civilization stretching from the hills all the way to Arabia Sea, peopled by a mysterious race half human, half serpent” (Mehta 119). Their way of life, myths and beliefs intertwine with nature. The tribal world which is tuned with nature is the centre of attraction for the troubled citizens of the material world who craves for tranquility. Having illustrated the intimacy between women and nature, Mehta has also projected the troubles of women and their indefatigable strength of resistance against their mental depression.

The women characters that are portrayed in the novel remain pure and sincere, though they are marginalized, disgusted and discarded by the patriarchal society. This very fact is highlighted in the Courtesan's story. The Courtesan's daughter is abducted by Ragul Singh, a notorious bandit, keeps her in a cave. He insists her to surrender herself to him sexually by telling that she has been his wife in many births before this one. Though she refuses to believe him, she realizes it when he touches her. As she feels:

He stretched out his arms to me. Suddenly I knew he was speaking the truth, and that night I entered my captor's embrace. Guided by his touch, I learned I had known his body in a hundred lifetimes before he took me again a virgin on the thin cotton quilt which was all that shielded our bodies from ground. (Mehta 184)

She accepts him as her husband and teaches him the art of love, desire and fulfilment. When incidentally Rahul Singh dies, she wants to keep the secret of Rahul Singh as a dacoit from the police and the world. Moreover, she has no desire to live; she embraces the river Naramda to get rid of her meaningless life. The river Narmada observes the sorrows of the Courtesan's daughter within herself and gives solace to her.

In the patriarchal society, women are denied to talk, write and even to have desires. The story of the musician exemplifies it in a vivid manner. The musician's daughter encounters the problems of physical isolation as well as mental depression. From her childhood, she is disgusted by her parents and friends because of her long hooked nose. But her knowledge about music is incomparable. She falls in love with a young man who comes to learn music from her father refuses her proposal and gets married with someone else. Though she is an ugly woman, her desire to marry him is genuine. At last her father recommends her to meditate on the water of Narmada until she is recovered from the attachment of the man. As Mehta observes “he says that I must meditate on the water of the Narmada, the symbol of Shiva's penance, until I have cured myself of my attachment to what has passed and can become again the ragini to every raga”(224). With the help of Narmada she cleanses herself of the guilt of loving a man and pledges to remain unmarried throughout her life.

Unlike these two stories, the story of the minstrel evokes pity and sympathy in the minds of the readers. Naga Baba, a monk, rescues an unnamed girl, who is sold into a brothel by her father. He has taken the girl into forest and named her as Uma. He teaches her reading, writing and singing praises of Narmada. She becomes a river minstrel and the bride of music. Though she is discarded by her father and has felt desolate, she finds satisfaction and contentment in learning and singing about Narmada.

Often the monsoon storms were so heavy the swollen waters of the river flooded their banks, swirling around the tree trunks and the bamboo thickets until they flowed right into the hut, as if trying to embrace the child learning to recite the river's praises. (Mehta 256)

Throughout the novel, the river Narmada is treated as a woman and the daughter of lord Shiva as Mehta states “the stream took on the form of a woman”(8). Like Shiva, she plays a multiple role as the creator, preserver and destroyer. As the river Narmada, a woman can create by giving birth, preserve by fulfilling desires, and she can be a destroyer too. Mehta also emphasizes woman as a counterpart of man and as an important force for the whole generation.

Like Gita Mehta, Sarah Joseph is one of the leading feminists and social activists in India. In her writings, she explicitly exposes her fascination towards nature and Indian culture. She also explores the relationship between the human world and environment with a spirit of commitment. As a feminist, she has founded Manushi, an organization of thinking women, to empower the voice of women community. Moreover, she believes that women are closely related to nature. Therefore, most of her novels deal with the decrepitude condition of women and their issues in relation to environmental issues.

In the novel *Gift in Green*, Joseph focuses two important women characters who are the victims of patriarchal society and environmental changes. Kunjimathu, a pretty village girl, falls in love with her cousin Kumaran, who seduces her and refuses to marry her: “As a memento of manly remembrance, he ruptured her hymen and took her virginity” (Joseph 22). Kumaran not only impounds her virginity but also ruins her Pokkali paddy field. He forges her documents and threatens Komban Joy who is maintaining the land on the basis of contract, to spoil it. It is Komban Joy who has used DDT on the prawn farm which causes for a huge destruction of insect species. As Joseph describes:

That was the day the yellow butterflies perished in their thousands. On the ridges of the paddy field, in courtyards, and front of Thampuran's shrine, they fell dead and lay like withered laburnum flowers. It was the children who noticed them first, and it saddened them. Sitting by the dead butterflies, they stroked with their index fingers the delicate wings of the tiny yellow creatures that had always eluded their hands. (GG 179)

He makes the land sterile by using enormous chemical pesticides. Kumaran succeeds in sabotaging Kunjumathu's body as well as the land. This male dominated society, having neglected giving to respect women, also denies observing ecological ethics. The paddy field is identified with its owner and both are made to suffer by the oppression of Kumaran.

Sarah Joseph expounds the life of Shailaja who is the victim of environmental changes. She is married to a nearby village Chakkam Kandam which is surrounded by unpalatable water. Once upon a time the village was encircled by bountiful water, which was the only source of the villagers' livelihood. But now the water is utterly ruined by defecation of effluent water from factories. Though the village is filled with water, the people do not have a drop of water to drink. Shailaja who cannot bear the noxious atmosphere of the village abandons her husband Chandramohan and his polluted village and wishes to be attached with the cozy atmosphere of Aathi, which is also subjected to face the same plight and predicaments. Being disrupted by pollution, the life of Shailaja and the land turn barren. This sort of environmental abuses has made sufferings as a new way of life for women, who they have to co-exist.

In the novel *The Virgil*, Joseph brings into focus how women and nature are subjugated even in ancient days. Though the story is a retold version of the canto 'Kishkindha' from the Ramayana, she looks at the story from a different perspective and throws limelight on the hidden truth. She brings out Raman's unfair attitude against Vali and his family and also depicts how the Lankan war damages nature to extricate Sita from Ravana's subjugation. As she writes: “they had broken all the rules by digging the earth and piercing the sky to search for a woman who had been abducted and hidden by some evil creature” (TV 160). Through this novel, Joseph discloses the violence that is played on nature and women.

Tara, the spouse of Vali who is conspired and killed by his brother Sugrivan in forging with Raman, wants to save her son Angadan from Sugrivan. After his brother's death, Sugrivan yearns to sexually exploit Tara. When he approaches her, she refuses to obey his avaricious sexual desire and retaliates as:

Tara struck him and pushed aside his hands, then lowered the cloth that covered her breast. 'Look at my beauty! Look! The marks made by Vali's nails. The bites that he presented. The holes made by Angadan's milk teeth. This earth is marked by the imprints of a father's and son's kisses. If you find any untouched space on my body, you are welcome to it.' (TV 57)

Though she is strong enough to protest, for the sake her son's life, she becomes the victim of Sugrivan's sexual perversion. On the other hand the beautiful atmosphere of Kishkindam is also ruined and

exploited, due to the war waged against Lanka to extricate Sita from the clutches of Ravana. The paddy fields in Kishkinda which are newly ploughed and sowed become the grounds for practicing archery. Joseph vocalizes that in the hands of man, both women and nature get affliction and both are made to remain passive.

Having projected women issues in correlation with environmental issues, both Gita Mehta and Sarah Joseph have emphasized the need to take action against the ill-treatment of women and nature and to retrieve them from perilous encumbrances. They advocate that nature is a source of energy which enables the human community to transcend their spirit beyond the material world. Therefore, man must co-exist with it rather than controlling it.

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## MYTH OF ETERNAL DENIAL IN MULK RAJ AANAD'S *THE LOST CHILD*

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This paper is divided into two parts- myth of eternal denial and its application to Mulk Raj Anand's short story *The Lost Child*. The myth of denial is prosed on Sanskrit *Vachan* 'Brhma Satyam, Janganmithya' It means only the Absolute is the Truth and the World is illusion. This world is regarded as Maya or illusion according to Indian philosophy.

The assumption is this world is an illusion. The human beings are sojourners. According to Indian philosophy, this life meant for the quest of self-knowledge but human beings, instead of attempting for self-knowledge, indulge into worldly pleasures. When human beings take birth, they are accompanied by many desires and demands. These desires range from our longing for material possessions to spiritual quest for self-knowledge. Common human beings get trapped by worldly desires and the purpose of self-knowledge goes to oblivion. Man's chasing of material possessions leads his life to degeneration. The mass mania for greed results into chaos and disorder and then he reminds the promise of the Almighty, mentioned in almost all scriptures. In Sanskrit it is as follows-

यदायदाहीधर्मस्यग्लनिर्भवतीभारत, अभ्युत्थानमअधर्मस्य,  
तदात्मानमसृजाम्यहम, परित्राणायसाधूनामविनाशायचदुष्कृताम  
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थायसंभवमियुगेयुगे

The simple meaning of the *Vachana* is whenever the religion will be in danger, to uplift the religion, to help the good ones, to destroy the bad ones, in every age I will incarnate. This promise by God forms the myth of eternal return. Man believes that God is with him. This very feeling of presence of God deviates man's attention from God and man indulges into worldly pleasures. But at a particular point man realizes that God has stopped answering his calls. All of sudden man feels afraid of the vacuum created by the felling of absence of God and stops craving for worldly pleasures and starts searching for 'Him'. Paradoxically when man wants material pleasures he is denied, and when man denies worldly pleasures he is offered. This form the myth of eternal denial.

The short story 'The Lost Child' by Indian writer in English, Mulk Raj Aanand is a fine exemplification of the myth of eternal denial.

Mulk Raj Aanad is a renowned Indian writer in English who started his literary career during the decade of 30's. He has immense literary output to his credit such as around 20 novels, 7 Collections of short stories, two anthologies of the stories retold, a large number of books on education, literature and art.

"The Lost Child" is his first story written in 1928 and was first published in *World's Great Short Stories* published by Odham Press, London

In his preface to the book *Mulk Raj Aanad: A Reader* published by Sahitya Akademi, Delhi, Mulk Raj Aanad has narrated about the birth of this story. When he went to London to pursue his Ph.D. in Philosophy, he received encouragement from many European scholars. Still he felt uneasy in exile in U.K. He states, "Forlorn, unable to sleep, one night I recalled a verse of Sage Nanak which said, 'We are all children lost in the world fair' I got up and wrote my first every story 'Lost Child' that night when I has got lost in a Baisakhi Spring Fair in a village on the banks of river Beas in Kangra Valley of North Punjab." (Atmaram, 2007 ix)

The story is based on Mulk Raj Aanand's personal experience and also on the note of Guru Nanak's



philosophy. Guru Nanak, the founder Guru of Sikhism in India, compares this world with a fair and the human beings with lost children. As it is mentioned earlier man takes birth in this world fair. This fair stands for divine test. It is full of temptations and man is expected to overcome the temptations to search for self-knowledge. Unfortunately man entraps himself in the temptations and is soon lost- lost from the true purpose of life.

*The Lost Child* is the story of a child who is going along with his parents to enjoy a fair in a village. The atmosphere is very joyous and enthusiastic and the child sometimes following his parents, sometimes running ahead of them in enjoying the zeal of the surrounding happy, bright and colourful atmosphere. He is very often called back by his mother, "Come, child come" whenever he is tempted by the sellers. The dragon flies, beautifully blossomed trees, shower of flowers, cool breeze of air all spread enchants on the child. The child gets attracted by a toy seller and records his demands to his parents for the toy, though he knows, 'the old, cold stare of refusal in their eyes' (P. 3). Next the child's mouth waters when he happens to see the sweet seller. He murmurs his demand for sweet but, 'he half knew as he begged that his plea would not be headed because his parents would say he was greedy... he moved on' (P.5)

Next he is tempted by garlands and again murmurs that he wants garlands but, 'he well knew his parents would refuse to buy him those flowers because they would say they were very cheap.' (P.5)

Then he is attracted by the colourful balloons but, 'he well knew, his parents would never buy him the balloons because they would say he was too old to play with such toys.' (P.5) Afterwards the juggler's play lures him. He goes towards the juggler but, 'knowing his parents had forbidden him to hear such coarse music as the jugglers played, he proceeded further.' (P.5)

At last, he reaches to a round- about in full swing and is overwhelmed by the whirling motion, laughter and cries. But this, 'before his overpowering love for the anticipated sensation of movement had been chilled by the thought of his parents' eternal denial, he made a bold request, "I want to go on the round-about, please, father, mother."' (P.6)

But this time, there is no reply from his parents and he is shocked by the sudden realization that he has lost his parents. His throat dries and the fear of being lost culminates into shouting and running here and there. Due to this panic, he is about to be crushed under the feet of crowd at the temple door but is saved and lifted up by a kind man. He tries to console the child by asking him about his parents but the child could utter only few words, "I want my father, I want my mother" (P.6) The man tries to soothe him by offering him everything that the child desired earlier- ride on the round-about, juggler's music, balloons, garlands but the child keeps on uttering, "I want my father, I want my mother." (P.6)

The story is simple and based on the personal experience of the author but Mulk Raj Aanad does not delimit the story as his personal experience. The very presentation of the story and certain precautions taken by the author while writing the story set it free from being personal experience only and enhance the scope of the implications.

Though the story has the setting of a fair, the author has not mentioned name of a particular village or town.

The characters are not given names but they are mentioned by common nouns like child, parents, sellers, jugglers etc.

Above all, the story does not end with traditional happy or sad note. It is left open for the imagination of readers.

It is because of these few touches the story raises above personal experience and can be interpreted at philosophical level.

Various critics have interpreted this story as an allegory of a lost man in this world fair. Close reading of this story reflects that it is a myth of eternal denial.

The story can construed as myth of eternal denial from both the sides- that of the lost child and the parents. The child is the only focus in the story. The parents are seen and experienced from the child's eyes.

Metaphorically, the fair is the world, the parents are God and the child represents us, the human beings. We, the readers look at both- the parents and the fair from the child's view point. The child stands at the cross roads of denial and desires. On one hand, the child is aware of the negation by his parents. The reasons for the denial on every demand of the child make it clear the parents want to keep their child away from vices like greed, cheapness, temptation etc. On the other hand the temptations in the fair for the child are very natural. Every time the child murmurs his desire and then reminds the reaction of his parents and moves ahead. Frequent use of the words 'but' and 'knowing' in the story signify the necessity of the awareness of limitations on the part of human beings. The world is a fair, full of myriad of attractions and enticements that lure human beings and deviate their attention from the Parents i.e. God. The precautionary call by the mother 'come, child come' is the initial call given by the illusionary pleasures in the world and follows the parents. But the more the child enters the fair, the more he is desirous. At every turn, the child is aware of the denial by the parents. So are human beings aware of the fact that they are meant to board this world temporarily but the temptations in the world and their desires root them deep down and down. The material life and its pleasures encompass them so downright that like the child they are not aware of when they get lost in this world fair. Murmuring his desires and pushing himself ahead by the presupposed denial by the parents, the child is sure that he is followed by his parents. Human beings also assume that God is with us and they continue with their life of pleasures and keep on demanding more.

But at a particular turn, the child realizes that his parents are responding him and the sudden realization of losing those shocks him. Like the child, when human beings, at a particular juncture realize that they are not supported by God, they experience the exact feeling experienced by the child. Then onwards the child is offered everything that he demanded earlier. But this time, the denial comes from the child. This time the denial is suggested strongly. The child does not say- he does not want this thing or that thing. This time the child is sure about what he wants and therefore keeps on repeating, "I want my father, I want my mother".

What does a human being do when he suddenly realizes that he is not supported by the power that he believes in? Like the child, does he understand clearly what is he actually craving for?

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07

## AFGHANISTAN IN TEXT AND CONTEXT: A STUDY OF KHALED HOSSEINI'S NOVEL *THE KITE RUNNER*

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### **Abstract:**

*Narrating and re-narrating the history of a land and cultural positioning, plagued by recurrent political underpinnings are the basic hallmarks of majoritarian voices in South Asian literary narratives. Down the ages, the region of Asia and South Asia in particular has been the witness of violence in the name of geography, religion, language, politics and so forth. As such, these trajectories remained central to the making of Afghan nation. Any good piece of literature have long sought to document social conditions and call for social change and Hosseini's, *The Kite Runner* is not an exception to this. The situation presented in the text encompasses a wide array of historical, cultural and political markers covering changes in Afghan society from the fall of the monarchy in Afghanistan through the Soviet invasion in 1979, the mass exodus of refugees to Pakistan and the United States, and the rise of the Taliban regime. The novel's many themes also include tensions between the Hazara and Pashtuns (Shia and Sunni), through the story of two friends Amir and Hassan who symbolise opposite ends of a socio-political hierarchy. The Hazaras (Shia) constitute the minority groups in Afghanistan living with shattered identity and are subjected to long history of oppression by the Pashtuns (Sunni), who forms the majority. Kite flying is one important metaphor representing Afghan social practice and kites symbolises the Afghan way of life and their cultural imagination running across generations and bringing their collective national consciousness onto one plane. This national priority come to halt when the country was taken over by the Taliban and the troubled relationship between Amir and Hassan became further complex. Hosseini's thought-provoking novel *The Kite Runner* chronicles those phases of Afghans' journey in Historical transitions.*

*This paper therefore, focuses to explore the multifaceted dimensions of social, cultural and political issues compelling narratives pervade with the change of regimes in war-torn Afghanistan as depicted in Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*.*

**Key words:** *culture, history, politics, identity, relationship.*

Literature plays an important role of unfolding the historical truth by portraying human life and presenting social problems inherent in a society. It transforms the historical and social facts into a text. There has been the witness of majority of the novels written, highlighting the true historical accounts of a land and its people. This led to the mushrooming of historical novella down the centuries. Scottish playwright, poet and novelist Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832), could perhaps be considered the first among the lineage of historical novelists with his famous trilogy, *Waverly* (1814), *Guy Mannering* (1815) and the *Antiquary* (1816) covering the history of Scotland from the 1740's through the 1800s. Victorian novelist Charles Dickens too deserves equal fame for narrating the events of Victorian England in the novels like *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859) and *Great Expectations* (1861) culminated during the course of industrial revolution in England. Hence, from the inception of historical fiction in novel format, the historian and the novelists have, it seems found themselves intertwined. To that effect, our understanding of Hosseini's present novel is enriched when we consider them within the literary tradition of historical novel, providing illumination to readers about country, time, race, ethnicity and place, exploring the struggle of becoming part of the fabric of a country torn out of fate. As Brannigan rightly points out:

Literature is a vehicle for the representation of history, and it does contain insights into the formation of historical moments. It reveals the processes and tensions by which historical change comes about. But it does not reflect history as a mirror. It sees literature as a constitutive and inseparable part of history in the making, and therefore rife with the creative forces, disruptions and contradictions, of history. (Brannigan: 1998: 418)

As per history is concerned; Afghanistan has gone through several wars and internal strife which have created a unique cultural and social milieu. It is perhaps one of the most war-torn, most ravaged and the most beleaguered of nations. The people of various ethnic origins have been striving to come to terms with their diversity over centuries. A land torn and people shattered by various wars show amazing resilience in coming back to normalcy, Afghanistan remains the epicentre of increasingly literary voices of the kind. Khaled Hosseini's famous novel *The Kite Runner* (2003) remains the finest example of a historical novel so far its themes and issues are concerned. It traces the socio-political and cultural history of Afghanistan in a very objective manner. The historical complexity of Afghanistan, marked by the rise and fall of the Monarchy followed by the Soviet invasion and the vulnerability of the Taliban rule has been the popular themes in fiction written in the wake of the W.T.C. incident of September 11, 2001. Hosseini too dealt with the same themes and issues in his first novel *The Kite Runner* (2003). In fact, it is also the first novel written in English by an Afghan writer. Through this novel, the writer has given an authentic insight to the people of the world about the courses of historical, religious and political events of Afghanistan at a certain period of time. It is Hosseini's close observation and great story telling skills that enable him to depict such complexities of life in Afghanistan during the harshest of times. Moreover, the distance of time helps him to take a separate and objective view of the events depicted in the novel. In one of the interviews Hosseini says:

I happened to write a short story called *The Kite Runner* back in the spring of 1999. I had seen a story about the Taliban banning kite flying in Kabul, and since I grew up in Kabul flying kites with my brother and my cousins, my friends, it struck a personal chord, and I wrote a short story, which I thought was going to be about kite flying... but it could make may be a good novel. And it was a kind of personal challenge to finally write that first novel, and I began writing it. (Hosseini: *Achievement.org*)

Through his story telling craftsmanship, Hosseini depicted the shift in historical transitions surfacing the Afghan nation from 1960's to the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and finally to the wake of 9/11 in the light of the narrator, Amir. Set in Afghanistan, from the fall of the monarchy to the Soviet occupation until the collapse of the Taliban regime, and in Fremont, California, Amir recollected his peaceful days of life spent in a beautiful house in the Wazir Akbar Khan district of northern Kabul. There he was accompanied by best of his companions, his loving father (Baba), their servant Ali and his son Hassan the longstanding friend and guide of Amir in several occasions. That became evident in Amir's claim, "when we were children, Hassan and I used to climb the poplar trees in the driveway of my father's house and annoy our neighbours by reflecting sunlight into their homes with a shard of mirror...our trouser pockets filled with dried mulberries and walnuts." (Hosseini: 2003: 03) He further recounted:

Everyone agreed that my father, my Baba, had built the most beautiful house in the Wazir Akbar Khan district, a new and affluent neighbourhood in the northern part of Kabul. Some thought it was the prettiest house in all of Kabul. A broad entryway flanked by rosebushes led to the sprawling house of marble floors and wide windows. Intricate mosaic tiles, handpicked by Baba in Isfahan, covered the floors of the four bathrooms. Gold-stitched tapestries, which Baba had bought in Calcutta, lined the walls; a crystal chandelier hung from the vaulted ceiling. (Hosseini: 2003: 4)

Through the young Amir's poignant narratives the readers became the witness of gradual changing trends taking place in all aspects of Afghan's resolve to national proclamation. Kite flying is one important

metaphor representing Afghan social practice in the novel running across all cultural memories across generations and kites more than metaphors bring to the fore, events of historical transitions of Afghan nation. The following admissions of Amir bring it to limelight: "The kite-fighting tournament was an old winter tradition in Afghanistan. It started early in the morning on the day of the contest and didn't end until only the winning kite flew in the sky I remember one year the tournament outlasted daylight. People gathered on sidewalks and roofs to cheer for their kids. The streets filled with kite fighters...Every kite fighter had an assistant in my case, Hassan who held the spool and fed the line" (Hosseini: 2003: 45)

He is further haunted by the memory of participating in the kite flying tournament and winning it by cutting the last of surviving rival's kite with the help of Hassan, who is expert in the art of kite flying. It remains the dream of all Afghans to win the tournament, for it not only fetches laurel to the winner but also proves their courage, skill and ability. People across cultural lines would throng in from all across to the place where the tournament is to be held and become the witness of historic event. Parents and elderly members of every household take keen interest in equipping the individual participants with the best of kites, spools and the thread so that they can withstand up to the last cut. Amir participated at the same and cut the last surviving kite:

You are almost there, Amir Agha! Almost there!" Hassan was panting. Then the moment came. I closed my eyes and loosened my grip on the string. It sliced my fingers again as the wind dragged it. And then...I didn't need to hear the crowd's roar to know. I didn't need to see either. Hassan was screaming and his arm was wrapped around my neck. (Hosseini: 2003: 58)

Afghanistan's cultural priorities, its social character, and distinctive class positions found in kite flying a site through which the nation's strong physical and graphic orientation found scope for articulation. Hence, kites were more than metaphors and they serve as actual identity markers and the symbol of trust, self-esteem and friendship among Afghan masses. Institutions and habits, mannerisms and beliefs, religious practices and social hierarchies are the important aspects of Afghan life and culture as depicted in the novel.

But life isn't always smooth and easygoing for a land exceedingly conservative and hypersensitive of race, religion and ethnicity. While certain aspects of culture play the role of binding the Afghan populace together by bringing them onto one plane, some cultural elements tore the people apart and become the root cause of conflict. Afghanistan's national anthem recognizes 14 ethnic groups among the country's 27 million people: Pashtuns, Tajiks, Hazaras, Uzbeks, Balochis, Turkmens, Nooristanis, Pamiris, Arabs, Gujars, Brahuis, Qizilbash, Aimaq and Pashai. Among them, the Pashtuns constitute the majority and remain the ruler of Afghanistan while the Hazaras forms the ethnic minority. The Hazaras follow the Shi'a faith of Islam and the Pashtuns the Sunni. Throughout the long history of Afghanistan there has been the long and unending conflict between the two groups of opposing cultural ends.

To show the longstanding rift between the two groups with opposing cultural ends, Hosseini has created two strong characters in his novel Amir and Hassan. Amir is a Pashtun (Sunni), rich and literate whereas Hassan is a Hazara (Shi'a), poor and illiterate. Though the two friends remain so much attached with each other but Amir couldn't come out of the cultural choice and division marked by the polemics of Afghan social structures. It is a relation behind which lies the ethnic sub-structures of class that so crucially determines the social polemics of Afghan life. The following admission puts the matter in perspectives: "The curious thing was, I never thought of Hassan and me as friends either. Not in Usual sense, anyhow. Never mind that we taught each other to ride a bicycle with no hands...Never mind that we spent entire winters flying kites, running kites...Because history isn't easy to overcome. Neither is religion. In the end, I was a Pashtun and he was a Hazara, I was a Sunni and he was a Shi'a, and nothing was ever going to change that. Nothing" (Hosseini: 2003: 22).

Behind the friendship stood long years of historical turmoil, years of trouble and longstanding

conflict between the Hazaras (Shi'a) and the Pashtuns (Sunni), which continued to be inscribed in the private lives of individuals belonging to the two communities, the long stretch of historical movement that neither of them could absolve. The rift between the two ethnic groups is so wide that became evident in Assef's declaration against Hassan, "Afghanistan is the land of Pashtuns. It always has been, will always be. We are the true Afghans, the pure Afghans, not this Flat-Nose here. His people pollute our land, our watan. They dirty our blood." (Hosseini: 2003: 35) Assef is a character in the novel that bluntly supported the Taliban's evolving ideology of establishing Afghanistan a country of one singular race i.e. the pashtuns (Sunni), who later became the leader of the organization and help in executing the same. That, their conflict have also emanated from ethno-religious historical divide became evident from the following quote: "The division between Sunnis and Shi'as is the largest and the oldest in the history of Islam. They both agree on the fundamentals of Islam and share the same Holy book (The Quran), but there is differences mostly derived from their historical experiences, political and social developments, as well as ethnic composition" (BBC Religious Archives).

Since the late 1970s, Afghanistan has suffered continuous and brutal civil war, which included foreign interventions in the form of the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In 1978, Daoud and his family were executed in a communist coup led by his cousin Nur Mohammad Taraki. This has led to a fierce and brutal war between the Soviet troops and the Mujahedin fighters, waging guerrilla warfare against the Soviet troops. While the rural areas came under the Mujahedin control the urban areas including Kabul came under the captive of the Soviet troops. During the conflict, over five million nearly a fifth of the population fled to Pakistan, Iran, U.S and elsewhere and about two million were displaced within the country.

The toll inflicted by both sides was devastating. An estimated 8, 70,000 Afghans were killed between 1978 and 1987- average of 240 each day. Bombings were often indiscriminate, with between 800 and 1,000 civilians reported to have been killed in a single day in one district of Faryab province. (Cost of war: 1978-2009)

The year is 1980 in the novel while the fighting reached its climax, sounds of bombardment; heavy shelling and gunshots become the usual state of affairs. Curfews were imposed instantly at any moment without any prior announcements. It is at this crucial juncture that Baba and Amir along with dozens of others decided to flee to Peshawar than to California in a congested fuel tanker: "We left that night, Baba and I, Kamal and his father, the others. Karim and his cousin, a square-faced balding man named Aziz, helped us get into the fuel tank. One by one we mounted the idling truck's rear deck, climbed the rear access ladder, and slid down into the tank. I remember Baba climbed halfway up the ladder, hopped back down and fished the snuffbox from his pocket. He emptied the box and picked up a handful of dirt from the middle of the unpaved road. He kissed the dirt. Poured it into the box. Stowed the box in his breast pocket, next to his heart" (Hosseini: 2003: 105)

The narrative is than carried forward to Fremont, California in the U.S. where Baba and Amir locate themselves negotiating all odds like other migrants and asylum seekers in the host country. That was the fate and harsh reality which millions of Afghans have to accept either by choice or by force. This became evident in Amir's claim: "Just one month after we arrived in the U.S., Baba found a job off Washington Boulevard as an assistant at a gas station owned by an Afghan acquaintance he'd started looking for work the same week we arrived. Six days a week, Baba pulled twelve-hour shifts pumping gas, running the register, changing oil, and washing windshields...I would bring him lunch sometimes...Baba's face drawn and pale under the bright fluorescent lights...his eyes watering from fatigue" (Hosseini: 2003: 113)

As recorded in the history of Afghanistan, it also appears in the novel that the year is 1989, while the Soviet finally withdrew its troops from Afghanistan. After the Soviets' exit, there emerged a war for power and control among the Mujahedin and other groups like the Taliban. Internal conflicts with supporting

hands from some strong external forces resulted to the outbreak of the civil war from 1992-1996. It is at this critical time that Amir received information from his father's close aid Rahim Khan who is based in Pakistan about the fatal condition of his childhood friend Hassan's son Sohrab back home in Afghanistan. He had rather no choice but to risk his life to be there and fetch Sohrab at any cost. By that time the country was taken over by the Mujahedin but for a shorter period of time: "By then that would have been 1995 the *Shorawi* were defeated and long gone and Kabul belonged to Massoud, Rabbani, and the *Mujahedin*. The infighting between the factions was fierce and no one knew if they would live to see the end of the day." (Hosseini: 2003: 185)

The country came under the shadow of the Taliban in 1996. Once in power, the Taliban enforced a strict set of rules, based on an extremist interpretation of Islam and shari'a law by replacing the existing secular law. The government does so purposefully to maintain Islamic environment as well as to stop the access of the popular culture in Afghan society. In other words the Taliban's effort was to keep the people of the country far from Enlightenment the West claims to stand for. Hosseini lamented over the same in one of his interview with BookBrowse that goes as: "The Taliban's acts of cultural vandalism the most infamous being the destruction of the giant Bamiyan Buddha had a devastating effect on Afghan culture and the artistic scene. The Taliban burned countless films, VCRs, music tapes, books, and paintings. They jailed filmmakers, musicians, painters, and sculptors. These restrictions forced some artists to abandon their craft, and many to continue practicing in covert fashion" (Hosseini: BookBrowse.com)

The awful condition of the people as depicted in *The Kite Runner* was, in fact, the stark reality in Afghanistan during the reign of the Taliban government. That the land had undergone innumerable change and fear, hatred and acts of brutality became the usual practice and state of the hour became evident from Hassan's sad letter to Amir that read as: "Amir Agha ... Alas the Afghanistan of our youth is long dead. Kindness is gone from the land and you cannot escape the killings. Always the killings. In Kabul, fear is everywhere, in the streets, in the stadium, in the markets; it is a part of our lives here, Amir Agha. The savages who rule our *watan* don't care about human decency" (Hosseini: 2003:189-90).

Education for girls was all but abolished. Women were banned from work, aside from female health workers, and were not allowed to leave home without a male escort and a full-length burqa. While women and girls were specifically singled out for discrimination and abuse, men and boys were also subject to gender-based restrictions and violence. Men were required to have long beards and wear the traditional shalwar kameez. Thousands of men were imprisoned and tortured, and many were subject to extortion, physical abuse and sexual violence. This became evident from the following admission of Hassan in a letter to Amir: "The other day, I accompanied Farzana jan to the bazaar to buy some potatoes and *naan*. She asked the vendor how much the potatoes cost, but he did not hear her, I think he had a deaf ear. So she asked louder and suddenly a young Talib ran over and hit her on the thighs with his wooden stick. He struck her so hard she fell down. He was screaming at her and cursing and saying the Ministry of Vice and Virtue does not allow women to speak loudly... I thank Allah that I am alive, not because I fear death, but because my wife has a husband and my son is not an orphan" (Hosseini: 2003:190).

The Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and the Suppression of Vice employed brutal tactics, most commonly public beatings of both men and women, to enforce the law. Adulterers and other criminals were executed in Kabul's sports stadium on Fridays and men, women and children were corralled in and forced to watch. The scene of hurling stones at the adulterers by the crowd till the death of the victims is notable in this regard, which according to the Taliban is carried out in the name of religion. Amir became the witness of one such incident while he happened to be in Afghanistan, searching for Sohrab and narrated the heart-touching incident that goes as below: "We are here today to carry out *Shari'a[h]*. We are here to carry out justice. We are here today because the will of Allah and the word of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him ... God says that every sinner must be punished in a manner befitting his sin ... And what manner of punishment, brothers and sisters, befits the adulterer? How shall we punish those who

dishonour the sanctity of marriage? How shall we deal with those who spit in the face of God? How shall we answer those who throw stones at the windows of God's house? WE SHALL THROW THE STONES BACK!" (Hosseini: 2003: 235-36).

Television, radio, music, dancing and pastimes such as kite flying were banned that became evident from Amir's claim: "After weeks later, the Taliban banned kite fighting." (Hosseini: 2003: 187) Amir's remark in regard to imposing ban on other cultural artefacts is ironical enough: "Tabla, harmonium, the whine of a *dil-roba*. I guessed music wasn't sinful as long as it played to Taliban ears" (Hosseini: 2003:245). Non-Muslim cultural sites, including the Buddha statues in Bamiyan, were destroyed. National landmarks and museums, many of which were also looted and damaged during the civil war period, were defaced and raided. This cultural assault aimed not only to rewrite Afghanistan's past but also formed part of concerted efforts to subjugate and eliminate minority ethnic and religious groups. Khalid Hosseini's exposition of the knock down of the statues of Buddha in Bamiyan too resembles the actual incident which hurt the Buddhists throughout the world. This is how the Taliban proceeded and are dug their own graves step by step. Rahimullah Yusufzai has aptly said that: "The ill-timed and unwarranted Taliban decision to demolish the giant Buddha statues in Bamiyan in March 2001 led to worldwide condemnation and angered the Buddhists. It was the last straw on the camel's back and the Taliban lost their remaining few friends in the world after blowing up marvellous pieces of Afghan heritage" (Yousufzai: 2002: 114).

Non-Pashtun ethnic groups, particularly the Hazara, were persecuted, subject to ethnic cleansing and massacred. This has also led to the brutal killing of Hassan and his wife Farzana Jan in the novel. An estimated 300 Hazara men, women and children were deliberately killed while seeking shelter in a mosque in Yakaolang in January 2001 while an estimated 2,000 Afghans, including many Hazara, were massacred in an attack on Mazar-e-Sharif in November 1998. Assef the Taliban leader claims about the incident in the novel by saying: "Door-to-door. We only rested for food and prayer ... We left the bodies in the streets, and if their families tried to sneak out to drag them back into their homes, we'd shoot them too. We left them in the streets for days. We left them for the dogs. Dog meat for dogs." (Hosseini: 2003:243)

The attack on America's Twin Towers in September 11, 2001 gave a heavy blow to the Taliban. Days after attack America declared war against the Taliban, and the Northern Alliance came to the forefront in the hunt of hardcore leaders of the Taliban like the Osama Bin Laden in the mountains and streets of Afghanistan. The incident accurately found place in Hosseini's narratives: "One Tuesday morning last September, the Twin Towers came crumbling down and, overnight, the world changed" (Hosseini: 2003:316) President George W. Bush converted his fury into action which in Amir's term is: "Soon after the attacks, America bombed Afghanistan, the Northern Alliance moved in, and the Taliban scurried like rats into the caves" (Hosseini: 2003: 316)

After this very incident, most radical change took place in Afghanistan. The Taliban fought till their last breath at the battle of Kandahar but had to bow down in front of the American forces and the northern alliance at the end of the day. What the Taliban were bound to do under such terrific circumstances was to hide themselves in the caves of the mountains and there were others who fled into the neighbouring countries like Pakistan. The fighting brought an end to the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and Hamid Karzai became the President of the country with the strong support of the U.S. Amir narrated the incident as: "That December, Pashtuns, Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Hazaras gathered in Bonn and, under the watchful eye of the UN, began the process that might someday end over twenty years of unhappiness in their *watan*. Hamid Karzai's caracul hat and green *chapan* became famous" (Hosseini, *Kite Runner* 316).

Thus, in the present text, Hosseini has skilfully grafted the true courses of Afghans' historical events through the country's toughest journeys right from the fall of Monarchy to the wake of the September 11, attack on the America's Twin Towers that finally led to the end of brutal Taliban rule in the country. History has never favoured the Afghans to co-exist in peace and harmony. While some challenges are on the edge to concede, other bigger challenges appear on the row. Hosseini has been so precise in his



description of every minute detail of historical, cultural, religious and political events plaguing the Afghan social milieu from the vantage point of view. The readers are allowed to traverse and have an authentic insight into those events in the light of the narrator Amir. It is also Hosseini's prime objective to inform the readers and aware them about, what is happening inside Afghanistan at this point of time. It's through the character of Amir in the novel, that the readers are taken through the wending and curving terrains of Afghan history that is dense with several such narratives of conciliation albeit pain and hatred.

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**EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN IN SHAUNA SING BALDWIN'S  
THE SELECTOR OF SOULS**

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**Abstract:**

*Shauna Singh Baldwin's **The Selector of Souls** portrays several issues and conflicts of India while it was constantly developing as one of the most competent economic forces in the world during 1990s. Being an Indo-Canadian writer, Baldwin pinpoints the bitter experiences of women and religious conflicts in India. The setting of the novel runs through primarily in India in the mid-1990s. She has written it with an ambitious attempt to make it more extensive and multifaceted in its themes and treatment. She narrates through the personal lives of two female characters namely **Damini** and **Anu** who battle for their survival among the male-chauvinistic society. Their sufferings are not so different from each other. They come from different backgrounds but at one point meet each other due to the disappointments they met with. Baldwin deals not only with the feministic issues but also with the major political events of the time, such as the ongoing fights for authority and power between parties, groups and individuals. All these happenings around them directly influence the personal circumstances of her protagonists. Shauna Sing Baldwin, being a diaspora novelist depicts with concern the plight of women in this novel and has enabled the western world to visualize the other side of India. Although we have stepped into twenty-first century, these sexual abuses and exploitation of women continue to be the matter of concern and threatening for the society. This novel is yet another example of feministic voices relevant even in the present scenario.*

In this essay, I attempt to examine how Shauna Singh Baldwin's *The Selector of Souls* portrays several issues and conflicts of India while it was constantly developing as one of the most competent economic forces in the world during 1990s. Baldwin pinpoints the bitter experiences of women and religious conflicts in India. Her earlier novels *What the Body Remembers* (1999) and *The Tiger Claw* (2004) deal primarily with the problems of minority communities like Sikh and Muslims and the experiences of women during partition. In this novel also, she is preoccupied with the social issues, mainly the struggles for survival of women at various layers of society. Although this novel is tied up with many themes, the protagonists of the novel are women whom the story revolves around. Baldwin being a strong feminist writer never stoops to showcase the exploitation of women in the society.

Classifying the diaspora writers under a particular identity becomes difficult because of globalization which has made the journeys easier and the development of science and technology has brought the world smaller. The writers like Baldwin who was born in Canada, grew up in India and settled in USA have multi-identities and can be called as Indo-Canadian-American, combining her ethnicity, place of birth and place of living. To acknowledge any writer as diaspora may not be as simple as one thinks of. Vijay Mishra, the author of *The Literature of Indian Diaspora: Theorizing Diasporic Imaginary* interprets that Diaspora; the label cannot be applied generously to all who migrate. This term has more meaning in it and it is reserved only for the unhappier ones whose wealth and fortunes of host land life can never compensate the untold mental sufferings, agony and the longing for love that they continue to undergo. Mishra tends to categorize others as immigrants, trans-nationals or global, but not diasporic. In this way of questioning about the label of diaspora, Sing Baldwin's attitude and concern towards India

overshadow her personal views about being a migrant. Her expression of worry about the pathetic side of India can be paralleled to the suffering which Vijay Mishra means to hold for the diaspora.

The setting of the novel runs through primarily in India in the mid-1990s. Baldwin narrates through the personal lives of two female characters namely Damini and Anu who battle for their survival among the male-chauvinistic society. Their sufferings are not so different from each other. They come from different backgrounds but at one point meet each other due to the disappointments they met with. The novel opens with a grandmother, Damini a mid-wife who indulges in making a strange and difficult sacrifice. She prepares to kill the new-born baby with the tobacco feeding and this is the sacrifice that characterizes one of the many unexpected, unwanted, unthinkable choices thrust upon women who must protect and care for their dependents, because her daughter once again gives birth to a female baby as a third child. Baldwin exactly points out through the following words how the parents neglect the female babies,

Leela (the new born baby's mother) turned away from her again, and bound a lond Dupatta about her breasts. And despite Damini's pleading, her son-in-law Chunilal, is making no preparations for her naming. He is not worth naming, he says(1)... Naming this baby will proclaim her a girl. She'll be like a rotti, a chair, a sandal, a pencil, a dhurrie, a rope-bed, a furrow, a lentil seed, a small box, a pot.(7)

The parents do not want this child and consider it as an object, due to the social system that a baby girl carries with them the economic burden for the parents who need to pay dowry at the time of marriage. The poor cannot afford it and hate the girl babies. Baldwin records this cultural practice of infanticide and the abortion of foetuses and there itself the deadly exploitation of women occurs. The following lines further explain the pathetic state of women who must face many problems throughout life:

And so this soul came, bringing all the desires of a being. Because it became a girl, along with it came all the expectations and demands of her someday husband and family. (8)

Baldwin's two central characters Damini and Anu exhibit internal strength and creativeness. While their approaches to the same problems stay different, each woman's greatest strength is not endurance as much as action. The novel travels around the courage required to take action either constructive or destructive action while dealing with issues such as, sex-selection, equality, domestic violence, infanticide, religious passion, and traditions harmful to a girl's and a woman's survival, among others. Even though the writer displays the issues of women, she does not want to let them be submissive, instead projects them so courageous.

I like women who try not to let themselves be determined by others, even other women. My women characters may be headstrong but they usually care a great deal about the impact of their actions on others. And they are feminist, often long before their time; they dare believe and act as if they are people. (2009.<http://www.shaunasinghBaldwin.com/TeהלkaQuestionsforSSBforWebsite.pdf>).

Baldwin speaks of the dictates of the society and unwritten norms of the cultural and religious structure through the lives of Damini and Anu. Damini's life is woven between the Hindu and Sikh world after she becomes a widow. Her future is uncertain and she has to earn for her livelihood in spite of her age. Because the custom dictates that she ought to live with a married son and she cannot live with the married daughter. Anu's cousin Rano, another character is baffled by both Hindu and Sikh influences. She lives in Canada and faces gender-based job issues such as discriminatory pay scales and lack of career progress. Baldwin traces the inequalities prevalent not only in India but also in Canada. Sister Immaculata is another woman character. She is an Irish-Catholic sister living and working in India, functions under the male-dominated church hierarchy.

Baldwin portrays the male characters as exploiting except a few as good. Amanjit, the Sardar is a disloyal son entrusted to care for his aged mother, treats her like an object instead of as a person. He also shows his inhuman attitude towards Damaini by driving her away from home immediately after the death

of Mem-saab. Anu's husband Vikas justifies beating Anu and blames his violence on her failure to bear sons. Damini's son-in-law Chunilal, the family's wage earner, grows too ill to work but believes with conviction that women are unable to work in the farms and that the birth of his daughter is a mistake.

Shauna Singh Baldwin has written it with an ambitious attempt to make it more extensive and multifaceted in its themes and treatment. Baldwin deals not only with the feministic issues but also with the major political events of the time, such as the ongoing fights for authority and power between parties, groups and individuals. All these happenings around them directly influence the personal circumstances of her protagonists. Being a diaspora novelist, she depicts with concern the plight of women in this novel and has enabled the western world to visualize the other side of India. Although we have stepped into twenty-first century, these sexual abuses and exploitation of women continue to be the matter of concern and threatening for the society. This novel is yet another example of feministic voices relevant even in the present scenario.

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09

**SUBVERTING THE NARRATIVE IN MAHABHARAT:  
THE AUTHORIAL PREROGATIVE IN MRITYUNJAYA,  
THE GREAT INDIAN NOVEL AND THE PALACE OF ILLUSIONS**

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The present paper is based on analysis of three works of fiction – Shivaji Savant's *Mrityunjaya*, (The Death Conqueror), Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* and Chitra Banarjee Divakaruni's *The Palace of Illusions*. All the three novels are imaginative retelling of great epic The Mahabharata.

The enthralling and fascinating tales of The Mahabharat have entertained and inspired several generations not only in India but across the world. People have learned philosophy, morality, ethics, aesthetics, manners, mores and etiquette from these tales. The epic weaves myth, history, religion, science, philosophy, superstition, and statecraft into its innumerable stories-within-stories to create a rich and swarming world filled with psychological complexity. For the man of letters they are the fountainheads of archetypes of myth, allusion, form, motif and idiom, irrespective of the mind-boggling diversity of details. But Mahabharata also presents life in its stark and naked realities, full of faults and foibles, avarice, trickery, duplicity, diplomacy, lust and lechery.

At the core of the epic lies the fierce rivalry between two branches of the Kuru dynasty, the Pandavas and the Kauravas. However, The Mahabharata has undergone a series of modifications, interpolations and additions since its composition. In spite of these changes, Mahabharata has remained a tale of conflict between the good and evil and ultimate victory of good over evil.

Literary authors in modern times have attempted to undermine the original story as told by Ved Vyasa. They have taken liberties with plot and characterization of the epic. The present paper argues that authorial prerogative in the three works selected for analysis, has considerably altered not only the plot and characterization but also the moral of the story.

Shivaji Savant, a twentieth century Marathi novelist in *Mrityunjaya* (A Marathi novel published in 1972) has substantially altered the story of *Mahabharat* as narrated by Ved Vyasa to suit the requirements of his novel which projects Karna as the central character. He has also rejected the impersonal epic narrative and instead has employed autobiographical mode of narration. The novel is divided into nine books as against original eighteen of Mahabharat. The epic employs the technique of stories within a story, but Savant has brought into play nine extended Monologues spoken by *six characters from Mahabharat*. *Four of these monologues are spoken* by Karna, the protagonist of the novel, which are intersperse with one each by his mother Kunti, his wife vrishali, his cherished friend Duryodhan, his foster brother Shon and the last one by Krishna.

The epic *Mahabharat* is not the story of a single central character who can claim to be its protagonist. It narrates the stories of dozens of kings and warriors who are all heroic in their own way. The only character whom the popular mind considers to be the hero is Krishna, but Krishna is projected as divine and therefore excluded from human drama, rather he is depicted as the cause and source of all that happens. However, Savant in *Mrityunjay* places Karna at the centre of the story. The novel recounts the life story of Karna, the great warrior and benevolent hero. All the events and characters are viewed from Karna's point of view. The monologues spoken by the characters other than Karna also focus on Karna. These characters reveal their feelings for Karna and dwell at length on their relationship with Karna. They

also try to justify their actions in respect of karna.

Although the eldest of Pandavas, Karna in Mahabharat is a character of second rank. He is a friend of Evil Duryodhan and is obliged to fight on his side on account of favours bestowed by Duryodhan. The epic highlights Karna's desire to become the best archer and his rivalry of Arjuna. However, Savant has cleverly embroidered on the outline of Karna's character and created full-fledged protagonist.

In *Mrityunjay*, Karna himself narrates the story of his life from very beginning and it is supplemented by the monologues spoken by Karna's near and dear ones. Savant has imaginatively supplied the details of Karna's childhood in Champanagari, his years of training at military academy of Hastinapur, his resentment at Guru Drona's unwarranted love for Arjuna, his love for Vrishali, his mutually appreciative friendship with Ashwadhaman, his demanding friendship with Duryodhan and his passion and respect for Sun God. His social identity as a charioteer's son is the major cause of his distress.

The English translators of *Mrityunjay*, Nandini Nopani and P. Lal in their preface credit Savant with creating a tragic hero in the character of Karna. Indian literary tradition excludes the concept of tragedy in human life; the basic Indian belief is that man's past karma determines his joys or sorrows in this life. The Mahabharat adheres to this belief and narrates a tale of conflict between the good and evil and ultimate victory of good over evil and everyone getting what she or he merits. The epic presents Karna as a good character supporting evil Duryodhan and suffering the consequences of his action in the form of many curses and an unheroic death at the hands of Arjuna. Savant however projects Karna as a tragic and noble hero suffering disproportionate punishment and a puppet in the hands of fate. Savant in depicting Karna was probably inspired by Tagore's poem *Karna Kunti Samvad*, which brings out the nobler side of Karna's character.

The author lays emphasis on the nobler side of Karna's character and highlights his generosity in giving away his flesh earrings and armour to Indra, knowing full well that he would become vulnerable and would not be able to kill Arjuna. When Karna is on his deathbed, an old beggar comes to him and Karna remembers that he has a golden tooth, and he takes a stone, breaks his tooth and satisfies the beggar. Savant has invested Karna with superhuman qualities to compensate for the inadequacies in his character. He has also in a roundabout manner established a link between Krishna and Karna to suggest Karna's nobility.

Savant in *Mrityunjay* has undermined the original story of Mahabharat by placing Karna at the centre and making innumerable additions and modifications in the original epic story. The novel is an attempt to offer a different interpretation of a long-established fountainhead of Indian literary tradition and to view the epic from the point of view of Karna, who remains a marginal and neglected character in the epic.

Shivaji Savant's innovative attempt in *Mrityunjay* is followed by a radical innovation in the story of epic by Shashi Tharoor in *The Great Indian Novel*. He literally translates the word Mahabharat into English to arrive at the title of his novel, *The Great Indian Novel*. It is neither a literal translation nor a transcreation of *Mahabharat*, but a twentieth century novel whose primary inspiration is the epic *Mahabharat*. V.V. or Ved Vyasa, The narrator in the novel claims it to be "A song of modern India" (Tharoor 6). However, the novel is based on the Indian politics of Pre and Post-Independence era. Most of the important freedom fighters and politicians are superimposed on the characters from epic. A close corresponding equivalence is shown between the history of ancient and modern India. The novel can also be seen as the retelling of the history of twentieth century India in terms of *Mahabharat*.

The novel closely follows the narrative structure of the epic. It is divided into eighteen books as the original epic. But the story of Mahabharat is shifted to twentieth century British India. Kanishka Chowdhury in "Revisioning History: Shashi Tharoor's Great Indian Novel" considers the novel as an attempt to revise and rewrite the history of Indian subcontinent, a breaking away from western tradition of historical discourse and a post-colonial response to former colonizers.

But In his retelling of *Mahabharata*, or retelling of the story of Indian freedom struggle, Tharoor

wittily blends the epic tale with history of twentieth century India. The result of this blending is a parody of *Mahabharat*, a burlesque or a sort of 'Mock Epic'. Abrams in *A Glossary of Literary Terms* defines burlesque as “an incongruous imitation”; that is, it imitates the manner (the form and style) or else the subject matter of a serious literary work or a literary genre, in verse or in prose, but makes the imitation amusing by a ridiculous disparity between the manner and the matter” (26). The novel appears to be a bizarre combination of mythology, history and politics. There are allusions ranging from mythology to geography to the writings of several other writers like Kipling and Paul Scott. The author has used the serious form of an epic to create a light hearted parody of Mahabharat. The immense framework of the epic has been used to create hilarious situations. The disparity between the form and manner and language of the author has resulted in a bantering mass of incidents. The incongruous imitation of the epic form in the novel has resulted into a 'Mock Epic or a burlesque'. Similarly, the novel is an irreverent parody of the story of Indian freedom struggle. Most of the freedom fighters including Mahatma Gandhi and Subhash Chandra Bose are caricatured. The important events of Indian history are presented as funny and amusing. Everything and everyone in the novel is treated in a flippant and ironic tone.

The protagonist of the *Great Indian Novel* is Bhishma Gangaji, a weird combination of *Mahabharata's* Bhishma Pitamah and the father of our nation, Mahatma Gandhi. Similarly, most of the characters from *Mahabharat* are superimposed upon Indian politicians to yield most weird blends. Some of these blends include Dhritarashtra and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Pandu and Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, and Duryodhan and all his brothers are represented by a single woman, Priya Duryodhani, who stands for Mrs. Indira Gandhi. Tharoor has taken unlimited liberty with the characters from both the tales to amuse the readers.

When the characters from *Mahabharat* become actors in modern Indian politics, their heroic actions become very comic. For instance, when Arjun tries to abduct Subhadra at the behest of Krishna, he gets lost in the dark alleys of the city, and carries away a prostitute. When Yudhishtir wants to tell a lie to Dronacharya about the death of Ashwathaman, he catches a cockroach, names it ashwathaman and crushes it, and informs Dronacharya that Ashwathaman is dead. The novel is full of such hilarious actions of great heroes from grand epic.

The author has attempted to demystify all the events that are presented in the epic as miraculous, supernatural and divine. Tharoor has considerably altered not only the plot and characterization but also the moral of the *Mahabharat*. The epic is originally a tale of conflict between the good and evil and ultimate victory of good over evil. But in *The Great Indian novel* evil triumphs over good and goodness is presented as a weakness.

Tharoor in his novel has not only twisted the narrative of *Mahabharat*, but also that of Indian freedom struggle. And the result is a splendid mock epic which may compare favourably with Alexander Pope's *Rape of Lock* and Dryden's *MacFlecknoe*. The Novel is a unique version of Indian history. It is not only funny but also insightful. It offers a new way of interpreting the events of history.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Palace of Illusions* is an inventive endeavor to retell *The Mahabharat* from Draupadi or Panchali's point of view. Panchali, The narrator of the novel sketches her life, beginning with her magical birth in fire as the daughter of a king. Followed by her suffocating childhood in the palace of King Drupad. Her brother Drishtyadyomna and Daima are her only companions. Panchali from her early childhood pines for a grand and beautiful palace. Her dream is fulfilled after her marriage to five Pandavas, when demon Maya builds a magical palace for them. The title of the novel derives from this palace.

Panchali is fascinated by the prophecy that she will change the course of history. Her curiosity about her future takes her to Maharishi Ved Vyasa and she comes to know that she will wed five men. After choosing Arjun in swayamvar she is compelled by Kunti to marry all five Pandavas. Her married life is governed by the rules made by Ved Vyasa and she is gradually distanced from Arjun.

Panchali then goes on to narrate her determined balancing act as a wife of five husbands who have been cheated out of their father's kingdom. She constantly stirs the Pandavas to reclaim their birthright. She remains with them through years of exile. She then goes on to narrate her stratagems to take over control of her household from her mother-in-law, her own, lovely dream palace at last, and then the unbelievable traumas that follow. Her home, freedom and honor are gambled away by her own husband. Dushasan tries to disrobe her in public. She then recounts her terrible life of hiding, servitude, evading assault and finally, the grim justice of war and a lonely death falling off a mountain.

Most of this narrative is based on the original epic. But the author adds other imaginative twists of her own. Panchali's complicated friendship with the inscrutable Krishna, and her secret attraction to Karna, who is her husband's most dangerous enemy are the figments of author's imagination.

*The Mahabharat* as a whole is thoroughly imbued with a patriarchal culture and moves inexorably towards patriarchy, and Divakaruni in the preface to her novel *The Palace of Illusions* states that she is dissatisfied with the depiction of women like Kunti, Gandhari and Draupadi in *Mahabharata*. They are shadowy and insignificant. Their role is subservient to men. In order to recompense for this, she in *The Palace of Illusions* tells the story of Mahabharat from the point of view of Draupadi, as seen through the eyes of a woman. Panchali is depicted as a three dimensional and fascinating woman.

Divakaruni in *This novel* gives an unexpected feminist interpretation of an epic story. Panchali's significant role in the life of Pandavas and her role in causing the battle of Kurukshetra is unmistakably brought out. She is granted divine vision by Maharishi Ved Vyasa during eighteen days of Kurukshetra battle. She is the only woman to witness the entire battle of Kurukshetra. In the grand epic of kings and Gods, the author highlights the importance of a woman's position. By making such imaginative additions to the story.

Divakaruni brings in Panchali's secret love for Karna, the arch enemy of her husbands. Panchali's love for Karna is the most significant departure from the original story. Her love for Karna represents Panchali's assertion of her freewill against a strange marriage of convenience.

The above analysis of the three novels clearly brings out the subversion implicit in these novels against the established and traditional narrative of The Mahabharat. All the three authors have fully exercised their prerogative and retold the story of The Mahabharat from different points of view to highlight the aspects of the story ignored or marginalized in the original epic. Shivaji Savant's *Mrityunjay* is an attempt to view the epic from the point of view of Karna, who remains a marginal and neglected character in the epic. Tharoor in *The Great Indian Novel* wittily blends the epic tale with history of twentieth century India which results in a hilarious mock Epic. Divakaruni in *The Palace of Illusions* gives a feminist interpretation of *Mahabharat*. She has placed the women in the forefront of the action, and has revealed the story that lay invisible between the lines of the men's exploits.

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**CULTURAL TRANSFIGURATION AND IDENTITY CRISIS IN  
JHUMPA LAHIRI'S *INTERPRETER OF MALADIES***

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Jhumpa Lahiri's "Temporary Matter" is one of the short stories in her collection of short stories *Interpreter of Maladies*. Shoba and Shukumar are the protagonists of "Temporary Matter". The rapport between the two starts shrinking after their child's birth. There was a time when both of them were very intimate to each other. Shukumar feels that nowadays Shoba is no more interested in house hold chores. What the couple struggle to retrieve is unknown to them. The intimacy they had before their child's birth is no more now. It seems as if the dead child has broken the tenderness between them. Lahiri successfully portrays the relationship between the couple before and after the death of their new born child. Shoba is usually more enthusiastic in nature. As for Shukumar's knowledge, she keeps her home very well and often surprises him with new dishes and birthday cakes. But now she has dropped her satchel in the hallway and doffed her sneakers hastily when she enters. "She wasn't this way before. She used to put her coat on a hanger, her sneakers in the closet, and she paid bills as soon as they came. But now she treated the house as if it were a hotel. It was typical of her. She was the type to prepare for surprises, good and bad." (IPM6)

Secrecy leads to broken trust. Shukumar maintains silence about their dead child, which Shoba is expecting him to tell. Soon they start avoiding each other, have their dinners separately. But the fate never gives up on them. The temporary power outages in their locality enhance their intimacy which the couple is groping for past six months. According to the novelist "For five days the electricity would be cut off for one hour". Shoba uses that opportunity to bring out the secrets which they hesitate to reveal each other. Shukumar prepares himself for that one precious hour, which he is going to spend with his wife.

Both longs for the affinity they missed for long time in their three bedroom house. Once they start speaking during the power outages, they come closer to one another. It was strong enough for them to make love which they have forgotten for a long time. Sharing the secrets and making time for our close ones will help enhance our relationships. It is a slow process of regaining their love for each other. Evidently Shoba let out the matter of moving to a new house without Shukumar. When Shukumar's turn came, he reveals the gender of their baby. "Our baby was a boy," he said. "His skin was more red than brown. He had black hair on his head. He weighed almost five pounds. His fingers were curled shut, just like yours in the night." (IPM22). The long awaited truth triggers her emotions. Both weep for what they knew now and also for what they have lost. Their weeping symbolizes their reunion after having a hard time in a course of period. It also exposes the agony of separation they are experiencing being in a same house.

Lilia the narrator of the story "When Mr.Pirzada Came to Dine" is only ten years old. India and its history are new to her, as she acquainted to American culture and its way of life. She considers Mr.Pirzada as an Indian but her father corrects her that he is no longer an Indian as he belongs to Dacca. Dacca is no longer belongs to India since partition. Little Lilia expresses her confusion through these words.

It made no sense to me. Mr.Pirzada and my parents spoke the same language, laughed at the same jokes, looked more or less the same. They ate pickled mangoes with their meals, ate rice every night for supper with their hands. Like my parents, Mr.Pirzada took off his shoes before entering a room, chewed fennel seeds after meals as a digestive, drank no alcohol,

for dessert dipped austere biscuits into successive cups of tea. (IPM25)

These political contrasts are tough for Lilia. Though she does not know Mr.Pirzada's first visit to her home, still she feels an intimacy towards him. She never feels India as her home country, but Mr.Pirzada's arrival induces her eagerness to know about her India. Mr.Pirzada was a lecturer in a University in Dacca, and lived in a three storey house along with his wife and seven daughters. The Pakistan government has awarded him a grant to study the foliage of New England in America. Lilia feels sympathy for him as he misses his family in Dacca. Every day when Mr.Pirzada comes to dine, he buys chocolates for Lilia as he is fond of her very much. He buys chocolates for Lilia regularly, though her mother protests such gifts blaming him of spoiling her.

She collects the gifts he has bought for her as a treasure in her sandalwood box which was used by her grandmother. Day after day they feel comfortable with his presence. But at the same time, he often laments about his family in Dacca where a civil war has broken and Dacca has been invaded. Soon she takes pity on him and prays for his family's safety in Dacca. Intimacy between Lilia and Mr.Pirzada becomes closer during the Halloween party. He helps her by carving the pumpkin to prepare a jack-o'-lantern. She even prays for his family's safety every night sincerely though she has never prayed for anyone in her life. He is Muslim, but that does not bother her. It is a secular type of prayer with the candy given by Mr.Pirzada. She likes going to bed with candy in her mouth.

Mr.Kapasi in the short story "Interpreter of Maladies" is a tourist guide and a taxi driver. He works as an interpreter also in a hospital for Gujarati-speaking patients. Mrs.Das is fascinated by his work and asks him to cure her from the guilty conscious of her secret affair. But Kapasi is charmed by Mrs.Das's beauty thinking that she has some attraction towards him. On the other hand Mr.Das is unaware of his wife's decreasing fondness and her secret affair. When Mr.Kapasi comes to know about her affair, he is startled and benumbed unable to answer. All the adult characters represented here, lead a loveless life. The interest Mr.Kapasi develops on her evaporates when he learns that she considers him as a parent. Here the dried out river in Konark temple is a symbolic representation of Das's loveless life. The atrocious monkeys threaten the family's safety which is much like Mrs.Das's secret and guilt.

Boori Ma the sweeper of the stairwell is the protagonist of the story "The Real Durwan". She cleans the four storey building's steps twice a day. This story is all about the partition of India-Pakistan, which has affected Boori Ma as well. Before starting her work, she starts narrating her past glory. Her third daughter's wedding menu begins as she reaches second floor.

We married her to a school principal. The rice was cooked in rosewater. The mayor was invited. Everybody washed their fingers in pewter bowls...Mustard prawns were steamed in banana leaves. Not a delicacy was spared. Not that this was an extravagance for us. At our house, we ate goat twice a week. We had a pond on our property, full of fish. (IPM71)

She is sixty years of age and her knees would swell during the start of every rainy season. Thinking and talking of her past life is an oasis to her, but this is an amusement to the residents. Slowly people settle the issue that the old lady must have been hired as a helper by a prosperous *Zamindar* in her past and therefore she is making some fictitious stories out of it. She makes it as a routine of cleaning the stairwell in the morning and narrating her past glory. Everything goes well, till the Dalals "install the basins" in the building. Boori Ma acts as a Durwan by protecting the building from the trespassers and thieves. But the basins become the reason for Boori Ma's cast out as it is stolen. Boori Ma the poor sweeper is helpless while the residents throw her out without mercy. The residents ignore Boori Ma, and start searching for a Real Durwan that shows their folly of disregarding the Real Durwan.

"Sexy" another short story in the collection reflects the theme of identity crisis. Miranda an American girl loves an Indian Dev. Miranda is in the brink of transforming to Indian culture. Even she starts looking for Indian recipes. Miranda is delighted by Dev's confession of mentioning her name which contains Indian name "Mira". In Western terms, sexy is someone sexually attractive. So, Miranda becomes

euphoric when Dev mentions her Sexy. But in the Indian language it also means that “loving someone you don't know”. Rohin is Lakshmi's cousin's son who also confesses that Miranda is sexy. Rohin's father left him and his mother because of a white woman he met in flight. When Miranda hears this from Rohin, she cannot help feeling pity for him.

On the other hand, Miranda tries to be an Indian in all aspects. She is searching Calcutta in India map, plans to try Indian recipes for cooking, searching Madhuri Dixit in vain. But she drops the idea of trying Indian food as it will be too spicy for her, and the search for Madhuri Dixit video has ended by confusing it as Mottery instead of Madhuri. Dev and his manliness make her exhilarate and slowly she is haunted by Indian culture and heritage. She forgets her own culture and Identity in course of time. The word Sexy is exemplified as it acts as an eye opener in this story. The word Sexy depicts as a compliment at first, later it becomes a wound and she walks away from Dev as she understands the real meaning through Rohin.

In the short story “Mrs.Sen's”, an Indian emigrant, Mrs.Sen, struggles in America to socialize with the new host culture. She is also a caretaker of Eliot, the American boy whose mother is working and nobody is there in his home. She never thought of leaving her family in India and living a lonely life in an unknown country. Her husband helps her learn to drive, buys her whatever she wants. But her childishness stops her from imitating the host culture. Often, Mrs.Sen complains to Eliot that her relatives in India think she is living a luxurious life in America. She is adamant in mingling with the people and the culture around her. Mr.Sen has encouraged her to learn to drive. The policeman too does not arrest her for the hit and the fish market gives preference for her when the fresh fish arrives. But she is not willing to step forward to make use of it.

Mrs.Sen chopping her vegetables with an iron blade on the stand where she rests her leg seems to be an imagery cleverly used by the writer. Eliot is amazed by the way the vegetables are chopped by her in an even shape and the way she dresses. She wears sari which is new to Eliot because his mother wears pants and skirts. The vermilion on her forehead, plaited hair, toe rings, and the recipes she cooks surprises him as he is never accustomed to such things. He never complains or comments about anything that Mrs.Sen does. Apart from this, it is Mrs.Sen's duty to embrace the host culture and start living with that. Adopting the new Western culture is hard for any Indian woman as the two cultures are extremely opposite to each other. Here also the true identity is in question. Basically Indian women suffer in the new land which they never encounter in their home land. “The breaking of people from their innate culture through physical dislocation as refugees, immigrants, exiles or the colonizing imposition of a foreign culture one can witness the displacement as the formative experience of our century.” (Ranjini, Ramakrishna 64)

“This Blessed House” is another short story, where Sanjeev and Twinkle are the newlywed couple, but both remarkably contrast each other in everything. Twinkle is not her original name, she adopts it from her childhood rhymes. Sanjeev is against her activities when she is more interested in Christian idols she finds around their new home. She finds the first idol from the kitchen, next from garden, and almost all over the house. Sometimes Sanjeev gets annoyed by her childishness in collecting the statues which do not belong to them. Both are married by their parents' wish and so they are not very much known to each other. It surprises Sanjeev that she is very much obsessed with a new religion and culture.

Twinkle is exaggerating the recent happenings in their house to her friend. She dresses like an American, she smokes, admires the Christian idols and decorates the house with the found statues. Sanjeev and Twinkle invite almost thirty people for their house warming party, his friends and colleagues and nearby Bengali families. Twinkle talks with the guests about how she finds the statues as a treasure hunt. The author implies the emigrants' life in a new land, because Mrs.Sen was not ready to go with her host culture. At the same time, Twinkle embraces the host culture without any hesitation. But she loses her true identity while hunting for the unknown factors around their house.

Mala the lady character in the short story “Third and Final Continent” is ready to abide by the customs of the new country as it is, but at the same time she is not ready to lose her own identity at any case.

Wearing sari, applying vermilion on her forehead is her true personality. Even Mrs. Croft appreciates Mala a “perfect lady”, when she sees her for first time. Mrs. Croft born in the 1800s and she has some criteria of women dressing and Mala's dressing has pleased her totally. Then narrator feels little unease by Mala's attires at first when she dresses in her traditional way for the dinner in a restaurant. Later she changes a little to acclimate to the country she settled in. At the same time, some people who are totally changed to the host culture are also portrayed in Jhumpa Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies*.

While portraying the theme of cultural dilemmas and dislocations of the migrants, Lahiri does not remain confined to the dislocations of migrants in foreign lands alone. Rather she projects dislocation as a permanent human condition. Man is disclosed in the world. He may have a home in the native nation, build a “home” in 'a new land' adapting to the cultures, but ultimately he has no home. (Kaur 34)

Comparing to all the women characters in *Interpreter of Maladies*, it is realized that the time will change everything. True Identity lies in the hearts of the emigrants, there is nothing to compare with one's attire, food and practices.

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## MEANDERING MEMORIES, MENDING TO LIVE: MEMORY, TRAUMA AND NARRATION IN GITHA HARIHARAN'S *FUGITIVE HISTORIES*

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### **Abstract:**

*The miracles of memory, the mysteries of the remembering and the forgetting has always fascinated the researches in the fields of Philosophy, Cognitive Psychology, Anthropology, Sociology and Literary studies as well. The emergent field of memory theory provides a relevant platform to examine not only the autobiographical narratives but also the fiction that emphasizes the stories of the character's autobiographical memories. Underscoring the deep connections between memory and story, the present paper attempts to explore the world of memories with a special focus on an eminent French psychiatrist, Pierre Janet's concept of narrative memory and its processing capacity which works through the meaning mechanism theory as discussed in existential-humanistic psychology. Through the complex texture of personal memories and collective trauma as displayed in Githa Hariharan's mnemonic opus, *Fugitive Histories*, the present paper interprets narrative memory as scaffolding that saves the self from crumbling under the burden of tormenting experiences of trauma and loss.*

**Key Words:** *Memory, trauma, Narrative, Meaning Mechanism*

Thou who stealest fire,  
From the fountains of the past,  
To glorify the present, oh! haste,  
Visit my low desire!  
Strengthen me, enlighten me!  
I faint in this insecurity,  
Thou dewy dawn of memory!

(Tennyson)

Tennyson sings of memory as a divine (de)light, which is interpreted as the space used to restore the experience we have. Explaining the need of human memory, the eminent psychologist Freud remarks: "We find it hard to believe, however the permanent traces of excitation such as these are also left in the system of perceptual consciousness. If they remained constantly conscious, they would very soon set limits to the system's aptitude to receive excitations." According to Freud, Memory is as a container in which we restore our thought, knowledge and experience. It is the capacity that we develop in order to save the space in the system of perceptual consciousness for receiving fresh excitations. Adding to Freud's concept, a French psychiatrist Pierre Janet who is a pioneer in the research of traumatic memory viewed the memory as "the central organizing apparatus of the mind, which categorizes and integrates all aspects of experience and automatically integrates them into ever enlarging and flexible meaning schemes." Janet interprets memory not only as containing capacity for experience but as a processing capacity which at all times was organizing and synthesizing the incoming information in the light of previous integrated memories." (Perry and Lawrence, 28) This capacity of memory helps the characters to tackle new events efficiently by establishing an analogy to the experience stored in the memory system. Emphasizing the processing capacity of memory as an action of telling a tale, Janet points out the linguistic operation of

memory. Janet's theory of memory explains the narrative memory as the process of experiencing events, storing, recounting, comprehending and then assimilating. We use narrative memory to integrate our experiences and to maintain our psychic lives as a unified whole. Githa Hariharan's Novel *Fugitive Histories* is narrative that meanders through images retrieved from memory. It is built on the memories and real life experiences of three women: Mala, her daughter Sara and Yasmin, one of the victims of 2002 riots in Gujrat. Through a complex texture of personal memories and collective trauma, the novel unfurls a chiaroscuro history of communal violence in Godhara Carnage. It seeks to explore the underlying subtexts of the collective and individual memory that bears the imprint of a troubled past and is in consequence shaped by it.

The novel hovers round three characters Mala, Sara and Yasmeen. It shifts its locations from Delhi to Mumbai to Ahmedabad. All the three central characters face identity crisis. Mala, who has lost her husband Asad, wants to know what she is without Asad. Sara does not know whether she should stay at her job in Mumbai or go off to Ahmadabad with her roommate Nina and write the script for Nina's documentary about the about Godhara carnage. She also faces the dilemma of what it means to be half Hindu and half Muslim (with a Hindu mother and Muslim father). The riot-affected girl, Yasmeen just wants to be what she was before misfortune struck.

While memory itself has been a topic of study in literature for years specifically, autobiographies, and more especially men's autobiographies, have been studied with fervor by many literary theorists it is only since the 1980s that critical attention has turned towards women's autobiography. Attention has also moved in recent years towards an investigation of memory in fiction. However, applying current ideas in psychology and cognitive science, such as those detailed in psychologist and memory theorist Daniel Schacter's study of memory, to literary works is a new endeavor. Making such a connection can be illuminating Schacter himself develops a discussion of Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in the introduction to his overview of memory theory, *Searching for Memory*. Evelyne Ender and Suzanne Nalbantian have written the only book-length studies applying contemporary scientific theories of memory to literature. However, Ender focuses most of her study on Proust, George Eliot, de Nerval, Freud, and Woolf, while Nalbantian's attention remains primarily on male authors, such as Rousseau, Proust, Faulkner, and Borges. James Olney, in another text on life-writing and memory, also focuses on male authors, specifically St. Augustine, Rousseau, Vico, and Beckett. Other authors, like Sidone Smith and Julia Watson, have written extensively on women's autobiographical texts, but have not focused on memory theory. The present paper attempts to apply current concepts of narrative memory theory to the analysis of Githa Hariharan's mnemonic opus, *Fugitive Histories*, with a special focus on memory's potential for resistance to oppression.

The novel opens with Mala's attempts at digging her memories of her husband. The first section of the novel entitled Missing Persons moves with Mala's memories of Asad, his creative life as an artist, the several displacements which they under went before they settled at Delhi. Sifting through the sketches left behind by Asad on restless summer afternoons and sleepless nights, Mala summons ghosts from childhood, relives the heady days of love and optimism when Asad and she robustly defied social conventions with their inter-religious marriage. The opening of Asad's trunk, more than that of cupboards proves an altogether different experience which sweeps out her restraint and she is caught unaware in the vortex of memories of her husband: "There are sketchbooks inside, what at first looks like dozens of them. Packed tightly, row after neat row. Rows, piles encompass a lifetime" (*Fugitive Histories*,5)

Mala takes recourse to go back to stories which have layers to be peeled off. These stories of her past life seem to form a kind of chain and Mala has to unravel them if she has to reconcile herself with the loss of Asad. In the long chain of stories which are real and have affected her life positively, Mala recalls her parental household. As a child Mala wanted to find a place to be in or a thing to do what would set her free from her family, her home, her school in the city, her annual summer home in the village. What she

wanted was to be set free from herself: What she really wanted was to be someone else.”

Mala's memories of her grandparents highlight the constraints which were imposed on women. Mala recalls how her despotic grandfather had confined her grandmother, Bala to store room because he had seen her sitting on the roof of the house. This memory of grandfather's despotic attitude is interspersed with Mala's memory of her life at Delhi with Asad. Mala's visits down the memory lanes shape a narrative frame which is concerned not only with the formal elements of a narrated *memory's* construction for instance, how the events are ordered and where emphasis is placed but also the existing narrative models and stories that are available to help her understand and shape her experiences, story forms that she has encountered that provide examples of and models for understanding and narrating her personal experiences. Such frames have a vital impact on the way one tells one's memories, for the way one put one's memories into story “affects the structure of recall, which in turn affects the structure of later recall”. When the psychologists and the social scientists speak of memory, they tend to speak of memory's narrative structures. Jerome Bruner, a psychologist who has investigated how “narrative form directs our memory”, suggests that in order to create storied memories, one must have “a grasp of narrative structure” (Seulin, 18). Such structures or narrative frames shape our autobiographical memories. Hariharan presents both Mala and her daughter Sara engaged in what may be called imaginative journey into the world of loss. While Sara visits Asad's grave both in person and in dream, Mala seeks psychic comfort through the memories of Asad by looking into his sketchbooks. Sara is drawn to retrospective memories of the time and space which formed the last days of her father's life. Sara feels the pain of loss as well as the helplessness of her mother and that of her own. Sara wished that her father should be cremated after Hindu rituals but her brother Samar decided otherwise, ignoring what Sara and Mala thought or felt about the final rites. Moreover, the recollection of her friend, Laila's sad plight shakes Sara to the roots. Sara distinctly recalls Laila's second marriage and then feels the void left by Laila's tragic end. The news reached Sara quite late that Laila and her husband were burnt to death when Mumbai erupted. In that sense, Sara's memory of Laila places the communal violence in perspective.

The First section of the novel is marked by a sense of loss which ramifies into Mala's unbearable loss of her husband, and then into Sara's painful memory of what happened to her friend Laila. Laila had to suffer two tragedies: divorce and her brutal death by being burnt alive along with her husband in the flare up of 2002 Gujrat riots. Unlike her mother. Sara has other props to hold on while drifting through the memories of loss. She does not stay in the same place and crosses the borders, comes to Ahmedabad from Mumbai and decides to help Yasmin as she is not prepared to suffer another loss. She meets Yasmin with her friend Nina who is working for a documentary on Godhara Victims. Sara does not believe in the authenticity of the documents which she has assiduously and painfully collected. Her mind acts like that of a surgeon who makes incision on a specific part of the body, reaches inside and performs the surgery. She feels intrigued by the situation which has appeared to her only as an overview. So she gets caught up in the dilemma of what is real and what is unreal. She is anxious about two things: the right question to ask and the courage to broach those questions

Explicating the interrelationship between memory and narrative, Janet remarks, “Memory, like belief, like all psychological phenomena, is an action; essentially, it is the action of telling a story.... The teller must not only know how to narrate the event, but also know how to associate the happening with the other events of his life, how to put it in its place in that life history which each of us is perpetually building up...” (Ross, 161) And so, Janet emphasizes the linguistic operation of memory by regarding it as “an action of telling a story” For instance, after losing his wife Joy Davidman to cancer, C. S. Lewis was devastated and overwhelmed by grief and his assumptive world was shattered. He lost all senses of meaning of life. With courageous honesty, Lewis documented his personal struggle with pain, doubt, rage, and fear of personal mortality and his eventual recovery in *A Grief Observed*. At the end, he was able to rediscover faith and meaning and experience growth in his soul. Listen to his poignant conclusion: "Only

torture will bring out the truth. Only under torture does he discover it himself." (Lewis 56) Ralph Waldo Emerson once wrote: "When it is dark enough, men see stars." The stars of hope and healing often reveal themselves only to those languishing in the dark abyss of sorrow and grief.

Meaning management is essential to this transformative process. In order to move forward, we have to somehow reconstruct our meaning-systems in order to adapt to different set of realities following bereavement. This evolution of meaning in response to loss continues so that we can maintain some sense of coherence in the midst of change and loss. We can experience positive changes, when the dead are weaved into the fabric of life, and the past is integrated with the future as the basis for self-identity. Sara's decision to support Yasmin signals the significance of meaning management. Echoing Frankl's assertion that "...the quest for meaning is the key to mental health and human flourishing" (157), constructivism is a postmodern approach to psychology that emphasizes people's need to impose meaning on their life experiences. A fundamental proposition of constructivism is that humans are motivated to construct and maintain a meaningful self-narrative, defined as "an overarching cognitive-affective behavioral structure that organizes the 'micro-narratives' of everyday life into a 'macro-narrative' that consolidates our self-understanding, establishes our characteristic range of emotions and goals, and guides our performance on the stage of the social world" (Neimeyer, 5354).

Meaning management refers to managing our life through meaning. More specifically, it refers to the need to manage-based processes, such as meaning-seeking and meaning-making, in order to understand who we are (identity), what really matters (values), where we are headed (purpose), and how to live the good life in spite of suffering and death (happiness). Therefore, meaning management is to manage our inner life, which is the sum total of all our feelings, desires, perceptions, thoughts, our inner voices and secret yearnings, and all the ebbs and flows of our consciousness. The objective of meaning management is to manage all our fears and hopes, memories and dreams, hates and loves, regrets and celebrations, doubts and beliefs, the various meanings we attach to events and people, in such a way as to facilitate the discovery of happiness, hope, meaning, fulfillment, and equanimity in the midst of setbacks, sufferings, and deaths."

The relevance of meaning management becomes self-apparent if we recognize that successful grief resolution and transformation involve the following meaning-related processes: (a) Revising one's identify, (b) re-evaluating one's values and priorities, (c) seeking new purposes and directions for one's life in terms of investing in new goals and relationships, and (d) taking adaptive actions to regain the joy and passion for living in spite of the loss.

Ritu Menon and Kamla Bhasin in their work, *Borders and Boundaries*, observe that while the Partition of 1947 disrupted the lives of millions, particularly women, it ironically, also proved to be liberating in many ways. The need for economic survival coupled with the „breakdown of traditional constraints on their mobility□ propelled thousands of women on the path of education enabling them to enter public spaces for the first time (205). Githa Hariharan□s novel *Fugitive Histories* (2009), too, explores the paradoxical effects of the chilling violence of 2002 on women. The novel, centring on the lives of the Muslim women in a relocated colony in Ahmedabad evocatively captures how the upheaval caused by violence and migration pushes women from the threshold of domesticity into the outside world. It traces the first tentative steps that these women take towards recovery and independence, and records the daily battles that they wage in the face of excruciating losses. In an attempt to reconstruct their lives, the women inhabiting the colony sew skirts which are then sold with the help of NGOs. Before 2002, Yasmeen□s father had a decent business. Her mother was a house wife with no worries or complaints. Post 2002, they are emotionally and financially drained. Yasmeen□s mother is forced to incessantly work on the sewing machine so that her school fees can be paid and her father's medicines can be bought. Even young children, who should ideally be in school, attend sewing classes or learn to make kites to supplement family incomes. Hariharan, thus, explores how women's lives are drastically transformed by such experiences, foregrounding the manner in which, within their own familial and community circles, they are forced to



take on roles that they had never envisaged. However, the liberating aspect of violence is just an infinitesimal part of the story. With the notion of honour being so deeply entrenched, it cannot be overlooked that one of the ways in which women are directly affected in the aftermath of violence is the manner in which issues pertaining to women's empowerment such as education, equality and gender justice take a back seat. In the name of defending a community and its women, community and religious leaders often take a regressive stand vis-à-vis women that equates to an infringement of their basic rights. The narrative, exploring the essentially contradictory ramifications of communalism, reinforces how violence recasts women as keepers of faith and heightens their awareness of vulnerability, often undoing whatever little progress women may have been achieved. Hariharan's narrative, therefore, captures the predicament of women caught between their own dreams and the community's dictates. In the novel, many people in the re-settled colony are unable to understand why Yasmeen's parents are so keen on their daughter's education. Many object to her going to school and some are shocked to know that she even intends to go to college. Her friend Sultana's education has been discontinued although she is even younger than Yasmeen. This decision is driven by both necessity and fear. Her mother cannot afford to send her to school and she is instead sent to learn sewing to contribute to the household expenses. Moreover, given the existing paranoia, safety emerges as a major concern. Many of the families feel that it is "dangerous for our girls to travel, anything can happen" thereby choosing a cloistered life for young girls and women (*Fugitive Histories*, 227). Therefore, young girls are also pressured to marry early and there is a greater insistence on following the *hijab*. On being advised that Yasmeen take the veil if she goes to college, her mother retorts: The angry ones on both sides want to put our daughters in burqas so that they can prove their point. Did their burqas keep our women safe five years ago? (*Fugitive Histories*, 227) By emphasizing the need to discover a larger vision and a higher purpose for human existence, meaning management provides one of the keys to resilience. It emphasizes the transcendental function of grief, which awakens one's spiritual and existential yearnings, and spurs one to rise above the painful experiences of mourning. Recovery always involves the reconstructing of painful and sorrowful experiences through the transformation of assigned meanings. One can never go back to the past. Therefore, recovery does not mean a return to the normal life before the bereavement. True recovery actually means that the bereaved person has found new meaning in memories which enables the person to reach a higher level of maturity. The meaning-management works through the narrative memory which supports trauma survivors to make sense their experiences.

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## HUNGER AND RESULTANT DEGRADATION IN KAMALA MARKANDAYA'S *NECTAR IN A SIEVE*

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Kamala Markandaya, who visualizes a better future for the people and the country, though she was an expatriate, lived in England for most of her life and became a freelance writer. With the publication of her first novel *Nectar in a Sieve* in 1954 she began her successful career. She ruminates on the problems of rural India. So her very first novel itself deals with peasants, their activities and their problems and anxieties. Through this successful beginning she has occupied a best place among Indian English Writers as one of the prestigious women writers in English.

The present paper studies the novel *Nectar in a Sieve* which deals with hunger, sufferings, derailed condition and degradation. The characters in this novel “are desperate because of the vagaries of natural calamities, the resultant constant hunger, ruthless machines and heartless men.” (Mahalakshmi 145). Rukmani, being a peasant in this novel and narrator of the story recollects her past life in a tranquil reverie. Every night reminisces her husband Nathan is with her. When “morning comes, the wavering grey turns gold he softly departs” (NS 3). Thus the novel begins.

The characters of this novel namely, Nathan, Rukmani, Kunthi, Irawaddy, Murugan, Ammu, Raja and Puli are folded with a blanket of starvation which is considered as the primary thing of degradation in this novel. As Anil Kumar Bhatnagar observes “The novel is not the story of Nathan and Rukmani alone. They represent thousands of innocent poor farmers living amidst the reign of terror and uncertainties let loose by thought, rapid industrialization and unemployment” (Kamala Markandaya A Thematic Study 4).

This degradation is due to the invasion of western Industry and modern technology in the form of tannery, causes incredible disaster in the lives of villagers who relied completely on the land offered by their landlords.

Though Kamala Markandaya presents the tannery as a bane of the villagers, she ultimately introduces the western man called Dr. Kennington as a boon in this novel, who cries out for the distressed peasants. He brings to light the inability of the peasants through these following lines

Times are better, times are better,' he shouts. 'Times will not be better for many months. Meanwhile you will suffer and die, you meek suffering fools. Why do you keep this ghastly silence? Why do you not demand-cry out for help-do something? There is nothing in this country, oh God, there is nothing!' (NS 46)

In this novel *Nectar in a Sieve*, Nathan and Rukmani being a newly married couple starts their livelihood with sowing, winnowing and cultivating their paddy fields. They lead their lives happily with relying this. The Years rolled by, the nature in which they relied on that alone became a betrayal one. Here Kamala Markandaya uses the word betrayal which is not just a word, but more than an embodiment of drought and starvation. Nature assaults them in the form of heavy rains follow-on during in floods. Initially they have no rice to sell. After a few days they have no rice to eat. Roots and leaves, the fruits of the prickly pear and plantains became food for them to live on. The second desolate of nature is in the form of drought.

By following this drought, they have undergone the menace of starvation and not paid their master's dues to continue their harvesting anymore. The following words will be quite evident of their

deteriorated condition.

He went into the hut and I followed. A few mud pots and two brass vessels, the tin trunk I had brought with me as a bride, the two shirts my eldest sons had left behind, two ollocks of dhal and a handful of dried chillies left over from better times: these we put together to sell. (NS 75)

Here, the first need of food itself is a barricade, then how one will lead the rest of his dreamful life. Every human being wishes to lead his life in a genuine way. But the basic needs determine his life, not him. Kamala Markandaya points out, how hunger plays a pivotal role in degrading them once and for all.

In this novel, there are so many sufferers who stuffed in the same tin of starvation. Though the author portrays Rukmani the protagonist and her husband Nathan as major sufferers, their children's life damages totally and comes to a dilapidated condition because of the cruelty of nature. The nights are always worse for them and once Nathan cries out loudly "A nightmare" (NS 82) "I saw the paddy turned to straw, the grain lost... Oh God, all was lost." (NS 82).

Rukmani and Nathan leave their home town for a well existence by seeking help from their third son Murugan who left home at his early age and married a town girl Ammu. On the contrary, they face exhaustion in finding not his son and undergo starvation without getting food. They fall under the work of stone-breakers to earn their food and find a temple to lie down at night. Kamala Markandaya here does not blame the poor peasants alone. Nature also plays a pivotal role in pushing them to vacate their home town. The tragedy of this novel is the people of villages are completely dependent on nature which finally made them a victim. The following words of Nathan unveil that how they blindly dependent on nature.

'You will see,' he said with confidence. 'We will find our strength. One look at the swelling grain will be enough to renew our vigour.' Indeed, it did our hearts good to see the paddy ripen. We watched it as a dog watches a bone, jealously, lest it be snatched away; or as a mother her child, with pride and affection. And most of all with fear.' (NS 96)

Like Nathan and Rukmani there are so many characters which have been caught in the hand of starvation. Next Raja falls in the deep rooted of hunger, the fourth son of Nathan and Rukmani, who is pitilessly attacked by lathi as he found in tannery while stealing calfskin for his hunger and fell into death eventually. When his parents come to know his death just they are frozen and they are told "He was not brutally treated or anything, you know. They merely tapped him with a lathi, as he was trying to escape, and he fell. He must have been very weak or something." (NS 94)

Previously Kamala Markandaya showcased to her readers how hunger makes a man, thief, but she does not stop with man alone. She continued to exhibit how the impact of hunger and starvation transferred to degrade the characters of women namely Kunthi, Irawaddy and Ammu. Hunger does not know the difference of men, women and children. It wreaks havoc on everyone's life. Consequently Kunthi is physically impoverished due to insufficient food so she starts to earn money by being a strumpet. Next to Knthi, Irawaddy who is married and unable to bear a baby also falls in the same ditch of fornication to feed his own afflicted brother after the departure of her husband. The following words of Irawaddy will be an evident to show, how she restarts her life with some hope. "Leave me alone, Mother. I have seen this coming for a long time. The reality is much easier to bear than the imaginings. At least now there is no more fear, no more necessity for lies and concealment." (NS 52)

Though the name Irawaddy makes known the meaning as one of the greatest rivers of Asia with precious water, here in this novel, it gives negative meaning because of hunger, drought, and circumstances which all these take a shape of dirt to corrupt the innocent Irawaddy into Irawaddy, the whore. Through this, Kamala Markandaya carries out the fact that it is hunger and starvation which both lead ultimately to degradation. Ira is forced to adopt prostitution in her frantic attempt to save the dying brother. On the whole, unbearable hunger hides in every unacceptable doings of Kunthi, Irawaddy and Ammu.

*Nectar in a Sieve* is a novel which illustrates how the menace of starvation and hunger wreck the

lives of the innocents and reduce them to people of unethical and immoral behavior. In the end, major characters of this novel discussed above fall a victim to demoralizing hunger and starvation. The readers of this novel will be profoundly moved when they wind up the reading of the first novel of Kamala Markandaya, who in her successive fictional works also offers a portrayal of the plight and predicament of the villagers.

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CHITRA BANERJEE DIVAKARUNI'S *SISTER OF MY HEART*

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Divakaruni's first novel *Sister of my Heart* is an emigrant narrative. It is about two cousins Sudha and Anju. They separate later, the former marrying a man in rural Bengal, and the latter marrying a man who settles down in America. They grow intimately as if the 'sisters of the heart.' They were born the same day, and the fathers of both died the same day. *Sister of my Heart* is said to be a national bestseller. Divakaruni's novel *Vine of Desire* is a sequel to *Sister of my Heart*. It is said, "*Sister of My Heart* is a story about family, friendship, and the bond between sisters." (Wikipedia *Sister 1*) Amazon Com writes,

*Sister of My Heart* spans many years and zigzags between India and America as the cousins first grow apart and then eventually reunite. Divakaruni invests this domestic drama with poetry as she traces her heroines' lives from infancy to motherhood, but it is Sudha and Anju who give the story its backbone. Anju might speak for both when she says, "In spite of all my insecurities, in spite of the oceans that'll be between us soon and the men that are between us already, I can never stop loving Sudha. It's my habit, and it's my fate." (Amazon com)

*Sister of my Heart* has two books the Book One, *The Princess in the Palace of Snakes* and Book Two -- *The Queen of Swords*. The two heroines. Sudha and Anju narrate their stories, past and present. In alternating chapters the reader closely follows the lives of Sudha and Anju through childhood and adulthood. Chapter One is called Sudha, and Chapter Two Anju. Sudha begins her story that includes others' stories. In the old days the first night after a child was born the divine character Bidhata Purush would descend on the earth and write the child's fate. We call it Setavi. The parents would keep silence. Sudha believed that this Setavi was followed by a demon for food. Sudha who tells of her mother Nalini, Anju's mother Gouri Ma, and a widow aunt Abha Pishi, tells also of how the two fathers were killed the same day. Probably they were killed when they went to a cave for stealing rubies. The girls are reared in Chatterjee's family (of Anju's). Sudha talks of the family's chauffeur Mr. Singhji, who himself is a refugee from the Punjab. It is hinted the Bidata Purush might have granted the ugly Anju a great future. On the other hand, the beautiful Sudha would, probably get the qualities of beauty, goodness, and possibly sorrow. Wikipedia adds:

Anju and Sudha grow up in a household run by their three mothers: Pishi, Gouri, and Nalini. Even though Anju and Sudha call each other sisters, they are technically cousins. Pishi is the girls' aunt. Pishi's youngest brother, Bijoy Chatterjee, married Gouri. Anju is their daughter. So in addition to Pishi and Gouri, there is Nalini, Sudha's mother. The family relationships may seem complicated, but they play an important role in the novel. (Wikipedia, *Sister 1*)

Chapter two is the story of Anju. Anju tells that she hates everyone except Sudha. She hates her mother Gouri, for she advocates the virtues of an ideal wife; her own mother, for she insists on study; and Pishi, for she follows the restrictions of widowhood. The thing is that Anju is like a 'new girl.' Like Sudha Anju criticizes her father for his courage to go to that cave and death. Her mother runs the family bookstore. Anju and Sudha stayed together in school. The two girls loved each other. The neighboring women like Sarita Aunty tried to reason with them for moderation. Anju loved Sudha because she was good and good-looking.

Sudha speaks of how her father destroyed the menfolk of the Chatterjee family. She speaks of the ghastly story of her father Gopal. He is referred to as 'black sheep,' meaning a cheater. Pishi is pickling

mangoes, and she tells Sudha, her father's story. Gopal, we understand, told Bijoy Chatterjee that he met a man, whose grandfather had gone to a cave in the Sundarbans. He got three rubies from there. He sold two, and probably became rich. Soon he had evil foreboding to the effect that he had to sell the remaining one if he has to have peace of mind. So he sold it to Gopal. Gopal pressed Bijoy to go to the cave for more rubies. Both left for Sundarbans for the rubies. Who knows what happened they did not return. Pishi said that her younger brother Bijoy on the day of going for ruby, disclosed the secret to her to the effect that Gopal was not their relative.

Anju gets her mother's gifts. She notices how Sudha avoids everyone lately. Sudha got a bedspread as a birthday gift. The Chatterjee family gets an emotional divide to such an extent that Sudha and her mother may get into trouble. Anju understands Sudha's painful situation. She thinks it lies in her cruelty.

A new film based on a romantic theme appeared. It featured a rich man's son falling in love with a dancing girl. Sudha and Anju, now aged 16, visit the Calcutta streets. Anju desired more freedom from her mother. They like to meet friends and watch films. Truly they go to a theatre for watching a film where a heroine falls in love with a man, but possibly ends up her life in tragedy. A man by the name Ashok sits next to Sudha, and the two fall in love with each other.

The older women or mothers learn the episode at the film theatre. Nalini scolds and beats Sudha. She complains thus:

'Then I have something to add,' says Aunt. 'Your Anju is a bad influence on my daughter. All the ideas read, she passes on to Sudha. Sudha would never have dared an escapade like today's on her own. I cannot interfere in how you deal with Anju, she is your daughter, after all, and her situation is very different from Sudha's. She is the only heir of the Chatterjees, while Sudha is just the poor cousin from nowhere oh yes, don't think I don't know what people say behind my back, Anju's position will shut a lot of gossiping mouths. But my poor Sudha, what does she have? Only her mother to ruin. That is why I've decided that she is not to leave the house, not even for school, unless Ramur Ma accompanies her.'*(Sister 57)*

Nalini decides to marry off her daughter. Sudha speaks of the bad music she faces because of the theatre-issue. Anju is frightened of Sudha's decision to abide by her mother. She wants to stop going to college, and marry. She wants to do business in clothes. Sudha worries about her destiny. She thinks her fate is closed. She notices Ashok when she is attending school in the strict vigilance of not only the driver Singhaji, but Ramur ma. Sudha makes a mistake by deciding to marry Ashok.

Anju joins Lady Brabourne College for graduate studies. Sudha does not join the college, and Anju decides to teach the college lessons to her friend. Anju celebrates her graduation. The two attend the last day of their school. They notice Ashok. Sudha speaks to him. She tells she stops from education, and decides for marriage. He is surprised. He gifts her a ring. The girls arrive back home. They have a gathering. Sudha tells Anju the beautiful story of the Princess in the Palace of Snakes. The author depicts the Chatterjee household where Gouri Ma faces a light-heart attack. She decides to marry off Anju.

Anju is afraid of her mother's health. Gouri Ma has decided to dispose the bookstore and marry off the girl. The speed of events frightens Sudha and she decides to consider Ashok. She plans to meet Ashok but finds a groom Ramesh. He is of a zaminadar family in Bardhaman, nearby.

The author writes of the Sanyals' visiting the Chatterjees for matrimonial alliance. Ramesh and his mother like Sudha for marriage. On the other hand, Sudha plans to marry Ashok, and plans to meet him at Kalighat the next day. Ashok thinks of elopement which Anju does not approve. Meanwhile, the Majumdar family makes a proposal for Anju.

Divakaruni writes: "Our stars must be really well aligned this month, Aunt N. keeps saying. First Sudha's marriage is all set, then I get a proposal, and now someone wants to buy the bookstore."*(Sister 132)*. Anju describes how the bookstore which the family ran for 75 years was sold and how it sheltered several committed workers like Palash, Jiten and Manish. The new party alterns the store, and a young man

appears there. He is discovered to be 'Mr. America' Mr. Suresh. Sunil's parents propose a matrimonial alliance with the Chatterjees. Sunil's father is a puritan and threatens the Chatterjees by saying that he will send back their Anju if he hears a scandal in the house later. Sunil likes Sudha more than he likes Anju. Meanwhile the family ruby raises a controversy.

Diwakaruni writes of the girls' childhood memories in the wake of their wedding just two days ahead. Many letters of gifts too, pour in. One letter, rather without an address, reaches Sudha's hand. Pishi worries about it. There are details about Anju's marriage to Sunil, and Sudha's to Ramesh. We also notice how Sudha's beauty distracts Sunil. One only feels that both Sudha and Anju should have married Sunil!

Book One ends with Anju and Sudha getting married on the same day. Sudha will move in with her husband and in-laws who live in another part of India. Anju's husband works in America, and she plans to join him after getting a visa.

Part-Two of the novel is "The Queen of Swords" and it has another twenty-two chapters in the same narrative pattern. The second part relates the story of Sudha and Anju as married women. It begins with Sudha's life just begun at the Sanyals. The new woman is happy more so because the Sanyals respect her more as she is fairer than them. We see Anju's new life in the Majumdar household. She is also their favorite. But Anju notices a scene in which her father-in-law quarrels with his wife. He insults his wife before the son and his wife; and once he is insulted by Sunil, he insults him with a reference to his whoring in America, which startles Anjali. The author depicts Sudha as 'Natan Bau', a new woman. Her mother-in-law gives her 'the bunch of keys'. This is like power-sharing. She takes care of the two young brothers-in-law. Sudha hears that Sunil went off to America.

There is Anju's visit to Sudha's house. The two women exchange their happy married thoughts. We see Sudha's household problems. One of them is about Sudha's not becoming pregnant. The author writes the kind of complex life Anju has in America. Sunil is a little uneasy. Anju is a little uneasy about Sudha's not becoming pregnant. Later Sudha takes a doctor's advice. The latter tells that the fault lies with Ramesh. We see Anju's concerns. She feels poor, because of Sunil's heavy payments to his father. Her concern for kith is seen in her phone calls. Sudha pays a visit to her ma's house, where Singhji (now settled down there) gives Sudha Ashok's letter. Ashok is waiting for her. Sudha once reaches her husband's house, is taken by Mrs Sanyal, to Shasti's temple, which is a Shakti place.

Later Anju becomes pregnant, and she informs it to Sudha. We see the old Sanyal household. Mrs Sanyal is extra careful for Sudha's health as she is pregnant. She is under the impression that she became pregnant because of going to Shasti Temple. Sudha receives a letter from Anju and reads about her pregnancy. There is Anju's call to Sudha who learns that she can deliver a female baby. Mrs Sanyal forces Sudha to go for an abortion, which the younger woman does not want to do. Ramesh is helpless. Maybe, they think of a divorce. Sudha returns to her mother. Gouri Ma speaks to Mrs Sanyal for a compromise. The Sanyals send a divorce letter.

The author depicts Anju's life in America. Anju is all right and she broods over Sudha's destiny. Sunil regrets that Sudha should have undertaken abortion. The couple worries about the social stigma. Anju thinks of inviting Sudha. There is a new start in Sudha's life. In the background of the Chatterjee's disposal of their house for a flat, Sudha receives her old lover Ashok. The two compromise with a step to grow her daughter separately. Sudha suffers. She has not yet married Ashok. She has started needlework as if a business. She speaks of the freedom the older women enjoy.

There is Anju's delivery. She delivers it at six months and the child dies. There is another glimpse of Sudha's life. She learns about Anju that her health is in a bad state. One day, Sudha speaks to Anju and learns that Anju suffered because of hard-work just to invite Sudha to America. Sudha gets ready to visit America. The last chapter is seminal to the end of the narrative. It depicts Sudha's travel to America. It depicts Singhaji as Sudha's changed father.

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**THE TREATMENT OF BLACKS IN RALPH ELLISON'S *INVISIBLE MAN***

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**Abstract:**

*Literature is the reflection of society. It includes novels, drama, short stories, poems etc. it provokes readers thought and transforms one's life. As we all aware of the fact that word has more power. It slices one's heart whereas powerful than sword. History is also a part of literature; it is interpreted, transformed and shaped in an artistic form of writing. It reiterates one's fear, frustration, anxiety, patience, anger and so on. It filters the emotions of the characters. The reader emotions are acted upon according to the situations. If the character finds joy the reader also feels happy and enjoys with it, if the reader finds the scene or an event unhappy then it makes the reader's heart heavy to sympathize or empathies with the character. It is a powerful tool where emotions are transformed irrespective of age, creed and colour. Literature seems to express strong emotions whereas racism plays an onus role. It helps understand the difficulties of people. They were victimized and marginalized by political power. Blacks were the longer victims of discrimination and injustice. Literature re iterates social equality within society and a high regard for human rights. The Researcher intends to analyse the treatment of blacks in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*. Blacks in all the aspects namely ,spiritually, emotionally, socially, religiously, politically and the sufferings of human and their pain and frustration is so well expressed in an art form. It provokes a brief historical background on blacks. As they're the minority group the whites looked down and treated them with much disrespect.*

African-American literature is that literature produced in the United States by those of African descent. This literature deals with the history of the African-Americans and African-American literature that focuses on a particular interest in the United States, such as African -Americans within the larger society of Americans. Its focus is on their need to change their experience and thoughts over the centuries in the American society. The African- American writer speaks about the African-American's experiences of suffering as slaves in the hands of America. African-American women's literature also can be approached from a number of perspectives. African-American art and culture are foremost in their minds. Many early collections of Black literature contain a common belief in Black cultural inferiority and White supremacy. No literary work written by a Black was acknowledged during the days when slavery was still in force. Such novelists as William Well Brown, Martin R. Delany, Harriet Wilson and Victor Sejour were noted pioneers of prose fiction, while Harper, George Moses Horton, Lucy Terry developed the poetic tradition begun by Wheatly. African-American writers have discussed African cultural tradition in various ways. The works of Robert Hayden, Richard Wright, Ralph Ellison, James Baldwin and Margaret Walker have written African tradition in various styles in the 1960s when the artistic creation in the black community was mingled with popular culture.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, authors such as W.E.B Dubois and Booker T. Washington also conversed about racist attitudes in the United States. During the American Civil Rights movement when few authors as Richard Wright and Gwendolyn Books wrote about racial segregation and Black nationalism, African-American literature became accepted as American literature. The following books are one of the

best examples of racism: *The Saga of an American Family* by Alex Haley, *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker and *Beloved* by Toni Morrison. So African-American tradition has been richly varied, in both ideology and form; as African Americans have slowly entered into the main stream of American life.

African-American Literature has several themes. It starts with a narrative by slaves in the past. In the Pre-revolutionary time, it focused on freedom and slavery in American society. In the civil war period, its themes were influenced by segregation and migration and the Black women's sufferings. The Harlem Renaissance period marked the turning point of African-American Literature. Everything changed. African-American writing supported this movement. In the early period their literary culture was dominated by the larger society but now they accepted their own culture and tradition. So African-American writing focuses on the folk culture or oral culture. It is based on African-American culture like spirituality, gospel music and the blues and etc., One of the important themes is Diaspora Heritage. It created a post colonial technique in their writings. Amongst the themes are African American culture, racism, slavery and equality. These are the role of African Americans within the American society. African American writing has happened to incorporate within itself oral forms like spirituality, sermons, gospel music, blues and rap.

The African-American's search for a black identity and maintaining a unique equality are other themes. African-American authors Harvart and Hendry Louis Gates Jr. deals with African literature. It claims that the Blacks, as a race, were inferior in other arts. It had a unique beginning, Black literature gave voice to the Blacks and they were able to speak about their experience as slaves in the American society. Henry Louis Gates Jr. says that the problem of color-lines, for example with effect from W.E.B Dubois wrote in *The Soul of Black Folk*. This work dealt with racism in African American literature. Modern Postmodern black literature shows the sufferings of people and how they deal with suffering, especially African American literature. For example, Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* Claims that Pocola's suffering and self-hatred lead to the hero's demise. So the themes demonstrate the sufferings to a new generation of readers tend to take any black work of literature literally. They take in only the message given by that work of art written by a Black writer.

Ralph Waldo Ellison one of the famous African-American writers, was born on March 1, 1914, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. He was American novelist, literary critic, scholar and writer. His father worked as a construction foreman and later the owner of a small ice-and-coal business who died when Ellison was three years old. He had one brother named Herbert Millsap Ellison; both were raised by their mother. His mother name Ida Millasap, was a nurse maid, and domestics servant, and active in politics for many years. Ellison studied in Douglas High school in Oklahoma City. As a child he was interested in music, plying trumpet. In 1933 Ellison attended classical composition at Tuskegee Institute under the instructions of William .L.Dowson, when he worked a number of odd job. In 1936, Ralph went to New York when he met Langston and Richard Wright; who gave him great encouragement in his writing

Ellison wrote many short stories, Essays and reviews and many other magazines journals in 1930s, at that time, his interested in social justice attracted him to the communist party. In 1943, Ellison joined merchant marine; the next year he received a Rosenwald Foundation Fellowship to write a novel *Invisible Man*, the novel that would establish him as a major writer. He spent on the book for five years, and it was published in 1952. Ellison is best known for his novel *Invisible Man*, Which won him the National Book Award for fiction in 1953. and *Invisible Man* is now regarded as one of the most important novel of the twentieth century. Ellison's second book, *Shadow and Act* (1964) is a collection of personal essays deals about Literature, Folklore, Jazz and the author's life. And also published several short stories and read others on television and lectures. His next collection of essay *Going to territory* (1986).

From 1955 to 1957 Ellison received a fellowship of the American Academy of Arts and Letters in Rome and he got the United States Medal of freedom in 1969. Ellison taught Bard college of Yale at the University of Chicago, he was professor in the Humanities at New York University. Ellison Married twice,

but he married Fanny Mc Connell in 1946, after that not available about his marriage life. Ralph Ellison died of pancreatic cancer at the age of 81, and buried in New York City on April 16, 1994. He is one of the important novelists of the twentieth century.

The writings of Ralph Ellison point out the anger and frustration hidden in every individual. The marginalization and racial concerns illustrate the reader their pain pushes their unique nature aside but focuses on their birthroot and their origins. The novel is a triumphant defence of an every individual who undergoes the racial problems in society. Saul Bellow comments Ellison's work as "brilliant individual victory". His writing makes the reader sympathize and travel with the character's life. It encapsulates the narrator's authentic nature and his search for autonomy. It deciphers that blackness plays an onus role despite one's brilliancy and good character. Whites always expect blacks to accept their inferior nature; they treat with cruel thoughts and don't feel empathetic about their life. Their dominant nature and supremacist ideals are felt throughout the novel. White people enslave blacks and ignore them by living in the bubble of privilege.

*Invisible Man* is an exemplar of African American literary work which deals with racism. The unnamed narrator meets an array of people in the novel. His life is so felt real and it offers a glimpse of racial thoughts.

I am an invisible man. No, I am not spook....I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids and I might even be said to possess a mind. I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me. Like the bodiless heads you see sometimes in circus sideshows, it is as though I have been surrounded by mirrors of hard distorting glass. When they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves or figments of their imagination (3).

Unlike most novels of his times, Ellison's *Invisible Man* is less of a protest and more of a record of the narrator's life. The various events in the life of the narrator unfold in the form of narration or writing by the unnamed narrator who is narrating from an underground room where he has been hiding. He narrates with a deep understanding of the workings of the minds of the various Black people whom he came across in on his journey from the South to Harlem in the North. More, importantly, he himself has undergone a great change from being naive to mature.

Instead of giving vent to his anger, Ellison uses his novel to make the point that recording the black man's history as it is the best way to try to change the racist society. The unnamed narrator's experiences that he narrates from his underground hideout are closely connected with Ellison's journey from disillusionment about the Communist Party to his realization or enlightenment about the true intent of the party's leaders. The novel was written as more of a record of the mental and emotional upheavals that the writer himself faced in his life, especially during his stay as a Communist Party member and after. He shared his disillusionment about the party and its aims to establish a world where everyone is equal despite being racially different with Richard Wright, another Black author of his times. He felt that the party betrayed his trust when he realized that it wasn't true to its self-declared principles and goals.

The party preached equality for all in the world which was what attracted Blacks like Ellison and Wright to it. But the realization that the party was only using the Blacks for political reasons and not even thinking of the Black community's welfare led the author to feel betrayed and left him mentally troubled.

The narrator in the novel also faces similar situations with what is known as the Brotherhood, a group formed by young Black men who profess to working for the betterment of the Black community in Harlem. He believed that the Brotherhood shared his passion for social equality for Blacks in a White-dominant society such as America was during that time. However, towards the end, he realizes that he had been deceived into believing so and that the Brotherhood didn't have the Harlem community's best at heart. The Brotherhood was just a group of young black men who had little idea of what was happening to the Black community in a racist world and also unwilling to do anything to change the plight of the Black man. These problems are created in the characters of Jim Trueblood, Dr. Bledsoe, Tod Clifton, Brother Jack and

Ras.

You my brother, mahn. Brothers are the same color; how the hell you call these white men brother? Shit, mahn. That's shit! Brothers the same color. We sons of Mma Africa, you done forgot? you black, BLACK! YOU ---Godabm, mahn!" He said, swinging the knife for emphasis. "You got bahd bair! You got thick lips! They say you stink! They hate you mahn, You African. AFRICAN! Why you with them? Leave that shit, mahn.... How they going to your brother?(370-71).

They came to district headquarters where the protagonist meets Brother Tod Clifton; a handsome, young black leader had a scar who fight with black nationalists. Their fights that the novel is the reminiscent of similarly inspired race battles between Detroit and Harlem. Ellison indented that his efforts to develop the creation of personal consciousness which insisted drawing on an the richness of black experience in America was a truly revolutionary movement leading to freedom.

This was something that Ellison had realized in his dealings with other contemporary Black writers. None of those writers had a proper insight into the lives of the Black people in America and, as a result, unable to help in changing the situation of the Black man. This failing on the part of Ellison and his contemporaries lead him to mental anguish. He sought relief from that mental anguish in the way of writing *Invisible Man*. The novel, therefore, is his expression of all that he went through and felt up till that time.

The theme of "being invisible" is present throughout the novel. The unnamed narrator is rarely acknowledged as a human being by both the Whites and the Blacks. He is subjected to cruelty, abuse and humiliation by even people whom he trusted like Dr. Bledsoe. He is victimized by everyone he meets because of his naivety. His unawareness of the threat that is posed to him because of his skin colour leads him to a lot of trouble beginning with his expulsion from college. He is subjugated by both Whites and Blacks. This was a reality that was a part of the society in Ellison's time. Finally, it is his "invisibility" that comes to the aid of the narrator. He is able to hide from the world in his underground hole with no fear of being found as the room he was in was a "sealed off" and "forgotten" part of a Whites only building. This is actually symbolic of a White-dominant society where the narrator seeks refuge in the solitude of his mind, here the underground hole. This invisibility symbolizes the racism of black people living in the place where, they are from origin to dominant society of America. The protagonist says that he is unseen not because of spook "I am not a spook like who haunted Edger Allan Poe; or I one of your Holly wood movie ectoplasms" (3).

Symbolism is a very significant technique used by the author. The dream that the author has after the Royal battle in the beginning sets the pace of the whole novel. In the dream, he sees his dead grandfather who coaxes him to open the briefcase containing his scholarship. On opening it, he finds inside not a scholarship but a note that says "keep this nigger running." With this begins his journey of physical and mental abuse, violence and disillusionment. The setting is surreal; the narrator, who has rejected some years later of hope and political involvement,

I fight my battle with monopolated Light & power. The deeper reason, I mean: It allows me to feel my vital aliveness. I also fight them for taking so much of my money before I learned to protect myself. In my hole in the basement there are exactly 1369 lights. I've wired the entire ceiling, every inch of it...Yet when you have lived invisible as long as I have you develop certain ingenuity (7).

He lives on the border of Harlem in an underground room, The hole or cellar is lighted by 1369 light bulbs, the heat and electricity are pirated from Monopolated Light and power which is symbolic of being enlightened with the revelation that recording the events that form a part of Black history is more effective in scent changing society than an actual protest. This is proved by the disastrous way in which the events of the protests by the Brotherhood ended. The narrator retrospection of his life leads him to an understanding

of his growth from a naive college graduate to an enlightened man who has come to accept his place in society and now knows what role he should play.

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**JHUMPA LAHIRI'S *THE NAMESAKE*: A STUDY**

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Lahiri's novel *The Namesake* (2004) is her first novel which is based on her short story "The Namesake" first published in *The New Yorker*. She expanded the story into a novel.

Amy Tan feels *The Namesake* is 'a dazzling storyteller'. The narrative begins with the Russian writer Nikolai Gogol's statement from his short story "The Overcoat" quite aptly: "The reader should realize himself that it could not have happened otherwise, and that to give him any other name was quite out of the question." The narrative begins with an event of the year 1968 in the life of the Indian Gangulis.

Ashima, pregnant with a child and in his Boston flat, enjoys a snacks which she feels lacking in something. She feels pain and calls her husband Ashoke, a peculiar name. Soon she is taken to Mt Auburn Hospital for child delivery. Dr Ashley, and three nurses, Beverly, Lois and Carol are there. Ashima ruminates about her past, her back home life, and the painful situation now. She remembered her parents, Mr. Ganguli's visit to her for matrimonial alliance and the grandiose attached to it. Later that hour she delivers a child.

Ashoke remembers the man's younger days in Calcutta. That he read literary books including the Russian classics. His paternal grandfather was a Professor of European literature at Calcutta University, and the boy Ashoke would listen to his Russian literature classics. "Read all the Russians, and then reread them," his grandfather had said. "They will never fail you."

Ashoke used to read Russian classics. One day when he travelled to his grandpa's house in Jameshedpur, he was reading Gogol's stories; and the railway collided. The rescue and relief people saved him by seeing his holding the book of Gogol's short "The Overcoat":

Akaky's death saddened him. It was about the absurd in the world. A good co-passanger Ghosh gave him company. Ghosh told Ashoke that he had recently returned to India after spending two years in England on a job voucher, but that he came back home because his wife was inconsolably miserable abroad. Ghosh spoke reverently of England.

Apart from his father, the baby has three visitors, all Bengali Maya and Dilip Nandi, a young married couple in Cambridge whom Ashima and Ashoke met a few months ago in the Purity Supreme, and Dr. Gupta, a mathematics postdoc from Dehradun, a bachelor in his fifties, whom Ashoke has befriended in the corridors of MIT.

Ashoke's son was to be named right at the time of his delivery; but the couple's old relative in Calcutta could not send one. She promised it; and her letter does not reach America. So the couple continue to call the baby as Gogol. Later the Gangulis visit India. Gogol reaches the age of five. Then Ashima delivers a girl baby called Sonali. The boy is put in a school. The two little-uns grow happily. The couple celebrates the children's birthday with pomp. When it is the boy's 14<sup>th</sup> birthday, the father gifts him *The Short Stories of Nikolai Gogol*.

Mr. Lawson is the first of Gogol's teachers to know and to care about Gogol the author. The first day of class he had looked up from the podium when he came to Gogol's name on the roster, an expression of benign amazement on his face. Unlike other teachers he did not ask, was that really his name, was that the last name, was it short for something else? He did not ask, as many foolishly did, "Wasn't he a writer?" Instead he called out the name in a perfectly reasonable way, without pause, without doubt, without a suppressed smile, just as he had called out Brian and Erica and Tom. And then: "Well, we're going to have to read 'The Overcoat.' Either that or 'The Nose.'" This passage is really interesting.

Gogol's father presses him to pursue engineering, perhaps at MIT. Assured by his grades and his apparent indifference to girls, his parents do not suspect Gogol of being, in his own fumbling way, an American teenager. Later on Gogol holds a party with Colin, Jason and Marc. In one go, he mingles with Kim, a girl from Connecticut. It is his kissing her there. He tells her his name as Nikhol for the first-time.

Gogol later changes his name to Nikhil. He falls in love with Ruth and Maxine. Gogol lives in New York, while his parents live in Cambridge. Lahiri writes of a Gogol Maxine scene as thus:

He sits with Maxine on the fainting couch, leafing through a coffee table book she'd helped to edit on eighteenth-century French wallpapers, one side of the book resting on each of their knees. She tells him this is the house she's grown up in, mentioning casually that she'd moved back six months ago after living with a man in Boston, an arrangement that had not worked out. When he asks if she plans to look for a place of her own she says it hasn't occurred to her. "It's such a bother renting a place in the city," she says. "Besides, I love this house. There's really nowhere else I'd rather live." Then they have a dinner. (*Namesake* 132)

Gogol's parents are diffident around Maxine, at first keeping their distance, not boisterous as they typically are around their Bengali friends. They ask where she went to college, what it is her parents do. But Maxine is immune to their awkwardness, drawing them out, devoting her attention to them fully, and Gogol is reminded of the first time he had met her, when she had seduced him in the same way. She asks his father about his research project in Cleveland, his mother about her part-time job at the local public library, which she has recently begun.

The happy family celebrates Gogol's birthday. The parents gift him a few thing including a 100 dollar cheque. Then the two lovers start their car-journey towards New Hampshire. Lahiri describes all this vividly. Finally, they reach the destination. The couple Lydia and Gerald welcome them. Ashoke lately works in Cleveland; while his daughter studies in California. Ashima lives alone in Cambridge. All these years Gogol lives separate. However, the family faces a great crisis the death of Ashoke. Gogol collects his body; and a burial is conducted.

There is an existential crisis in the Ganguly's house. A year has passed since his father's death. He still lives in New York, rents the apartment on Amsterdam Avenue. He works for the same firm. The only significant difference in his life, apart from the permanent absence of his father, is the additional absence of Maxine.

Gogol remembers once going to a Christmas party at her parents' home. He and Sonia had not wanted to go. Christmas was supposed to be spent with just family. But their parents had replied that in America, Bengali friends were the closest thing they had to family, and so they had gone to Bedford, where the Mazoomdars lived. Their daughter Moushumi could not marry her English boy -friend Graham. So Gogol marries her one day. The entire chapter '1999' describes Gogol's marriage.

Fault lines appear in Gogol's life thus. On Mondays and Wednesdays no one knows where his wife is. There are no Bengali fruit sellers to greet her on the walk from Dimitri's subway stop, no neighbors to recognize her once she turns onto Dimitri's block. It reminds her of living in Paris for a few hours at Dimitri's she is inaccessible, anonymous. Dimitri is not terribly curious about Nikhil, does not ask her his name. He expresses no jealousy.

There is the concluding chapter. The year is 2000 A.D. Ashima is preparing for a party. She will be leaving Pemberton Road house where she has lived for twenty-seven years. The house has been sold recently. She intends spending six months in India and the remaining six months in the U.S.A. She would be truly without borders true to the meaning of her name "Ashima." Later Gogol breaks up his marriage with Moushumi as she develops an affair with Dimitri.

Thus ends the Gogol story in dismay, anguish and alienation. Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* is certainly an existential narrative which Camus or Kafka might have narrated a century earlier.

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**Literary Endeavour (ISSN 0976-299X) : Vol. VIII : Issue: 1 (January, 2017)**

## JEWISH AMERICAN LITERATURE: AN OVERVIEW

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Judaism is the oldest religion in the world. Both Christianity and Islam have derived from it. Judaism believes in monotheism. God spoke to Moses that he would care them as long as they followed him. The Jews call themselves as 'the chosen people.' Life's fulfillment is on earth, but not in heaven. The Jews believe that a messiah will come to the world when the people are in troubles.

The differences of opinion have caused several branches in Judaism, such as Reachabites, Samaritans, Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes, Kariates, Hasidism, Mitnaggedim and others. Torah is the sacred book of Judaism. This is the Hebrew Bible, composed in the 12<sup>th</sup> century BC. The Hebrews believe that God gave both oral and written laws to Moses at Mt. Sinai. The Jews worship God through prayer and sacrifice. The history of the Jews is too complex. The Babylonians, Persians, Greeks and Romans persecuted the Jews. The Muslims too. Perhaps in the 12<sup>th</sup> century AD, the Jews left for other places in Europe, Africa, Asia, and later in America. The Christians too persecuted the Jews as if the step-brothers as one can notice the Holocaust in Germany.

In Ninian Smart's view Christianity won and Judaism got defeated because, he writes:

The new mystery religion had some inherent advantages. First, because of its Jewish monotheism it was universal in scope. Second, in looking to a God-human in Jesus it presented a theme very familiar to the Greco-Roman world. Third, it was able, from the third century onward in particular, to pick up themes from the Platonic tradition which would make the faith appealing to the educated person. Fourth, the nature of its 'mystery,' a sacred meal, was coupled to a scheme of initiation which meant much more in the way of commitment to beliefs than the other mystery cults. Fifth, periodic persecution, which Jews also experienced, reinforced the solidarity of the group. Sixth, the empty formalism of the emperor cult and the marked pluralism of belief among the imperial elite pointed to the lack of a coherent state ideology. It was the Christian's good fortune that Constantine I (d. 337) saw in Christian teachings such an ideology, and reorganized the Empire with it as official teaching; it was at his command that the first great Council of the Church was called. Seventh, the new religion had consistent organization, with its system of overseers or bishops; it was only matched in this by the Manichaeans. Eighth, it was able to fight off its pessimistic Gnostic rivals and the Manichaeans with its relatively positive attitudes to the world. (Smart, 31)

The early Jewish studies are known as *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. Waxman called the expanded literary tradition as the 'portable fatherland.' Much of Jewish literature is spoiled by the use of variety of languages in different parts of the world. Again and again in the late 18th and 19th centuries we hear the obsessive call for American writers to throw off the chains of European influence. Emerson wrote, "We have listened too long," Emerson wrote, "to the courtly muses of Europe" (Emerson 62). Judah Monis (1683-1764), an Italian Jew probably of Portuguese stock, was the first Jewish man of letters in America, publishing a volume of religious discourses (*The Truth, The Whole Truth, and Nothing But the Truth*) in 1722. Protestant thinkers, well before the colonial period, had identified the New Land with the Bible, and themselves with Israel; as Herman Melville declared in *White Jacket* (1850), "We Americans



are the peculiar, chosen people the Israel of our time; we bear the ark of the liberties of the world” (Melville, 506). The Jews in America petitioned to the government for freedom for long time, beginning in 1656. The difference of the secular and the sacred that was twofold was kept alive for the American Jews. Many Jews accepted the status of secularity. Mordecai Manuel Noah (1785-1851), a diplomat, editor, politician and one of the few early two playwrights in America, (the other was Isaac Harby) became secular. Like Gershom Seixas, Noah's account of Jewish history was essentially that of Rashi a vision that looks to the future by gazing longingly backwards. Isaac Mayer Wise was a German Jew in America. He deplored for the backwardness in the Jews. In a critique similar to W. E. B. Du Bois's analysis of the debilitating effects of 'double-consciousness' in *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), Wise judged that antisemitism had demoralized the German and Polish Jew, and robbed him of his self-respect. Wise wrote *History of the Israelitish Nation* (1854), a democratic version of the Jewish history, avoiding the rigidity of Rashi, Rabbi Isaac and the ideology of return, treating the Bible as a source. Emma Lazarus (1849-1887) was of Sephardic German descent of the colonial times. Lazarus spoke for Palestine.

**Judaism in America:** Elliot Cohen proclaimed in *Commentary* in November 1945 that American Jews “will evolve new patterns of living, new modes of thought, which will harmonize heritage and country into a true sense of at-home-ness in the modern world.” (Cohan 2) However, critics are of the opinion that Judaism's struggle for a place of prominence ended in America by the First World War. The European rabbis arrived in America in the 1840s with programs for preserving their religion. Max Lilienthal arrived in 1845; Isaac M. Wise in 1846; David Einhorn, 1855; Samuel Adler, 1857; Bernard Felsenthal, 1858; and Samuel Hirsch, 1866. In dedicating a new synagogue in Charleston, South Carolina in 1841, Gustav Poznanski thought that America was their Palestine, that city their Jerusalem, that house of God their temple.

**European Immigrants:** Twenty-one percent of the Americans were foreign born in 1920. One of the hordes was from East Europe. These immigrants wrote literature. Israel Zangwill's 1908 play *The Melting Pot* spoke of assimilation in America. Not all the depictions were unfavourable. Although it did not circulate widely, journalist Hutchins Hapgood's sentimental portrait of Jewish life in *The Spirit of the Ghetto: Studies of the Jewish Quarter of New York* (1902) was familiar to the writers and sociologists who wrote about the ghetto. Robert Park and Worth also wrote of East European Jews in poor circumstances. The surrounding areas of New York had a linguistic mess in regard to Jewish life. The Jews spoke in the languages of their backgrounds. The poet and prose writer Morris Rosenfeld (1862-1923) captured the hearts and minds of the newly proletarianized Jewish urban masses by articulating their sense of triple banishment: exiled from home, from nature, and by extension, from God. By the time of Sholem Asch's (1880-1957) first visit to America, in 1909, there was already in place a body of prose fiction and serious drama that employed that structure. Most famous were the melodramas of Jacob Gordin (1853-1909), then at the peak of his career. Yehoash (1872-1927) found a new poetics. Even Zishe Landau (1889-1937), the chief ideologue of Di Yunge, who cultivated a phlegmatic, dandified persona, eventually discovered positive aesthetic uses for the spiritual legacy of his Hasidic grandparents. Jewish literature thrived in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A journalist called Daniel Persky tells that there were 110 Hebrew writers in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The broadest vein of creativity in Hebrew writing was found in poetry. The poets who wrote and published estimable bodies of verse include Hillel Bavli, Israel Efros, Shimon Ginsberg, Shimon Halkin, Moshe Feinshtein, H.A. Friedland, E.E. Lisitzky, Gavriel Preil, Avraham Regelson, Isig Silberschlag, Shaul and Benjamin Silkiner. The important prose writers are A.A. Arieli, S.L. Blank, Halkin, Bernard Isaacs, Lisitzky, Avraham Shoyer, and Reuven Wallenrod. Important essayists include Avraham Epstein, Daniel Persky, Menahem Ribalow. The sole major playwright in Hebrew is Harry Seckler.

American Hebrews speak several languages. Most of them, being immigrants or their descendants from different linguistic backgrounds ranging from Arabic to that of Spanish/ German/ English speak their

respective mother tongue. The first-generation Jewish American writers, the sons and daughters of immigrants, sometimes forged their own distinctive voices by inscribing traces of immigrant speech into their writing, by retaining an accent of ethnicity. Huck Finn's (Mark Twain's novel of that name) colloquial speech slides into Augie March's brassy tones in Bellow's groundbreaking novel, *The Adventures of Augie March* (1953). Hebrew is another story. Since the exile from Judea to Babylon in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, Babylon has been the trope of longing for the lost home of Zion and for the Hebrew language, the very name of Babylon signifying confusion of tongues, the fall into a linguistic Babel of languages. Ozick's fiction provides a rich sampling of this phenomenon, which also marks the works of a younger generation of writers, such as Aryeh Lev Stollman's *The Far Euphrates* and *The Illuminated Soul* and Myla Goldberg's *Bee Season*. Henry James who visited New York in 1904 felt surprised to see the presence of the Jews. He felt the change in American speech. The most wackily inventive television series to explore the state of the contemporary Jewish soul in the condition of diaspora was the award-winning *Northern Exposure* (ABC, 1990-1995).

**Jewish American Writers and Communism:** American writers, particularly those who were unhappy, turned to the Left in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The communist-led cultural movement was a great attraction for them. The 1917 Russian Revolution inspired these writers for the sake of working class people. In 1956, all but a few of those writers remaining close to the Party were so appalled by Nikita Khrushchev's exposure of Stalin's crimes that they terminated their association.

Before the Great Depression, Jewish American writers allured by socialism included Abraham Cahan (1860-1951), editor of the *JewishDailyForward* and author of *The Rise of David Levinsky* (1917); Anzia Yezierska (1885-1970), author of *Bread Givers* (1925); and Samuel Ornitz (1891-1935), author of *Haunch, Paunch and Jowl: An Anonymous Autobiography* (1923). Yet the leading names in socialist literary circles of that era were the non-Jewish Jack London, Upton Sinclair, Floyd Dell, John Reed, and Max Eastman.

The Jewish writers had a good infrastructure when it came to Press. The magazines *Partisan Review*, *Dynamo*, *Mainstream*, *Masses*, *The Communist*, *Political Affairs* and others supported their cause. Among the most prominent cultural figures of the "New York Intellectuals" are the literary critics Lionel Trilling (1905-1975), Philip Rahv (1908-1973), William Phillips (1907-2002), Leslie Fiedler (b. 1917), Alfred Kazin (1915-1998), and Irving Howe (1920-93); the art critics Harold Rosenberg (1906-1978), Meyer Schapiro (1904-1996), and Clement Greenberg (1909-1994); and the creative writers were Saul Bellow (b.1915), Isaac Rosenfeld (1918-1956), Delmore Schwartz (1913-1966), and Harvey Swados (1920-1972). Kenneth Fearing was a critic of popular culture.

Yet there were also a sufficiently large number of left-wing Jewish American novelists to constitute a major school of realist-naturalist literature within modern fiction. They were Budd Schulberg (b. 1914), Albert Halper (1904-1984), Edward Dahlberg (1900-1977), Nathan Asch (1902-1964), and others. Notwithstanding this imposing record, Jewish American Left writers, female as well as male, more often abjured a primary focus on Jewish material, favouring a broader canvas. Black writers like Richard Wright, Langston Hughes, Lorraine Hansberry, W.E.B. Du Bois also wrote about the Jews.

**Jewish American Renaissance:** The Jewish prosperity or their American dream was always related to the mainstream life. Still Jewish intellectuals fought for their prosperity. The writer-journalist Abraham Cahan fought for the unity of the Jews, and the centre for such activities was New York City. The cluster of Jewish writers that formed in New York in the 1930s, later joined by a few others from Chicago, constituted America's first and so far, its only European-style intelligentsia. Irving Howe accentuated their critical-intellectual function when he dubbed them "The New York Intellectuals," comparing his colleagues to the nineteenth-century Russian vanguard. Bernard Malamud seemed to capture an authentic Jewish American style by transposing the crises and sufferings of his characters. Not every Jewish writer played up the comic incongruities of the Jewish American condition. Herman Wouk, the best of Jewish

middlebrow novelists and later, Chaim Potok, achieved best-seller status by turning Jewish problems into standard narratives.

**The Theme of Holocaust:** Phillip Roth's novel *Zuckerman Bound* speaks of the Holocaust. There are many Jewish novels in this regard. This group includes, most notably Roth's "Eli, the Fanatic" (1959), Edward Wallant's *The Pawnbroker* (1961) and *A Love Story* (1972), Ozick's *Cannibal Galaxy* (1983), *The Messiah of Stockholm* (1985), and "Rosa," part II of *The Shawl* (1980), Rebecca Goldstein's *Late Summer Passion of a Woman of Mind* (1989) and "Legacy of Raizel Kaidish" (1993), Louis Begley's *Wartime Lies* (1991), Lev Raphael's *Winter Eyes* (1992), Aryeh Lev Stollman's *The Far Euphrates* (1997), Michaels' *Fugitive Pieces*, and Rosenbaum's *Second Hand Smoke*.

Cynthia Ozick thinks there is no separate Jewish American literature, but American literature on Jewish themes. From Emma Lazarus, whose sonnet 'The New Colossus' adorns the Statue of Liberty's pedestal, to Muriel Rukeyser, Maxine Kumin, Louise Gluck, Marilyn Hacker, Alicia Ostricker, and Jacqueline Osherow in poetry; from Mary Antin and Jane Bowles, whose prose helped define regionalism and modernism, to Tillie Olsen, E.M. Broner, Erica Jong, Marge Piercy, Anne Roiphe, Norma Rosen, Susan Fromberg Shaeffer, Grace Paley, Rebecca Goldstein, and Allegra Goodman in fiction: from Lillian Hellman to Eve Merriam, and Wendy Wasserstein in drama: Jewish American women writers have questioned, stretched, and extended our understanding of sexual and religious, national and ethnic categories that cannot contain their accomplishments but whose contradictions definitely can frame them.

America has a broad, bright crown of Jewish critics in a wide range of areas: Lionel Trilling, Alfred Kazin, Philip Rahv, Irving Howe, M.H. Abrams, Leslie Fiedler, Marjorie Perloff, Stephen Greenblatt, Susan Gubar. We can add others like Harold Bloom, John Hollander, Geoffery Hartman, Sacvan Bercovitch and others. Hana Wirth Neshet's book *What is Jewish Literature?* examines the issue of the identity crisis in the contemporary Jewish writers.

Against this background, many American Jews who had once embraced the dominant cultural narrative of assimilation began to seek alternative plots that could be read as particularly 'Jewish.' The pioneering and patriotic Israeli served as one model for a new kind of Jew particularly after the Six-Day War of 1967.

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**TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES: A STUDY**

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*Tess of the d'Urbervilles: A Pure Woman Faithfully Presented* is one of Hardy's tragic novels. It was serialized in the *Graphic* in England in 1891, and in *Harper's Bazaar* in America. It was then published with a sharp revision in book form in three volumes by Osgood, Mcilvaine & Co. in 1891 and included in the Wessex Edition of Hardy's works (1912-31). Thus the publishing history of *Tess* is extremely complicated.

The novel *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* had an unfortunate beginning as its heroine Tess herself had an unfortunate beginning in her life with poverty. It was refused by two publishers, and Hardy was then forced to edit it radically. Once it was published in its intended form, in 1891, it was denounced by the press and by many readers. George Meredith, the editor of *Cornhill* magazine where Hardy's many novels were serialized, wrote him once that he should be aware that the novels were read by Victorian women and children. Tess is actually more admirable than either of the two men in her life, both of whom presumably are higher in the social scale than she. Each, however, has a false concept of human relationships, derived from his particular background. Rosemarie Morgan observes,

That the greatest outrage provoked by the novel was about the sexuality of Tess Durbeyfield, the central character. She is openly sexual and openly bears an illegitimate child; moreover, she is openly loved by a middle-class clergyman's son and is openly defended by Hardy as a "pure woman." (Morgan 48) *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* made Hardy popular. Although it created a big controversy over the issue of Victorian society's morality, it sold. The Victorian readers then, as the modern readers today, liked to read Tess's life from the ritual springtime fertility dance on the village green and up to the final passage when the black flag moved slowly up the mast on the prison tower in Winconster (the old capital of the Saxon kings, signifying orthodoxy) as signal that justice had been done.

The Victorian critics did not like the novel though they worried about it. The novel fascinated every one of them. The story of Tess is so moving even Hardy as told to George Douglas wrote: "I too, lost my heart to her as I went on with her history." (Pinion 57) Really the publication of *Tess* caused many an indignant attacks. One reviewer called it 'a prig in an Elision field;' and some bishops burnt its copies in public. Hardy received threatening calls. The Victorian attack was mainly about his description of Tess as a 'Pure Woman: Faithfully Represented.' This claim in saying that Tess was a maiden ran against the very grain of Victorian morality. As Hardy wrote again, people associated 'purity' with its 'artificial and derivative meaning' the biology.

Hardy depicts Tess as a girl of good character. Though a girl of sixth standard education, she is a lady. For example, here is Tess's comment on stars while going to Casterbridge with her brother Abraham:

'Did you say the stars were worlds, Tess?'

'Yes.'

'All like ours?'

'I don't know; but I think so. They sometimes seem to be like the apples on our stubborn-tree. Most of them splendid and sound a few blighted.'

'Which do we live on a splendid one or a blighted one?'

'A blighted one.'

'Tis very unlucky that we didn't pitch on a sound one, when there were so many more of 'em!  
'Yes.'

'Is it like that *really*, Tess?' said Abraham, turning to her much impressed, on reconsideration of this rare information. 'How would it have been if we had pitched on a sound one?'

'Well, father wouldn't have coughed and crept about as he does, and wouldn't have got too tipsy to go this journey; and mother wouldn't have been always washing, and never getting finished' (p. 324).

Tess, that splendid girl of Marlott, a small Blackmoor village of Wessex region, does not like Alexander Stokes D'Urbervilles even though he tries to help her family, by way of giving them a horse, or toys to children, or a hope to the miserly woman Joan Durbeyfield. Because, Tess knows, Alec is a wicked. However, the family falls in ruin on account of the death of Prince, the family horse, which, of course, Tess caused and blamed for. As a result, the family pressures her to go back to Alec's estate in search of work though Tess hesitates.

Alexander otherwise known as Alec, as expected, seduces Tess and she becomes pregnant. Later she separates from him and bears a child calling him aptly as 'Sorrow.' The society hates her! Tess, realizes the tragic flaw in human nature. Father John, priding with his family ancestry, does not allow a parson into his house for baptizing Tess's child. In spite of her desperate bid, the parson does not give the child a Christian burial. Tess is in woe and she bursts: "Then I don't like you and I'll never come to your church." (p. 375). Hardy's Tess was wise and rebellious at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century which position our women today have not yet achieved.

When destiny takes Tess the way it did, to Talbothays in the far south, near Kingsbare, Tess meets gentleman Angel Clare whom she has already met at her village green during the village springtime festival. Angel Clare, a son of a parson in Emminster, has come to Mr Cricks, the dairyman at Talbothays for an apprenticeship in dairying. He decides to do farming either in England or in the colonies like Brazil. Angel Clare is unmarried and he is the only bright youth at Talbothays. The three women Marian, Izz Huett and Retty Priddle, like him very much. Tess remains uncommitted. Whereas Angel Clare likes Tess. Apparently he says: "What a fresh and virginal daughter of Nature that milkmaid is!" (p. 393).

Angel Clare and Tess seem to be like-minded. Tess's stay at Talbothays is one of a happy episodes in her life. Of course, Tess's is an unmarried life. Her happiness consists of a positive environment. Neither, Mr Crick, nor her co-maids, Retty, Izz and Marian disturb her. Besides, Angel Clare's love for this 'mighty personality' is implicit.

Angel Clare goes home with the intention to decide about his wooing Tess. After coming to a fair understanding with his hard-core parents, Angel Clare gallops the hills to Var Vally and discloses that he will marry Tess. Perhaps the best passage that reveals Tess's firm nobility not to hurt Angel Clare is this:

"Why don't somebody tell him all about me?" she said. "It was only forty miles off why hasn't it reached here? Somebody must know!"

"Yet nobody seemed to know; nobody told him" (p. 435).

Tess begs Angel Clare to marry one of the three maids. But that does not work. They fix a Sunday for their wedding. But Tess is afraid of disclosing him her past.

The second part of the novel opens with Joan Durbeyfield's letter to her daughter Tess, in which, the matron warns Tess against any confession of her past. Tess is an honest lady. She does not want to cheat Angel Clare. She tries to confess her crime, if it may be called, to Angel Clare. Hardy says:

"This was the last drachma required to turn the scale of her indecision. Declare the past to him by word of mouth she could not; but there was another way. She sat down and wrote on the four pages of a note-sheet a succinct narrative of those events of three or four years ago, put it into an envelope, and directed it to Clare. Then, lest the flesh should again be weak, she crept upstairs without any shoes and slipped the note under his door" (p.464).

She speaks;

"I am so anxious to talk to you I want to confess all my faults and blunders!" she said with attempted lightness.

'No, now we can't have faults talked of you must be deemed perfect today at least, my sweet!' he cried, 'We shall have plenty of time, hereafter, I hope, to talk over our failings. I will confess mine at the same time' (p.466).

Finally Tess and Angel Clare marry at a church in Casterbridge. Then they go to Wellbridge for their honeymoon. Soon comes their dreadful confession! Angel Clare confesses that he had an affair with a prostitute in London which Tess forgives. Then she confesses her fault which he does not forgive. Because he is a man and he is timid. So they separate soon. Tess goes home as unhappy as Angel Clare decides to go to Brazil more to escape from the oppressing Tess-episode. Meanwhile, when he comes to settle down his accounts with the Wellbridge lodge-owner, he meets Izz Huett and he comes to know what Izz tells: 'Tess would have laid down her life for 'ee. I could do no more!' (p. 511).

Tess begins her search for work in Blackmoor Vale again. Society speaks of the stigma. "But I don't care," she said. "O, no I don't care! I'll always be ugly now, because Angel is not here, and I have nobody to take care of me." (p. 518). This is an example of Tess's fidelity to her husband.

Tess, left deserted by Angel Clare, suffers in the frost of Flintcomb-Ash. Once she goes to Angel Clare's Emminster (Oxford) with a positive hope of getting some work. But that turns to be more an injury. Unfortunately, she faces Alec, now a parson, on the way. Worse still in the guise of helping her starved family, he misleads her. Tess hates Alec's help. As Hardy, in Chapter 44 reminds us, she desires nothing by way of favour or pity.

When Tess's father John passes away, Tess has to bear the family burden. Even the Durbeyfields have to quit the house at Morlatt and settle at Kingsbare. Mother Joan Durbeyfield attacks Tess with a sever thought that at least she should have married Alec which makes Tess succumb to the evil again.

Alec, that monster by way of his assistance to Tess's family, wins Tess's mother's heart. Alec thinks of owning her. Soon Tess writes her last letter to Angel Clare informing him of Alec's threat:

"O, why have you treated me so monstrously, Angel! I do not deserve it. I have thought it all over carefully, and I can never, never forgive you! You know that I did not intend to wrong you why have you so wronged me? You are cruel, cruel indeed! I will try to forget you. It is all injustice I have received at your hands!" (p. 577).

Even Izz and Marian, Tess's friends, write to Angel Clare that he had to come back and accept her. Much later, Angel Clare, in search of Tess arrives at Kingsbare just to see Tess in ruin. She stays with Alec at Herons. Tess, being really misled by Alec's cheating speaks to Angel:

"And then my dear, dear husband came home to me... and I did not know it!... And you had used your cruel persuasion upon me... My own true husband will never, never O, God I can't bear this! I cannot!" (p. 596)

Alec taunts her abusing her husband and Tess stabs him with a knife. She cries: "I have done it I don't know how," she continued. "Still I owed to you, and to myself, Angel. ... I was unable to bear you're not loving me! Say you do now dear, dear husband; say you do, now I have killed him!" (p. 599). Having killed Alec, Tess goes off with Angel Clare. They hide here and there in the New Forest. Then they go to Stonehenge where she is caught by the police. Tess asks Angel Clare to marry her sister 'Liza Loo.' She wishes to meet him in heaven. Tess is hanged and the only witnesses of her tragic end are Angel Clare and 'Liza Loo,' now in a union as to fulfill Tess's last wishes when "the President of the Immortals ended His sport with Tess."

Hardy calls Tess 'A Pure Woman Faithfully Represented.' Tess is a pure woman spiritually. Though biologically Alec seduces her, or even lives with her a few days at the end, Tess is Angel Clare's wife first and foremost. The essential theme of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* is that of the destruction of a good and

natural character by the forces of circumstance and of society itself.

The novel was not universally condemned, however. Many 19th-century critics and readers found much to praise it. Andrew Lang applauded its "moral passages of great beauty," such as the club-walking scene." (Lang qt Peter 181)

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## PARTITION NOVELS OF 1947 : A THEMATIC STUDY

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### I. Introduction:

The partition of India gives a historical record to the world. It witnesses the exploitation of women and the great bloody riots. It is unforgettable event in the world. Thus the partition brings only tragedies. No one gets happiness in this partition. *The* fictional representation of Partition has been popular theme in literature of different languages. The narrative of colossal human tragedy during the Partition in Indian subcontinent is increasingly popular in the literature of 20<sup>th</sup> century. Partition novels have covered a wide range of literary works in different languages like Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Punjabi and English. The cataclysmic event stirred many creative minds in India and Pakistan to write stories and novels and to make Movies on it.

Even now, sixty eight years after Partition fictions and films are made to unfold trauma and pain of its victims. Most of the writers presented Partition as main theme of their works. Fiction is thus the expression of the most intimate social consciousness in which it is born and evolves. As a creative process, fiction registers the creative evolution of the society itself. A number of novels in the Indian sub-continent have been written on the theme of the Partition of India. This unforgettable historical moment has been captured as horrifying by the novelists like Khushwant Singh in *Train to Pakistan* (1956), , Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice-Candy-Man*, and *A Bend in the Ganges* (1964) by Manohar Malgaonkar, and

### II. Partition novels: A Thematic Study

Women's experience of the Partition is marked by large scale rape, abduction and forced marriage. In the partition untold numbers of women suffered a fate worse than death they were raped, sometimes tortured, gang-raped and murdered. These atrocities primarily occurred in Punjab and Bengal and involved venal criminality on the part of all parties concerned: Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims.

The novels on the partition present a realistic show of the tribulations the people underwent on account of the violence let loose by spurt of sudden communal occurrences. The novelists feel that politics was responsible for human slaughter from all sides and any particular side could not be made responsible for ugly and repugnant series of events. Their approach in the novels has remained objective in the sense that all have tried to expose human nature and its capability of perpetrating cruelty and barbarism on its own creed. Certainly, the novels prove that the traumatic experiences of the partition have shaken their writers to roots and made them restive to give vent to their indignation at the terrible holocaust which claimed a huge loss of innocent human lives.

#### ***Train to Pakistan:***

The novel *Train to Pakistan* is first novel on the theme of Partition, is a brilliant and realistic story of political hatred, violence, and of mass passions during those turbulent and fateful days that preceded and followed the partition of the British India. Thus the novel based on the theme of partition of India into India and Pakistan.

Singh concentrates on local life and the direct indication of politics is completely absent. The residents of Mano Majra are blissfully unaware of political decision. That is why there is no tensed situation and communal disharmony in Mano Majra. Through this novel Singh tries to inform the readers that the aftermath of the partition was not one sided. The people from both sides were involved in violence, rape, murder, abduction etc. both the side were among the sufferer. As Singh said in his novel- "*Muslims*



*said Hindus had planned and started the killing. According to the Hindus the Muslims were to blame. The fact is both sides killed. Both shot and stabbed and speared and clubbed. Both tortured. Both raped."*

Singh blames the responsibility to some extent on Hukum Chand, the Deputy Commissioner and the district magistrate, for disorder and violence in Mano Majra. He was sincerely worried about the massacres but was powerless against the fury of the law. He is often described with the dirty physical appearance and is busy with a teenage prostitute. Even in order to send the Muslims of Mano Majra he planned of a conspiracy. He tells the police officer to spread news that Iqbal is a Muslim League worker from Pakistan and he sends his faxes to Pakistan but originally he is a member of a communist party and he used to send his telegrams in Delhi not in Pakistan. Through this matter the writer intends to tell the readers that the authority also responsible for the unwanted violence. If they wished, they could have been prevented it.

By the character of Juggat Singh, the writer represents the moral side of humanity. Juggat Singh or Jugg, is a village badmash from Mano Majra. He is accused of the murder of Lala Ram Lal, the Hindu moneylender though that murder was committed by Mali and his gang. At the end of the novel we see both Jugga and Iqbal come to know that the train which is going toward Pakistan that night, is going to be attacked by the orthodox Sikh agitators in which the Muslims of Mano Majra also leaving for Pakistan. Iqbal, an educated man did nothing but Jugga in order to save the life of his beloved comes forward the Sikh rioters tied a rope above the train those who are coming on the hood can be killed. But Jugga cuts that rope by sacrificing his life and 'The Train' safely goes to the way of Pakistan. Singh here conveys the message that there is something which is more powerful, stronger than the religious sentiment or orthodoxy that is nothing but love for which Jugga sacrifices his life.

#### ***Ice Candy Man:***

*Ice-Candy-Man* is a novel by Bapsi Sidhwa, Pakistani writer. The novel is different from other novels of partition. It presents the turbulent upheaval of Partition from the viewpoint of a handicapped Parsi girl child, narrator and chronicler. Lenny looks at characters belonging to different communities through the prism of her own Parsi sensitivity. Shorn of biases the child's narration also imparts an authentic credibility to the novel.

The novel shows how friends and neighbors turn out to be enemies overnight. A Muslim village *PirPindo* is attacked by Sikhs and Muslim men and women are killed. Sikh families in Lahore are attacked in Lahore and the chain reaction continues. People like *Hari* and *Moti* become converts to save their lives. Ayah's Lover Masseur is killed.

By the character of *Ice-Candy-Man* writer represents the mind of the common people how changes in the criminal thoughts by effects of the Partition. *Ice-Candy-Man* is a loving person. He is in love with the ayah of Lenny. He is known warmth and good-nature. One incident transforms the peace-loving ice-candy-man into a selfish man and a savage. It happens to be on Lahore railway station when the train arrives from *Gurdaspur*. It does not carry passengers but dead bodies of Muslims. There are women but full of chopped female breasts. This barbaric scene shocks him and he loses his sanity. And revenge becomes the only motivation in his life. Friendships and personal relations are forgotten. The atmosphere becomes malicious and *Ice-Candy man* joins the frenzied mob and abdicates Ayah and keeps her in the brothels of *HiraMandi*.

Later in the novel, *Ice-Candy man* tries to mend his ways and forcibly marries Ayah and changes her name as Mumtaz. But she finds this disgusting and with the help of Lenny's Godmother she reaches a relief camp in Amritsar. *Ice-Candy-Man* tries to get her but in vain. Thus the novel conveys a serious warning of the dangers of communalism and religious obscurantism by the *Ice-Candy-Man*.

#### ***The Bend in the Ganges:***

*The Bend in the Ganges* is a novel written by Manohar Malgaonkar. This is an "epic presentation of the whole struggle for Indian independence and its aftermath." It is a tragedy unrelieved by heroism or

grandeur. *Gian* and *Dehi* are two friends with two extreme ideologies. *Gian*, a young collegiate, a self-styled Gandhian, accepts the creed of non-violence, truth and the boycott of the Britishers. Born in a village ridden with feudal traditions and taboos, he impulsively swayed by the fascinating spectacle of consigning the foreign clothes to fire as a token of his staunch support to the Swadeshi Movement. But, later, when his brother is killed by his cousin in a family feud over property, he abandons his solemn vow of non-violence and murders the assassin of his brother. Declared “criminally guilty” he is transported to Andamans on a life-sentence. *Gian*, a Gandhian, is forced by the circumstances to be an anti-Gandhian, a liar, a deceit, a terrorist and an anarchist. *Gian*'s micro-tragedy of family-feud suspicion, rivalry, hatred, vindictiveness, and murder can be interpreted to be foreshadowing “*the macro-tragedy on a national scale in the year of partition.*”

On the other hand we have a terrorist group of young, revolutionary students, the freedom-fighters led by *Debi Dayal*, who blow up railway tracks and bridges. The reason of *Debi*'s hate for the British lies wholly outside the realms of politics and is purely accidental. He continues breeding his contempt for the British, plans to sabotage the R. A. F. aircraft with some detonating pins stolen from his father's firm. The operation is successful but the police is quick to retaliate. *Debi* is traced, tried summarily, arrested and sentenced to Andamans for life, to the horror and chagrin of his family.

Both friends now once again are face to face on a prison ship bound for Andamans. In prison *Gian* becomes an informer, collaborates with the British, and betrays *Debi*, whose hate remains pure until he is liberated by the Japanese and returns to India as their agent. *Gian* also manages an escape to India with the help of his British captors, has an affair with *Sundari*, *Debi*'s sister, on the ground that he has befriended her brother, but he is soon caught, rejected and even humiliated by her. *Debi*, instead of joining hands in the freedom struggle, falls in love with a Muslim girl *Mumtaz*, whom he buys from a brothel. *Debi*, in a bid to help his parents in Lahore, is killed by a mob of furious Muslims and *Mumtaz* is carried away. In the final cataclysm of mutilation, rape, plunder and murder only *Sundari* and *Gian* survive, fleeing together from what has suddenly become Pakistan with no future left for them. This is how “the sunrise of our freedom” found millions done to death, and tens of millions “dispossessed of all that they owned and cherished, and brutally tossed,” on the other side of the artificial border between the newly-bifurcated countries.

*Malgonkar* builds a powerful plot with gripping and suspenseful events. The novel attains an epic grandeur in the sense that the events have been brilliantly dramatized and packed with variegated richness of human contents. The novelist displays a wonderful knack of depicting the socio-political background with consummate skill and convincing emotional situations. *A Bend in the Ganges* records not a just in history, but “*one of history's meanest affronts with a great wave of terror,*” the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of Hindus and Muslims.

### III Conclusion:

These novels examine the inexorable logic of Partition as an offshoot of fundamentalism and fanaticism sparked by hardening communal attitudes. These novels belong to the genre of the partition novel. These novels effectively and realistically depict the “*vulnerability of human understanding and life, caused by the throes of Partition which relentlessly divided friends,*” as *NovyKapadia* observes. She opines that throughout history, fanatics as well as ideologies, pushed to the emotional brink of daring their lives, have taken the plunge, which has triggered off a chain reaction of rigid mental fixations and attitudes.

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NOSTALGIA IN ANITA BROOKNER'S *THE DEBUT*

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**Abstract:**

*The felling of nostalgia is universal according to researchers and the theorists. There is not a single man in the world that has not experienced the feeling of nostalgia. It is a psychological phenomenon and everyone in the world is influenced by the same. It has different definitions. To some it is appositve emotion whereas some think it as a negative emotion. Yet some think it as a combination of the both. It is related to the happy past of a person. The meaning of homesickness has also been attributed to it. Anita Brookner is one of the leading British psychological novelists of Modern era. Most of the characters in her novels experience this mental state called nostalgia. The present paper is an attempt to shed light on the theme of nostalgia in *The Debut*.*

**Key words:** *Homesickness, positive emotions, negative emotions, psychological phenomena etc.*

To understand the concept of nostalgia the researcher has to go back approximately, 2800 years, to the ancient Greeks. As per Homer's tale, Odysseus was so haunted by the idea of returning home that he rejects the proposal of immortality offered to him. The Greek word for return is 'nostos'. His wish of *nostos* made him to experience a mental pain called 'algos' in Greek. Thus the earlier interpretation of the term was "the psychological suffering caused by unrelenting yearning to return to ones; homeland" (Sekidikes, Wildschut, and Baden, 2004, p.200-201).. The word nostalgia was used in the academic context for the first time when the Swiss physician Johannes Hofer published a medical dissertation in 1988 describing the nostalgic condition. Kaplan(11987) thought it as a variant of depression. The term has been there for more than 300 years and during these years the conceptual meaning of the term has been revised several times. The modern views regarding the term refer to the positive feeling associated with reminiscence of several places, events and objects in the past. The New Oxford Dictionary of English (1998) defines it as "a sentimental longing or wistful affection for the past, typically for a period or place with happy personal associations" (p.1266).It is a phenomenon fundamental to mankind. In *Some Notes on Nostalgia* Beardsley Ruml (1946) says, "Recognition of the fundamental and pervasive influence of the nostalgia, under whatever name, will enable us to interpret human behavior with a new realism...the understanding of interpersonal relationship also requires an appreciation of the role played by nostalgic sentiments".

Today researchers and the theorists think unanimously that nostalgia is a universal feeling. There is no man who has not experienced the feeling of nostalgia in his life. Some think nostalgia as a negative emotion whereas to some it is a positive emotion. Yet some think that nostalgia consists of bitter-sweet components. Family and others have been the taken to be the most prominent contents triggering nostalgia. Different objects, events, excursions, holidays have proven to wax nostalgia. Experimental explorations of nostalgic experiences have been insufficient. The term being difficult to define, several authors have suggested different categories of the term such as personal, true, historical, social, real, stimulated collective, institutionalized, geographical nostalgia etc. Some of the categories are noted in the present study. Against this background the present novel is to be examined.

Anita Brookner's first published novel, *The Debut* (1981) (published as *A Start in Life* in Britain), undoubtedly made her novelist. It deals with nostalgic world of the characters. Brookner explores the inner

world of the characters throughout the novel. The novel reveals various elements in the lives of the major characters. It exhibits nostalgic experiences, feelings, longing for the past as well as different kinds of nostalgia such as real, personal, collective and geographical nostalgia. The structure of the novel contributes to reflect the nostalgia. The family saga in the novel focuses more on the family's past. The nostalgia powerfully reflects through the characters in *The Debut*.

Brookner's protagonist Dr. Ruth Weiss, at forty, recollects her reminiscences and narrates her feelings about the past. Her reminiscences are full of bitter sweet experiences. She is a successful lecturer and author. Her personality has been shaped by different aspects. About this she says, "...it has started much earlier than that, when, at a faintly remembered moment in her early childhood..." (Anita Brookner, *The Debut* 7). Her childhood experiences are quite noteworthy. About her childhood, she "remembered herself as a pale, neat child with extraordinary hair..." (11). This shows her nostalgic feelings about her childhood. Her father would take care of the child. He would supply the best books to read during her childhood days. Brookner narrates, "...from Grimm and Hans Andresen, she graduated to the works of Charles Dickens" (12). She reminds his giving her Everyman edition, with its comfortable assurance on the flyleaf. Her mother though busy in her schedule, would provide her attention to the child. Ruth reminds her "...promised to buy her some pretty cloths, when we get to the end of this run, darling" (17, 18).

The nostalgia powerfully reflects through the reminiscences of her grandmother. The best source of energy and security for Ruth was her grandmother. Throughout the novel there is consistent reference to her granny. When Ruth reminds, Brookner narrates, "The grandmother would be moved to take a glass of hot milk and cinnamon to the child's bedside, persuade her to lay aside her book and sit there until the glass was emptied and the light was switched off" (20). In the dining room, "her grandmother buttered a poppy-seed roll for her" (13). Ruth recalls that her grandmother was always busy in the kitchen and dining room and, cooked the favorite dishes for Ruth. This underlines the real nostalgia of Ruth.

Another thing that triggers nostalgia in her mind was her school. She says that her school was a source of joy to her. She had so many sweet memories about her school days and her teacher. She treated her school as, "...a sort of day nursery" (23). The school supplied her comfort in the form of beans and sausages, stewed prunes and custard. Thus the meal provided in the school, now she recalls, was a kind of treat to her. She still remembers the food that made her nostalgic. The food items are the elements that trigger nostalgia. Her teacher, "...excited anything like interest and loyalty" (24). Thus she misses the days she spent in the company of her favourite teacher who encouraged her all the time. The college library was full of books and she enjoyed the pleasure of working in such a library. Brookner narrates, "She found evening hours in the library the most satisfying of her life" (27).

During her college days she was attracted to Richard Hirst who was a psychologist by training. She got scholarship from the British Council that made to go to France for a year. In order to study away from home and to meet Richard she got a flat in Edith Grove near World's End. She reminds she was eager to meet him and the atmosphere was romantic. Brookner narrates, she, "stayed as long as possible in the bath, and then sprayed herself with a great deal of scent..." (56). She was on the wings of love.

In France, The bus conductor sang a Christmas song that remembered Ruth the Christmas festival celebrated in her house. Her granny "had filled the flat with the odour of roosting goose and red cabbage, although officially she ignored the celebration of Christmas. Helen, on the other hand, became sentimentally religious, fingered her late mother's rosary" (112). She stayed in Paris where she was introduced with the famous professor Duplessis. She was attracted towards Duplessis but the experience with Richard still lingered in her mind. She reminds, "She still measured her efforts and her experiences against her disastrous failure with Richard" (153). She longs the company of Duplessis. After the death of her mother, Ruth decides to stay in London to look after her father. She gets a job of teaching in a local college. She was attracted to Roddy who was the third person in her life. They got married. She got a kind of relief after so many hurdles. She got comfort. She recalls the days after her marriage and longs to live them.

She “felt a great sense of security, which, is what every woman needs” (188). But she is shocked to see Roddy died in an accident.

Apart from the protagonist, there are other characters that also are seen facing nostalgic experiences. George fell nostalgic for Sally, the food she served, the flat she owns etc. Helen also longs her youthful period. Sally pines for the company of George. Mrs. Cutler yearns for her past days.

It is also significant that Brookner's theme of exile or outsider within the family contributes to develop the nostalgia in the novel. Remarkably, the technique used in the novel reflects the theme of nostalgia. The setting also had its contribution in reflecting the theme of nostalgia. The initial setting of Weiss family is Oakwood Court which is free from any description of the neighbors and it reveals the lonely state of the place. Not only setting but the imagery and symbolism used in the novel also contribute to reflect the nostalgia.

Hence, from the above discussion it is clear that in *The Debut* Brookner narrates the state of mind of Ruth, George, Helen, Sally, Molly, Roddy, the causes of nostalgia and remedies they find in every situation. The novel explores various categories of nostalgia such as real, personal, geographical, stimulated and collective nostalgia. There is the exploration of different triggers of nostalgia. The use of structure, themes reflected, the narrative techniques used, the significant settings, imagery, symbolism used very significantly in the novel are suggestive to reveal nostalgia.

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**AMRITA PRITAM'S PINJAR : A FEMINISTIC PERSPECTIVE**

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**I. Introduction**

**Amrita Pritam** (31 August 1919 – 31 October 2005) was an Indian writer and poet, who wrote in Punjabi and Hindi. She is considered the first prominent woman Punjabi poet, novelist, and essayist, and the leading 20th-century poet of the Punjabi language, who is equally loved on both sides of the India-Pakistan border. With a career spanning over six decades, she produced over 100 books, of poetry, fiction, biographies, essays, a collection of Punjabi folk songs and an autobiography that were translated into several Indian and foreign languages.

Feminism and humanism are the main themes used by Amrita Pritam in her write-ups. Her style of writing is deeply influenced by the folk-poetry of Punjab and her work for a decade or more for the broadcasting media had given her a command over the common man's language. Through her work she always tried to portray the realism of society. She presented her views with extreme clarity and boldness. Feminism and various aspects of feministic ideas got reflected through her novels. In Punjabi literature, she is popularly known as the most significant voice of the women. Work of Amrita Pritam included poetic quality. Like for instance there are moments of ecstasy, great joy fraught with great-sadness; there are moments of lonely soliloquies and almost spiritual despair and despondency in her works. Amrita Pritam had a flourishing career for more than six decades. In her career, she penned down 28 novels, five short stories, 18 compilations of prose and 16 prose volumes. As a novelist, her most noted work was *Pinjar* (The Skeleton) (1950), in which she created her memorable character, *Puro*, an epitome of violence against women, loss of humanity and ultimate surrender to existential fate; the novel was made into an award-winning film, *Pinjar* in 2003.

Known as the most important voice for the women in Punjabi literature, in 1956, she became the first woman to win the Sahitya Akademi Award for her magnum opus, a long poem, *Sunehade* (Messages), later she received the Bharatiya Jnanpith, one of India's highest literary awards, in 1982 for *Kagaz Te Canvas* (The Paper and the Canvas). The Padma Shri came her way in 1969 and finally, Padma Vibhushan, India's second highest civilian award, in 2004, and in the same year she was honored with India's highest literary award, given by the Sahitya Akademi (India's Academy of Letters), the Sahitya Akademi Fellowship given to the "immortals of literature" for lifetime achievement.

Amrita is the first recipient of Punjab Rattan Award conferred upon her by Punjab Chief Minister Capt. Amarinder Singh. She is first woman recipient of the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1956 for *Sunehadey* (poetic diminutive of the word *sunehi*, e. *Messages*), Amrita Pritam received the Bhartiya Jnanpith Award, India's highest literary award, in 1982 for *Kagaz Te Canvas* (*Paper and Canvas*). She received the Padma Shri (1969) and Padma Vibhushan, India's second highest civilian award, and Sahitya Akademi Fellowship, India's highest literary award, also in 2004. She received D.Litt. honorary degrees, from many universities including, Delhi University (1973), Jabalpur University (1973) and Vishwa Bharati (1987)

Amrita Pritam remained extremely popular even after her migration from Pakistan. This prominent writer and poet of India tried to portray the sufferings of the people of both the countries after the partition through her writings. In the year 2007, renowned lyricist Gulzar released "Amrita recited by Gulzar", an audio album of the poems of Amrita Pritam recited by him. Her work reflects a headstrong, revolutionary and rebellious approach that inspires the readers to break-off the contradictions of life.

Amrita Pritam died on 31st of October, 2005 in Delhi at the age of 86 years.

## II. Amrita Pritam's '*Pinjar*': A Feminist Perspectives

*Pinjar* is a novel written by Amrita Pritam whose literal meaning in Punjabi language is *Skeleton*. The writer through this story brings light upon the problem faced by women during the time of partition of India. There were rites, rape cases, abduction of young women of opposite community. The women were used just as a symbol of sex for the pleasure of men. Amrita Pritam understood the compassion of the subject matter on which she wrote the novel and she has handled it with utmost respect. The story vividly captured the trouble and misery of Puro as victim of situations while the story moves on an emotional ride with twists and turns which leaves the reader wonder struck as what will happen the next.

The writer in this novel has used her adaptability to represent the sorrow and compassion for the characters in the novel. She has written with courage, infatuation and full devotion. She was herself one of the eye-witnesses of the partition of India in August 1947 and its consequences. She portrays the pathetic and falling standard of our human spirit in her novel. The novel has accurately brought up the complex role of Puro who is facing the entire dilemma in the world in the early ages of her life. She has been kidnapped by a Muslim lad, her family has left her to die, her name has been distorted, her religion has been transformed, she has been married to Rashida who abducted her. In short she has been reduced to only a skeleton with no soul inside her. Still she endeavors for the pleasure of others. No other women facing similar pain and sorrow could have brawled against it with so much confidence.

*Pinjar* tells the tale of a woman caught between two lands and coping with a dual identity. It is an effective portrayal of the suffering that women of the sub-continent had to undergo because of the decision to divide the country on the basis of religion. The partition was a painful experience for women. The partition was a time when the state was immensely powerful to alter the lives of individuals because the decision of partition was taken by those who were at the helm of state affairs and the individual became absolutely powerless in the circumstance of displacement and identity loss because he/she had no control over their own lives.

Amrita presents in her novel the problems of women in the before partition and in the partition. She narrates that the exploitation women is become tradition which is comes from our forefathers. She described how the communities are name of majority and prestige exploitation on women. And they target only women to take their revenge or show the power of their majority.

In the novel the focus on the two main characters Puro and Rashida. The Puro is Hindu girl and Rashida is a Muslim boy. The novel goes on these two characters. Amrita captured the feminine and partition situations over all these two characters families and she gives the relation between these two families in pre partition and partition.

In the novel we see that the Shaikhs and Sahukars of the village are not good terms from the pre partition days. In the pre partition the majority of village is the Hindus who are Sahukars or Moneylender. They attacked Shaikhs family for a small amount. Then the sister of Rashida's father is kept in the house of Puro's uncle for three nights. Through this Amrita tells that the exploitation is not only happening in present days, it is happened in our ancient days. So the exploitation of women or target of women in the name of power and community took birth in by our ancientness.

Due to the Sahukars, the Shaikhs are wanted avenge on it. Then the time is changing when the independence fought are started then the separate nation for Muslims demand also get the big voice in India. In that time the villages of Hindu Majorities take place the majority of Muslims then the force to the Rashida abducted the Puro who is belongs to Sahukar's family and her marriage is fixed with the Ramchand who is belongs to near village's Sahukara's. In this time the Hindus are lived very critical position whether the majority of Muslims. So the Puro's mother didn't give permission to Puro to go to the outside alone. That much the fear of Shaikhs is take place in the mind of the Hindus. But Puro's marriage before one day, when the Puro go to the fields then the Rashida abducted her.

Thus abduction and rape of women of one community by the men of the other was a way of 'dishonoring' the other community as real and symbolic subjugation. Inherent in these acts are also the notions of women as property. In both cases Amrita Highlights, it is the women that suffer the humiliation.

One night Puro escapes from Rashida's confinement and manages to return to her family, but her parents shun her. Her father does not accept her and says, "*Dear daughter, it is your fate! We are helpless.*" That is the social stigma of abduction that is responsible for Puro's ostracization is clear from her mother's comments: "*Who will marry you now? You are defiled! Your religion is polluted*" (28). Amrita tries to highlight that women had to constantly prove their innocence and assert their right to dignity in our patriarchal society.

When her parents did not accept her, Puro was obliged to go back. Rashida met her on the way and married her the very next day. And gives her name "*Hamida*". But she cannot get easily accustomed to the Muslim way of life and, "*in her dream, when she met her old friends and played in her parents' home everyone called her Puro. At other times she was Hamida. It was a double life: hamida by day, Puro by night. In reality she was just a skeleton, without a shape or a name*". (11).

Thus she is not at all happy with Rashida and every now and then remembers Ramchand. She is split into two: physically she belongs to Rashida and in the heart of her hearts she is still beholden to Ramchand, as his Puro. When Puro gave birth to Rashida he thinks that he overcomes from his emotion because now the Puro is not a girl who he abducted, she was Hamida, the mother of his son. But thinking of Puro is different she became a mother of unwanted child, a "*Slimy slug*". When her child sucks her milk out with force, she thinks just as his father had used force to take her.

Thus Amrita exploits Puro's situation to through light on the exploitation of women at the hands of men. When she comes across the girls like Kammo, Taro, and mad woman, all living in wretched conditions. First, the Kammo, who is a motherless girl whose father was takes another and leaves the village. Kammo is a Hindu girl so Hamida not easily meets her. Because when she wants help to the twelve year old girl, then she rejects her reason is religion. But Hamida success to won the Kammo's heart and their relation as a mother and daughter. In Hamida's house Kammo forgets her pains and torture of her aunts. And Hamida gives a love for her, who is wants a happy from her. But this is banned for her aunts.

Then another girl Taro, who is a Muslim stay in next door of Hamida. And she always want die than live. Because her husband takes another woman as his wife and forces Taro to become a prostitute. This makes suffer her unknown disease. And she told that her mother forced to live with her husband's home, because this is her fate. Taro always says to Hamida for a food he parents sold her. And she want die. When Hamida says her mother why the married Taro that home. They say her husband's parents say that they look Taro very carefully. And Hamida first time see a girl who first time rise her voice against her torture, because Hamida never rise voice against her parents and her husband. She lives like this is her fate. And Rashida is now her child's father only for her.

The seeing their two girls life Hamida very sad, and thinking that a woman how much suffer in her life. And she also shocked by another girl a Mad Woman, who is comes to the village Sakkar, is yet another example of the exploitation of women. She comes to the village half-fed and half-clad, and lives in a shed outside the village gates where the villagers serve the food and water. The villagers woman were the cloth to the mad woman but she never were the cloth, and she always half-fed and half-clad. However, to shock and dismay of the villagers, the mad woman is impregnated by somebody. In this time she gives birth to a child, which is protected by Rashida and Hamida. When she gives birth to a child mad woman dead. And the child is taken by the Hamida and Rashida.

When the child was taken Hamida and Rashida the Hindus are rise voice that, the mad woman is belongs to the Hindu committee and a Muslim family how growth the child of Hindu girl. But reality is that no one knows about the, religion of mad woman. The Hindus go to house of Rashida and take the child to their custody. But the family of Hindu neatly not cares the child and the child is very critical condition,



then they return to the child to Rashida's family.

Thus Amrita gives the conditions of women in community background. The Kammo who is always tortured by her aunt and Taro who is want to die by torture of her husband and a mad woman who is not live like others, she become pregnant by somebody. No one knows whose child was this. Thus Amrita described the exploitation of women in pre-partition days.

Amrita in her novel shows that before partition how the communal peace war is going on. According to Amrita is that, this peace war is taking the big war in the partition time. And then the other community men, want avenge by abduction another community women or rape or force marriage. Thus she explains that the exploitation of women spread in large scale in the partition because the background of the peace war between the communities and the partition base on the community quarrel.

The riots of 1947 torture her and shake to the very foundations the ideal world of her imagination. While the male writers of Punjabi literature were either keeping deliberate silence over the massacre by the name of religion or were involved in literary writings which had nothing to do with the communal riots, Amrita writes about the sufferings of those who are abducted, raped and tortured by the name of religion. Amrita describes the surroundings of 1947 from where came her "Pinjar".

### III. Conclusion:

*Pinjar* is such an important novel precisely because of how it conceives of the status of women. Pritam set out to construct a narrative of Partition from the women's point of view. This meant that Puro becomes the symbol of what women had to endure during Partition. In a very powerful way, Pritam argues that the violation of the nation's women on both sides of Partition is akin to how Partition itself violated the nation. That is to say that Pritam does not see much difference between the Partition's political violation of the homeland and its consequences of actual violation of women. The status of women in *Pinjar* is to symbolize how the nation's status was violated during Partition. As Pritam recognized that Partition was used as a means to manipulate and consolidate political power, she also understood that this was representative of women during the time period. These women had no say in partition, confirming that their mistreatment was both mirroring and results of Partition: "*Pinjar* is the women's cry in prose against her existential fate and social abuse." It is in this light that Pritam's work displays the status of women as a result of political and social manipulation, a situation that cries out and pleads for dramatic and swift change.

Lastly, her novel *Pinjar* (Skeleton) is a compelling account of her deeply personal experience of Partition and Independence. Perhaps *Pinjar* is Amrita's final testimony, as a witness, to Punjab's Partition. Here Amrita's Puro defies patriarchal and territorial boundaries, and effectively uses her agency to critique the reality of Partition by choosing to stay on in Pakistan. Indeed, in times when religious identity became a brutal blueprint of territorial boundaries and nationalism, Amrita and her female protagonist criticize the elision of religious community with "nation", highlight patriarchal hypocrisy and challenge the national obsession with borders.

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## HENRY JAMES'S SELECT NOVELS: A STUDY

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Henry James's most famous biographer Leon Edel observes,

To read the essays and reviews as well as the books, devoted to James since the beginning of this century, in the attempt to discover the contemporary view of the man and his work is to encounter some large and crudely built sphinx, over whom has been flung a prodigious coat of motley. James has been likened to Goethe, to Shakespeare and Racine and to Marivaux. (Edel 1)

Henry James is a famous American novelist, short-story writer, playwright, critic and thinker. The brother of William James, the famous American psychologist and philosopher, Henry James was born in New York in 1843. He was educated by private tutors until the age of 12 and then at schools in Boulogne, Paris, Geneva, Bonn and - when the family returned to America - at Newport, Rhode Island. He entered Harvard Law School in 1862 for a brief spell of time and, with the encouragement of Charles Eliot Norton and William Dean Howells, both friends later, he began to concentrate on writing. In the 1860s his early reviews and essays were published in *The North American Review* and *The Atlantic Monthly*. *Watch and Ward*, serialized in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1871, was his first novel. *A Passionate Pilgrim and Other Tales* (1875) and *Transatlantic Sketches* (1875) reflect his experiences of Europe on extended visits in 1869 and 1872-4. They are his travel sketches. After spending 1875 in Paris he settled in England in 1876, making London his base for over 20 years before moving to Lamb House in Rye, Sussex to be close to the sea. James's remarkably wide range of acquaintance in the literary world include Joseph Conrad, Stephen Crane, H. G. Wells, George Gissing and Edith Wharton, a particularly close friend during the last years of his life. James became a British subject in 1915.

Deeply influenced by Continental literature of the Russian Turgenev, the French Daudet, Flaubert, the Goncourts and Zola in Paris, the Polish Conrad, the Swedish Swedenborg, James took the American experience of Europe as the theme of his first important works: *Roderick Hudson* (1876), *The American* (1877), *The Europeans* (1878), *Daisy Miller* (1879), *An International Episode* (1879) and, his masterpiece of this period, *The Portrait of A Lady* (1881). *Washington Square* (1880) and *The Bostonians* (1886) use an American setting and *The Princess Casamassima* (1886) studies the political underworld of London, and *The Aspern Papers* (1888) returns to his 'international theme'. In addition to short stories that include *The Madonna of the Future and Other Tales* (1879) and *The Siege of London* (1883), he has published essays *Partial Portraits* (1888) and travel writings *Portraits of Places* (1883), *A Little Tour in France* (1884), and the three significant critical studies: *Of French Poets and Novelists* (1878), *Hawthorne* (1879) and *The Art of Novel* (1884).

Kathryn VanSpanckeren writes, Henry James once wrote that 'art especially literary art, makes life, makes interest, makes importance.' James's fiction and criticism is the most highly conscious, sophisticated and difficult of its era. With Twain, James is generally ranked as the greatest American novelist of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (VanSpanckeren 51).

James in 1890 turned his attention to drama, writing several drawing-room comedies and adapting *The American* before becoming discouraged by the failure of *Guy Domville* (1895) in London. The collections of short stories belonging to this period are: *The Lesson of the Master* (1892); *The Real Thing*

and *Other Tales* (1893); *Terminations* (1895) and *Embarrassments* (1896). The novels which followed - notably *The Spoils of Poynton* (1897), *What Maisie Knew* (1897), *The Awkward Age* (1899) and *The Sacred Fount* (1901) - abandon his 'international theme.' *The Wings of the Dove* (1902), *The Ambassadors* (1903) and *The Golden Bowl* (1904) are the last novels. *The Turn of the Screw* (1898) is his most famous venture into the uncanny.

James first returned to America after a 21-year presence in Europe in 1904, staying with Henry Adams and meeting President Theodore Roosevelt. His often unfavorable impressions of his native country make *The American Scene* (1907) an altogether less enjoyable travel book than either *English Hours* (1905) or *Italian Hours* (1910). The New York Edition of his works (1907-9) revised their texts and contributed 18 new prefaces which together amount to a major statement of his approach to fiction. The project speaks of his theory and practice. His last completed novel was *The Outcry* (1911). *The Ivory Tower* and *The Sense of the Past* were left unfinished. A *Small Boy and Others* (1913) and *Notes of a Son and Brother* (1914) are autobiographical; a third volume, *The Middle Years*, appeared posthumously in 1917.

James's biographer Leon Edel divides James's creative life into three periods. The first one covers the works like *The American*, *Daisy Miller* and *The Portrait of a Lady*. The second one covers the masterpieces *The Bostonians* and *The Princess Casamassima*. The third period covers such great works as *The Wings of the Dove*, *The Ambassadors* and *The Golden Bowl*. Edel thinks that the third phase is his major phase of writing.

It is in his essay "The Art of Fiction" (1884) that James most succinctly expressed his critical principles as well as a justification of his novelistic endeavor. One may read his book *The Art of Novel* fruitfully in this regard.

**The following is a critical study of James's important novels.**

#### **Roderick Hudson (1876)**

*Roderick Hudson (1876)* was first published as a serial in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1875, and then in book form in 1876. James revised it for publication in England in 1879. Roderick Hudson, an amateur sculptor, is taken to Europe by Rowland Mallet, a wealthy connoisseur who is impressed by his talent. In Rome he introduces Roderick to his circle, which includes the French sculptor, Gloriani, who is certain that Roderick's talent will never develop. Roderick meets Christina Light, the daughter of an expatriate American widow and he is fascinated by her and so he deserts his own work. In order to force him back into reality, Rowland brings his mother and fiancée, Mary Garland, from New England. Their arrival seems to have its desired effect, and Roderick executes a fine bust of his mother. But then Christina, urged on by her ambitious mother, marries Prince Casamassima and Roderick's work comes to a complete halt. Once again Rowland attempts to rekindle Roderick's interest by arranging a visit to Switzerland. Unfortunately Christina is there too and Roderick borrows money from Mary so that he can follow his old love. This provokes Rowland to a furious outburst and he condemns Roderick as an ungrateful wretch. Roderick walks off into the Swiss Alps where he is caught in a thunderstorm. He dies mysteriously. Still the novel was a success. *The North American Review* said, "The novel had a singularly perfect evenness of execution." (Moore 37). The story has the immense merit of rising to a climax at the end.

#### **The American (1877)**

*The American (1877)* was published in *The Atlantic Monthly* between June 1876 and May 1877, and as a book in 1877. Christopher Newman, a bachelor who has become wealthy through shrewd business dealings in America, travels to Paris, France to find a beautiful wife. He is *an intelligent and idealistic self-made millionaire industrialist*. Though an accomplished businessman, he is naive about European ways. This is the author's attitude too. Mrs Tristram, an expatriate American, serves as a sort of guide and confidante to him, much as Maria Gostrey serves Lambert Strether in *The Ambassadors*.

Newman becomes engaged to Claire de Cintre, a widow and the daughter of an aristocratic French family, the Bellegardes. But the Bellegardes decide they cannot sacrifice the family pride, even to

Newman's wealth, and they cancel the engagement. Meanwhile Newman has introduced Valentin Bellegarde, Claire's brother and his own friend and ally, to Noemie Nioche, a young woman who copies great paintings for a living. Because of his involvement with Noemie, Valentin fights and dies in a duel. Just before dying, however, he provides Newman with the means of compelling the Bellegarde family to allow him to marry Claire: he sends Newman to Mrs Bread, the Dowager Marquise's maid, who reveals that the Marquise had caused her husband's death by withholding his medicine. In the end, however, Newman decides not to use this information for blackmailing, and the novel closes with Claire's becoming a Carmelite nun more out of depression.

Harry Moore thinks though this theme was a familiar one to the French, James made it fascinating by giving it a touch of novelty. The stage, in 1890, beckoned James first in the person of the actor Edward Compton, whose wife was the American actress Virginia Bateman and whose son was to become the writer Sir Compton Mackenzie. Edward Compton wrote to James suggesting that he dramatize *The American*, and he paid an advance of £250 on it in 1890. The play was opened at Liverpool in 1871. The play had a happy ending as the brother is not killed and as Newman marries the heroine at the end. The whole thing was like a comedy of manners. Edward Compton played the role of Christopher Newman, and Elizabeth Robins that of Claire de Cintre. However, the London audience found it un-dramatic.

### **The Europeans (1878)**

Henry James published *The Europeans* serially in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1878, and as a book, in slightly revised form, the same year. Felix Young, an artist, and his sister Eugenia, the wife of a German nobleman who is about to renounce her for reasons of state, come from Europe to Massachusetts to visit their relatives, the Wentworths. The elder Wentworth houses the two in a nearby house. Relations between the cousins become friendly. Wentworth's daughter Gertrude falls in love with Felix; and his son Clifford becomes infatuated with Eugenia, who is looking for a wealthy husband and welcomes all this too naturally. Gertrude, however, already has an 'understanding' with Mr Brand, the Unitarian minister. Although she does not in fact care for Mr Brand, her sister Charlotte does. There are Robert and Lizzie to complicate the matters. Robert is drawn but not unreservedly - to Eugenia; Lizzie hopes to win Clifford Wentworth.

At the end of the novel, Mr Wentworth consents to the marriage of Felix and Gertrude; Clifford, having overcome his infatuation for Eugenia, marries Lizzie. Mr Brand discovers that he cares not for Gertrude but for Charlotte, and marries her. Robert and Eugenia do not, however, make a fourth happy couple. Though attracted to her, Robert cannot overcome his scruples about her past and about the calculating way in which she uses her feminine wiles. Eugenia returns to Europe alone. The characterization is much complex.

### **Daisy Miller (1879)**

*This is a* short novel by Henry James, published in 1879. The heroine Daisy Miller is touring Europe with her mother and brother. The expatriate American community interprets her innocence and lack of concern for social convention as immodesty, and she is ostracized. One of its members, Frederick Winterbourne, is charmed by her innocence, however. In Rome Daisy takes up with Glovanelli, a young Italian. Winterbourne meets them one evening viewing the Coliseum by moonlight, and berates Daisy for her lack of social decorum. He warns her of fever. James's friend Edith Wharton has written a short story "Roman Fever." Shocked and hurt by his reaction, she returns at once to her hotel, where she contracts malaria and dies within a week.

Henry James made a play based on *Daisy Miller* for a New York theater but it was turned down telling that it was too literary.

### **The Portrait of a Lady (1881)**

*The Portrait of a Lady* was first published serially in *The Atlantic Monthly* (1880-1), and then in book form in 1881. The novel has 53 chapters.

Isabel Archer, of Albany, New York, a penniless orphan, becomes the protégée of her wealthy aunt, Lydia Touchett. She goes to England to stay with her aunt and uncle, a retired American banker, and their tubercular son, Ralph, who persuades his father to provide for Isabel in his will. That so happens. When Mr Touchett dies, Isabel finds herself rich and goes to the Continent with Mrs Touchett and her friend, Madame Merle. In Florence, Madame Merle introduces Isabel to Gilbert Osmond, a middle-aged widower with a young daughter, Pansy. To preserve her freedom, Isabel has previously turned down proposals of marriage from Casper Goodwood, a rich young American, and from Lord Warburton, an English neighbour of the Touchetts. Now, however, impressed with Osmond's taste and intellectual detachment, she accepts his proposal, only to discover him to be a selfish fellow who has married her for her riches. When she hears that Ralph is dying she prepares to depart for England to be with him, but Osmond forbids her to go. It is at this point that she discovers that Madame Merle is Pansy's mother, and she at last understands the woman's part in her marriage to Osmond. It is a plot. She goes to England after a final confrontation with Madame Merle and is at Ralph's side when he is on deathbed. Casper Goodwood makes a last attempt to gain Isabel, but she rejects him and returns to Osmond and Pansy in Italy.

The heroine Isabel Archer is based on James's cousin Minny Temple who was beautiful and who died young. Archer, as critics think, is linked to the Greek goddess Artemis or Diana. James has depicted her 'as a well-meaning American abroad.' (Moore 48). The bad Osmond is based on Francis Boott whose daughter Lizzie is Pansy here. Critics on both sides of the Atlantic found *The Portrait of a Lady* as James's major novel.

### **Washington Square (1880)**

*Washington Square* (1880) is a short novel published serially in *The Cornhill Magazine* in 1880 and in book form in 1881. The motherless daughter of a wealthy New York physician, Catherine Sloper is unappreciated and ignored by her father, and leads a lonely and bleak existence until she is courted by Morris Townsend. She accepts his proposal of marriage, but her doctor-father refuses to give his consent when he discovers Townsend to be penniless. Exasperated by Catherine's obstinate attachment Dr Sloper takes her away to Europe for a year. This does not change her mind, but Morris, faced with the prospect of Catherine having to forfeit her inheritance if she marries him, breaks off the engagement. Seventeen years later, after the death of her father has made Catherine a rich woman, Morris returns and proposes again. Good or ill she rejects him absolutely and settles down to the life of a spinster in the family house in Washington Square. The theme of the novel is a traditional one.

### **The Bostonians (1886)**

*The Bostonians* (1886) was serialized in *The Century Magazine* in 1885-86 and published in 1886. It is a satirical study of the movement for female emancipation in New England. In searching for a tale which would be characteristic of social conditions in America James concluded that the most striking aspect of American life was the situation of women, the decline of the sentiment of sex, and the agitation in their behalf.

*The Bostonians* recounts the story of a young lawyer from the South, Basil Ransom, who comes to Boston on business. He becomes acquainted with his two cousins, the feminist Olive Chancellor and her sister, the widow Mrs Luna, who soon falls in love with him. Olive takes Ransom to a suffragette meeting, where he meets the altruistic philanthropist, Miss Birdseye, a character modeled on Elizabeth Peabody, the Transcendentalist. Both Olive and Ransom are immediately interested by a beautiful young woman speaker, Verena Tarrant. Verena is easily persuaded to share Olive's luxurious home, and Olive sets out to make her a leader of the feminist cause, pleading with her to forswear the thought of marriage. Ransom, however, increasingly irritated by the attentions of Mrs Luna, falls in love with Verena and attempts to counter Olive's sway over her. As a result, hostility develops between Olive and Ransom. Verena is preparing to deliver a course of lectures, but when Miss Birdseye dies she loses confidence. She is about to begin her first lecture when Ransom's appearance unnerves her. Forced to choose between Olive and

Ransom, she accepts Ransom's proposal, to Olive's bitter disappointment. This is the casual Hardy-esque theme of triangular man-women relationship.

The relationship of Olive and Verena at some levels pre-figures the popular novel *Trilby*, which came out ten years later. Oddly enough, before George du Maurier wrote *Trilby* he offered James the plot. James's novel, far too prolific for its necessities, was in one way a farewell to America in often satiric terms.

### **The Princess Casamassima (1886)**

*The Princess Casamassima (1886)* was published serially in *The Atlantic Monthly* from September 1885 to October 1886, and then in book form in 1886.

Set in London in the 1880s, the novel portrays a range of characters from all social sections. The hero is an orphan boy Hyacinth Robinson, who has been brought up by Miss Pynsent, a quiet little spinster who makes a living as a dressmaker and lives in a slum of London. Hyacinth has seen his mother only once, when she was dying in prison, condemned for the murder of his father, 'Lord Frederick'. He becomes apprenticed to the book-binder Eustache Popuin, a French Communist in exile. While learning his trade he meets Paul Muniment, a proletarian revolutionary, joins a secret society, and commits himself to the cause. He contacts Christina, the Princess Casamassima, who, separated from her Italian husband, finds the revolutionary movement an outlet for her energies. After mistress Miss Pynsent dies, Hyacinth travels to Europe and returns with a somewhat altered social vision. Though he no longer supports the society, he receives a summons from it to carry out the assassination of a duke. The Princess Casamassima goes to his apartment, planning to offer to substitute for him, but she arrives too late. Lo Hyacinth has given up in despair and killed himself. The whole thing is a tragedy.

Leon Edel and Lionel Trilling have written about this novel. That James felt a novelist did not have to be born into the milieu he deals with, we know from his essay of 1884, 'The Art of Fiction', written for *Longman's Magazine* in answer to a lecture and pamphlet on the subject by the now-faded bestseller, Walter Besant. Besant's lecture later appeared as a book, along with James's riposte. His principal objection, however, was to Besant's claim that novels should have 'a conscious moral purpose'.

### **The Spoils of Poynton (1897)**

*The Spoils of Poynton (1897)* was serialized in *The Atlantic Monthly* from April to June 1896 under the title *The Old Things*, and published in book as *The Spoils of Poynton* in 1897.

Poynton Park is the home of Owen Gereth, and the 'spoils' are the antiques and *objects A'art* with which his mother has filled it. When Mrs Gereth discovers that Owen has decided to marry the tasteless Mona Brigstock, she tries to interest him instead in Fleda Vetch, a kindred spirit who shares her own aesthetics. As Fleda secretly falls in love with Owen, he enlists her help in persuading his mother to vacate Poynton, which will now be the home of his bride. Mrs Gereth moves out, but takes away the most prized possessions. Mona threatens to break off the engagement unless the spoils are returned to the Poynton park. All the while Owen is becoming more and more attracted to Fleda; Mrs Gereth, certain that he has now transferred his affections to Fleda and will not marry Mona, returns the spoils to Poynton. Owen attempts to break his engagement with Mona, but, hearing of the replenishment of Poynton, she forces him to marry her. The hide and seek thing takes place. Fleda receives a letter from Owen, travelling abroad with Mona, asking her to choose from Poynton whatever object she wants. She arrives at Poynton Park just as the house and its spoils burn down! Thus the misfortune takes place.

James had this idea of writing the novel at a dinner party. He picked up a few threads of a story of a woman and depicted the narration. Here James speaks of artist's job for selection. The theory relates to his realistic approach to life.

### **What Maisie Knew (1897)**

*What Maisie Knew (1897)* was published in *The Chap Book* from January to August 1897. Later the same year a revised version was serialized in the *New Review* and published in book form. Though written in the third person, it is told from the point of view of the perceptive but somewhat naive Maisie. Her

parents, Beale and Ida Farange, divorce when she is six and it is arranged that she spend half the year with her father and half the year with her mother a strange adjustment. Beale marries Miss Overmore, who had been Maisie's governess; Ida marries Sir Claude but still has a succession of lovers. Maisie, now under the care of Mrs Wix, is shuttled back and forth between the two households. Her two new step-parents become attracted to one another and, when their marriages to her real parents dissolve, they marry. Abandoned to Mrs Wix's care by Ida and Beale, Maisie is invited by Sir Claude, who is fond of her, to make her home with him and the former Miss Overmore. Unfortunately, the former Miss Overmore cannot abide Mrs Wix, the one 'safe' adult whom Maisie absolutely refuses to give up. The final scene, which takes place in Boulogne, ends with Maisie's refusal to live with Sir Claude and his new wife: she departs for England with Mrs Wix, her means of subsistence guaranteed by Sir Claude. It is ambiguous what sort of 'knowledge' Maisie has achieved and debatable whether or not she has remained innocent in spite of the sordid worldliness that surrounds her. The novel sounds like a comedy of manners. The story speaks of people's lack of moral integrity. Maisie's knowledge of evil strengthens her. Her approach to the tactics of adjustment has a psychological twist.

### **The Awkward Age (1899)**

*The Awkward Age (1899)* was published serially in *Harper's Weekl* from October 1898 to January 1899. The novel was revised before it appeared in a book form in 1899. It is written almost entirely in the form of dialogue. Its hero Nanda Arthurian Brookenham, is a 'knowing' young woman brought up in the permissive and worldly atmosphere of her mother's salon. Aggie, a 'pure' young lady who has been raised strictly in the Continental manner, by her aunt the Duchess, serves as her foil. The action revolves around the relations between Nanda and Aggie and two men, Mr Vanderbank and Mr Mitchett.

Nanda loves Mr Vanderbank, but he does not return her feeling. Mr Longdon, an elderly gentleman who once cared for Nanda's grand-mother, encourages Vanderbank to Nanda, even offering to provide her with dowry. But Nanda, out of the worldly wisdom that has perhaps made her less marriageable than Aggie, realizes Vanderbank does not love her and, in a typically Jamesian renunciation scene, graciously gives him up. Meanwhile, Mr Mitchett, who had hoped to marry Nanda himself, has been sought by the Duchess as a match for Aggie. Accepting that he marries Aggie. Nanda retires to Longdon's country house.

### **The Sacred Fount (1901)**

*The Sacred Fount (1901)* is a short novel by Henry James, published in 1901. The story takes place at a weekend party at Newmarch, an English country house. The nameless narrator develops the theory of the 'sacred fount' when he observes that his hostess, Grace Brissenden, is much older than her husband, Guy, yet after a few years of marriage seems to be the more youthful and energetic of the two. The narrator thinks that Guy is the 'fount' from which his wife draws her new vitality. He then applies this theory to another pair of guests Gilbert Long and May Server. He posits the passage of vital force from May, who appears to be emotionally disturbed to Gilbert, who once seemed dull but is now a witty man of the world. He further decides that Gilbert and Grace, the dominant partners of their respective marriages, are drawing closer together, and that so are May and Guy, the weaker partners. The reader is left uncertain whether Grace is lying or the narrator has merely invented the idea. The idea of guess work is ripe.

### **The Wings of the Dove (1902)**

*The Wings of the Dove (1902)* as that of *The Ambassadors (1901)* and *The Golden Bowl (1904)* speaks of James's excellence. *The Wings of the Dove* takes place in London and Venice, and in the atmosphere of the latter James again makes scenery an aspect of the plot, which in the main concerns itself with the scheme hatched by Kate Croy, in love with the impecunious journalist Merton Densher. Her strategy is to induce Merton to marry the heiress Milly Theale, who is mortally ill; after her death, Merton would have enough money to marry Kate. Milly, the bright and attractive American girl, is another of James's fictional portraits of Minny Temple. *Moore writes,*

If the American girl ultimately wins in the subtle yet desperate conflict in *The wings of the Dove,*

another of her species does so more decisively and lives through her victory in *The Golden Bowl*. This too is a tortuous story with frequent dramatic heightening of the action. Maggie, a rich American girl in London, marries the Italian Prince Amerigo, but retains her urgent closeness to her father, as in the similar case of Clover Hooper Adams. In *The golden Bowl*, the neglected Prince resumes an adulterous affair with Charlotte, a friend of Maggie's (Moore 93).

### **The Ambassadors (1903)**

*The Ambassadors (1903)* was serialized in *The North American Review* and published, with revisions, in 1903. James considered it his most 'perfect' work of art. Lambert Strether is sent to Paris by Mrs Newsome, a wealthy widow, to persuade her son Chad to return to Massachusetts and his responsibilities as head of the family business. Strether's success as an ambassador will ensure his marriage to Mrs Newsome when he returns. On the way he meets Maria Gostrey, an expatriate American whose witty and sympathetic observations introduce him to the pleasure of European life. In Paris he finds Chad a sophisticated young man who is not eager to return to America. Madame de Vionnet has clearly been the refining influence on Chad's life.

Strether's letters to Mrs Newsome reveal his declining enthusiasm for his embassy, and she sends her daughter Sarah, with Sarah's husband and sister-in-law, to appeal to Chad. They receive little help from Strether and their lack of success further estranges him from Mrs Newsome. Consequently Strether makes two discoveries: that Chad's liaison with Madame de Vionnet is an intimate one, and that his own sympathies rest with Chad. However, he remains content to observe life and ultimately returns to Massachusetts.

*Harry Moore thinks* Lambert Strether is an idealist who discovers a secret love affair and in doing so he discovers a new complexity to his inner life. William Dean Howell's words about art had inspired James to write this narrative, which the author felt the most satisfying of his novels.

### **The Golden Bowl (1904)**

*The Golden Bowl (1904)* was published in 1904. Adam Verver is an American millionaire living in London with his daughter Maggie and amassing an art collection. Maggie is of marriageable age, and her friend Fanny Assingham finds her an Italian prince, Amerigo. The beautiful Charlotte Stant comes to London to stay with Fanny, who knows that Charlotte and Amerigo had once been in love but could not marry since they were both penniless. Charlotte has no trouble persuading Amerigo to accompany her when she goes shopping in search of a wedding present for Maggie. At an antique dealer's she wants to give Amerigo a present also, a gilded crystal bowl. The presence of a flaw in the bowl brings it within the range of her purse; Amerigo, however, is disturbed that the bowl is flawed and declines the gift. A year later, following the birth of a child to Maggie and Amerigo, Adam Verver, now a grand-father but not yet 50, marries Charlotte. But Charlotte and Amerigo have not forgotten their original feelings for each other, and they meet in secret. For her father's birthday Maggie buys a gilded crystal bowl. She has not noticed that it is flawed, but the dealer feels compelled to point it out and calls on her. Here recognizes the photographs of Amerigo and Charlotte and tells Maggie that the pair had visited his shop and rejected the bowl during the days of her engagement to Amerigo. Maggie sends for Fanny and makes clear that she knows the whole truth about Charlotte and Amerigo. She smashes the golden bowl just as he enters the room. Amerigo stops seeing Charlotte; Adam gives no hint to her that he knows of her liaison; Maggie conducts herself with unruffled serenity. Charlotte, wondering at her lover's withdrawal, cannot provoke Maggie to any kind of exchange. Adam finally resolves the situation by deciding to return to America with Charlotte. This is a strange story. The novel is rich in its symbols.

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## TABOO ISSUES AND WORDS IN STANDUP COMEDY IN INDIA AND AMERICA

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The present piece of writing examines how frequently Indians and Americans standup comedians refer to taboo issues. At the outset the paper defines the genre with its unique characteristics and how taboo issues have offered ruthless criticism and humors situations for the both the audience. The paper is based on the videos available on YouTube. The paper is also considering psychological origin of the term and finds some support in the writings of Freud who looked upon with surprise and found the unwritten laws on sexual behavior have special role and restriction on mankind business.

Standup comedy is somewhat new and amazing speech genre in Indian setup for style; approach and content combined with entertain values. The comedy in India is getting popular with wider coverage on television and live shows. Every season a new entertainer with his diverse cultural, regional, professional and educational background is bringing material in to celebrate Indian spirit. In fact it proves that Indian youths are quite eager to take advantage of the platform to impart and poke fun at the adolescent oppressed feelings, frustrations in relations. Repeated claps, laughter, cheering, booing from another end i.e. audience shows the lively and communicative possibilities to deal with various topics. It must be said that the genre is an ultimate mirror to understand pros and cons of life on collective scale.

It is observed that contemporary audience is brought up with newer sensibility and do not have any objection on responding frankly. To prove my argument I have selected some random videos and the artist who are making references to it. In some cases these events are related collectively or bear the personal stamp of the comedian. Generally single comedian begins with informal touch onward steadily mixing variety of expressions might be direct, sarcastic or full of punches dealing with societal and own failure, roughly covering the most darling topics or the concerns of the masses. Many being young comedians are subject to reflect their understanding, frustration on the world. Mostly bachelors, recent breakups, kicked off from job, putting on weight, aging problem, contrast of western culture and Indian culture' have often found the way in such comedies. In the words of Mintz Lawrence, "humour is a vitally important social and cultural phenomenon, that the student of a culture and society cannot find a more revealing index to its values, attitudes, disposition and concerns and that the relatively undervalued genre of standup comedy is the most interesting of all the manifestations of humor in the popular culture<sup>1</sup>"

I propose that the majority comedians have shown keen interest in referring to taboo issues and words. The word taboo refers to objects and issues those are not directly addressed or touched in the mankind routine business. The word is defined on wiktory as an inhibition or bans that result from social customs or emotional aversion. Freud had under taken an extensive study of the issues and found the correlation between customs and day to today business going orderly among aborigines. It may be argued that 'taboo words represent a class of emotions arousing references with respects of body products, body parts, sexual acts, ethnic or racial insults, profanity, vulgarity, slang and scatology.<sup>2</sup> Freud in his famous work entitled 'Totem and Taboo' has connected the latter term with unwritten laws among the aborigine societies probably stern customary control and discipline for every member, bind to act within the prescribed code of conduct. In the Freudian sense it is instinctual subjugation of sexual feelings same has made the societies really ideal in terms of conduct expected from members. American standup comedians have freely exploited next words explicitly to share their frustration, bitch, pussy, cock, slut, anus,

scrotums, piss, kiss queer, shit and fuck off. While some 'strong connotative' words too are used in the show. The swearing words too can be considered in the category. In the case Indian comedians the words are somewhat implicit in its usage.

Indian comedians too have presented some topics where these words have been publically uttered. In some cases Kenny Sebastian, Varun Thakur, Abish Mathew, Zakir Khan and Daniel Fernandes have rather muffled the words in the modest context. But whenever the adolescent memories have surfaced these artists have used words fitting to the Indian context and culture. Varun Thakur in his show available in YouTube condoms, 'Chemist and Contraceptives in India' has frankly exploited the words. Abish Mathew in one of his episodes 'What women think about During Sex' not only exploits the situation with the words but combines it with bodily movements. In brief taboo issues, words and gestures in Indian standup comedy are making its way on the model provided by the Americans.

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## FEMINIST LITERARY CRITICISM: MORALITY, IDEOLOGY AND REVOLUTION

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Feminism reflects the silencing and marginalization of women in a particular culture, a culture organized in the favour of men. Unlike the other approaches, feminism is an overtly political approach and can attack other approaches for their false assumptions about women.

Feminist literary criticism developed mostly since the beginning of the late twentieth century, as women's movement. The movement includes the writings of Simone de Beauvoir, Kate Millet, and Betty Friedan. They examined a female "self" constructed in literature by male authors to embody various male fears and anxieties. They considered literary texts as models and agents of power. Simone de Beauvoir in her book, *The Second Sex* (1949) asked what is woman, and how is she constructed differently from men?

Ecofeminism links feminism with ecology. The advocates of the theory argue that capitalistic system of society is responsible for the split between nature and culture. The movement seeks to eradicate all forms of social injustice, not just injustice against women and environment. Francoise D'Eaubonne coined the term in her book, *Le Feminisme ou la Mort*.

Feminism is a practical social movement. It addresses the inequality of the sexes. It is an important theoretical discourse. It is one of the most important and influential intellectual currents of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It has become famous like Marxism and Psychoanalysis. Feminist theory encompasses most disciplines from art and architecture to science and technology. It is mainly concentrated in the Social Sciences and the Humanities. It is diverse and there are varieties of feminist theory. At its core, it has four principal concerns: (i) elucidate the origins and causes of gender inequality (ii) explain the operation and persistence of this state of affairs (iii) delineate effective strategies to either bring about full equality between the sexes or at least ameliorate the effects of ongoing inequality and (iv) imagine a world in which sexual inequality no longer exists.

The causes of sexual inequality are almost impossible to trace. It was already an established fact in all of recorded history. Therefore it is ultimately a matter for pure assumption. The most widely accepted proposition is that in prehistoric times biology placed women in a subordinate position to men because pregnancy and childbearing render them susceptible and in need of assistance both to obtain food and fend off predators. As societies became more prosperous and technology sophisticated women's vulnerability diminished.

Feminism is one of the most important social movements of the past two centuries. It has brought about the most enduring and progressive transformation of human society on a global scale. The history of feminism is traditionally divided into three waves. Each wave signaled a different era in the struggle to attain equality between the sexes. Feminism is first and foremost a social movement for the liberation of women. The term feminism appeared in 1880s. In the past, the usual term 'women's rights' was used. The first advocates of women's rights expressed their concern against inequities in society's treatment of women.

Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792) is one of the earliest self-consciously feminist works. It was written at the height of the French Revolution. Wollstonecraft criticizes patriarchal society for the unreasonable way it confines women's rights, their opportunity for education, articulateness, and economic freedom; while on the other hand she criticizes women for buying into mere 'spaniels' and 'toys'. According to Wollstonecraft, better education for young women is the solution, not the

granting of equal rights. Feminism does not begin with Wollstonecraft but with the various Women's liberation movements that sprang up in the early 1800s.

Struggling after more than a century, women achieved full voting rights regardless of age, race, or marital status. It justifies Juliet Mitchell's claim that feminism is 'the longest revolution.' Women obtained the right to vote in most parts of the world at the turn of the twentieth century. Feminists fought for full equality not for only right to vote.

It is worth mentioning that throughout the long First Wave of feminism women fought against several injustices. Jane Austen and Charlotte Bronte were the proto feminist writers. They have described the plight of women with regard to the ownership of property. Women did not have full rights over their own body. They had no legal protection against sexual violence. The idea that a husband could rape his wife was not admitted as law until late in the twentieth century. Women were discriminated against in the workplace. Women were paid less than men for same work. They were restricted to apply for certain jobs. They were denied promotions. They were not entitled for allowance for maternity leave. Many of these problems persist today.

Once suffrage was granted, the women's rights movement fell into decline, The Second Wave of Feminism commenced in the late 1950s and early 1960s. A new generation of activists called themselves the Second Wave of feminism. Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) is generally known as the culminating point for second round of political struggle. The National Organization for Women (NOW) was formed in 1966 and became the central focus, in the US, for feminist activism. The second wave feminists thought that a sea change in cultural attitudes on the part of both men and women would bring equality between the sexes. Authors like Germaine Greer and Kate Millet called for a sexual liberation as well. They argued that women could alter their status as the second sex by overturning the double standards applied to their sexuality and behaviour.

The second wave of feminism came to an end in the early 1980s. They got success to win many battles for their rights. The political climate changed. The Reagan-Thatcher era was very unfriendly to equal rights. Feminism was caricatured as mere political correctness. Third Wave feminist scholar Susan Faludi documents the event in her *Backlash: the Undeclared War against Women* (1991). There were also problems within feminism. Feminist scholars of colour, particularly those from the Third World argued very forcefully that feminism neglected race and class. These issues are central in the third wave of feminism. As societies have become more prosperous, and technology more sophisticated, women's vulnerability diminished. But their subordinate position seemed to harden. Feminist theorists have analysed the issue of the persistence of sexism even after the ceasing of the principal justification. There are three basic answers to this question: first, biology continues to be determining factor, second, it is in men's interest to maintain the subordination of women, and third, women have been complicit with their own oppression. Radical feminists like Shulamith Firestone said that biotechnology should be used to put an end to women's reproductive role.

The Third Wave feminists have argued for a celebration of feminity. They argued that setting aside an imposed identity is liberating, but it also creates an identity crisis. Simone de Beauvoir, one of the most important feminist writers of the twentieth century, famously declared that woman is made not born. Identity is the main agenda for French feminists- Helene Cixous, Catherine Clement, Luce Irigaray, Julia Kristeva, and Michele Le Douffe, draw on a wide variety of philosophical sources, but use psychoanalysis to elucidate what 'woman means in our time. There has been considerable debate on the issue of material differences between women. The feminist critics have deliberated on the differences of class, race, ethnicity, religion, and sexuality. The feminist theory offers us a perspective to view and evaluate the world. Ecofeminism, feminist ethics, and feminist film criticism enable us to reevaluate the situation in the world. The feminist theory does not imagine an alternative future. It carves out a new way of thinking and acting in the present.

Helen Vendler explained the idea of a “female” language or way of writing. There is not and never will be a separate women's language. For the success of feminism, it must de-idealise women. Feminist criticism is moral, ideological, and revolutionary.

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## NATURE AND IMAGINATION

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Nature is one of the major themes in English literature appealing readers for creative possibilities. Poets have looked upon nature as a soothsayer, companion, philosopher and a platform to percept emotional, intuitional elements and many celebrated nature in their works and regarded it as quintessence of divine spirit. In the terms of pastoralism it has stood for 'refuge, reflection, rescue, requiem and reconstruction'<sup>1</sup>. In the light of the above citations nature comes up as an important element where often writers and readers have sought reliable platform to express themselves. Nature for Romanticism was the projection of non-human phenomena of the one's own unconscious fantasies different from him constructed verbally. Terry Gifford asserts that pastoral constantly discloses the 'preoccupation and tension'<sup>2</sup> of its period. American romanticism emphasized upon the pessimistic situation of man and dismissed the possibility of social reform or man's hopes to go on with it. But undeniably nature has stood for the poignant experience of the human being in literature. Nature according pastoralism is a single reference to tree in a city or else. Like all other writers nature in the wirings of Norman Lewis finds secondary place. Through the use of nature most of the writes are channelizing seny rauxa i.e. crazy energy through nature and society through their writings. His literary interaction with nature grows gradually and as artist he enlarges his platform, creating authority significantly and takes on board various properties to prove himself one with nature. To catch the process of creation Forest Pyle explains,

The imagination is described as the "operations of the mind upon [external] objects." The imagination holds [an] alchemic power [. . .] to melt down the fragments it [perceives in] the outside world and to recast them into something "newly created".<sup>3</sup>

Anil Gomes says that we develop language in the context of looking: the metaphor of vision again. He continues argument referring Iris Murdoch, "Both contexts [spatio-temporal and conceptual] are relevant towards our ability to 'seeing more', towards 'seeing what he sees'.<sup>4</sup> Understanding the process of creation and aesthetic experience in Wordsworthian concept is something harmonious, mutual partnership with joy. He also looked upon them as major elements for the composition of the literary work. Leo Tolstoy identified it in a particular kind of look or sound. In short aesthetic standards are themselves facial appearance of the world created through magical words. We understand that poetic portrayal appearing in the genres is bind by reality seen around. Naturally authors' reaction springs from the strongest feeling or attachment crated at the moment. Author precepts various objects and symbolizes it in compact manner. To quote M. H. Abraham who says about the nature of imagery,

All objects and qualities of sense perception referred to a poem or other work of literature, whether by literal description by allusion or the smiles and metaphors.<sup>5</sup>

He gets deeper by identifying various facets related to the physical relation authenticated by the different senses. Over all knowledge through Eyes and Ears is nothing but sublime experience. Theories related to sublime perceptions are both psychological and physical in nature. Stephen Brown says that imagery is words of phrases, denoting a sense of perceptible object used to designate not that object but other object of thought belonging to a different order. He continues the discussion that focuses the role of mind that selects images irrespective of its merits and stands out 'organism a compound of matter and spirit.' In brief mind is an important platform that receives emotions and channelizes ideas with the help of

imagery. The ideas and emotions have origin in language. The Romantic School poets heavily rely on emotions. According to Richard Lannoy, "Characteristically to slow down our sense of time we use word and images (and tones) to draw us into a whirlpool of multiple perspectives and emphasize a cyclical rapture than linear narrative structure. These are psychedelic techniques. The phrase 'imperialist designs'<sup>6</sup> is more personal experience resulting from the world around them. The imagery is a sensory or pictorial language that is used to enrich meaning. It appeals to the eye, ear, taste, smell, touch, or movement. The imagery is vast concept which includes simile, metaphor, Metonymy, Synecdoche, Hyperbole, and Oxymoron. In the creative works we get number of passages related to nature created through similar properties in it. The elements are often conveyed through simile, metaphor or personification. Imagery shows nature with bustling cities. It stimulates the imagination and creates vivid pictures in reader's minds. Imagery also emphasized an idea and through words brought the universe to life. The sublime is unparalleled excellence that encompasses numerous traits like ethical, intellectual, metaphysical, aesthetic, spiritual and artistic. The projection of the next elements of sublime novelty, terror, obscurity, joy, grief, and sympathy decide the creative value of the work

In brief nature and imagination go hand in hand to create variety patterns ideas in the minds of both writer and reader. Nature and imagination work together to explore how text is enriched with tone, texture, colour, and mood.

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**WOMEN'S FAMILIAL AFFINITY IN MANJU KAPUR'S *DIFFICULT DAUGHTERS***

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Human being has a close relationship with the world in which he is born and lives. Relationship does not simply refer to the connection between man and the world but an inborn bondage between man and man. This relationship is still the backbone of humanity. Men and woman are chained with each other by series of relationship. All these modes of relationships determine his personality and moreover make man, a man. Ultimately this relationship teaches him the value of humanity and morality, which in turn give him wisdom. It is very well expressed in our literature.

Man-woman relationship has been a subject of research in literature. Manju Kapur has depicted the women characters in her novels in multiple roles as daughters and daughters-in-law, as sisters and sisters-in-law, as wives, as mothers and mothers-in-law. She has portrayed their interpersonal relationship at home and in society. And the problems they encounter in a male dominated society. She presents a picture of educated, refined, middle class women in Indian society. Peter Barry rightly points out, "This distinction is what Simone de Beauvoir invokes in the famous first sentence in Part Two of *The Second Sex* (1949) when she writes 'One is not born a woman; rather, one becomes a woman'" (Barry, Peter 125).

*Difficult Daughter* narrates the struggle of its protagonist Virmati who is torn between her family duty and her desire for independence. The mother-daughter relationship between Kasturi and Virmati on the one hand and Virmati and Ida on the other is perfectly brought out. For Kasturi academic pursuit is not of primary importance though she knows education is necessary for the healthy development of the mind and also for the development and the benefit of the family. Kasturi gives the greatest importance to her family and she thinks that the welfare of the family is more important than anything else. She tells Virmati "Leave your studies if it is going to make you so bad tempered with your family. You are forgetting what comes first... what good are Shaku's degrees when she is not settled. Will they look after her when she is old?" (*Difficult* 21-22)

Later in her life, Virmati goes against the wish of her parents in selecting her partner. Virmati thinks about her home and, therefore, after her secret marriage with the professor she feels the need to inform them. Thus,

On her arrival in Amritsar, she had written and told them she was married, but nobody had come to see her, not one brother or sister, not any of the young ones to whom she had practically been a mother. They were justifiably angry with her, but she realized she had transgressed; she was willing to make amends. Full of desperate hope, Virmati shuffled down Lepel Griffin Road (*Difficult* 220).

Virmati as a daughter-in-law, after her secret marriage with the professor, is very debilitated and depressed about his family because they treat her as an outcaste. She is not allowed to help in the kitchen or do any other household work. But at one point of time Kishori Devi, who is the mother-in-law of Virmati is much delighted and kind to Virmati when she came to know about her daughter-in-law's pregnancy. "without saying anything, she substituted Virmati's morning cup of tea with a glass of hot milk, with either almonds or honey added to it. ... 'Let her learn our family ways as soon as possible. No sacrifice is too great for the coming child,' stated Kishori Devi mournfully" (242-243)



Between Ganga and Virmati, the two wives of the professor, crop up intolerance which lead to disharmony in the family. Harish, in order to make things uncomplicated, reassures Virmati, his second wife:

Why do you want to make life difficult? Do you doubt that I love you with my whole being?  
... You are my other self. Let her wash my clothes, if she feels like it. It has nothing to do with me. I don't want a washer woman. I want a companion (217).

The professor always expects his wife, Virmati, to be a companion to him. Virmati and Ganga are like two ends of the pole which never meet and there is always a cold war between them. Every time the children and Ganga avoid her, Virmati is hurt. When Ganga looks at her “she would turn her face away, or what was worse, would stare intensely at her, her eyes moist, her lip trembling, her red *bindi* flashing accusingly” (219). Virmati strongly believes that her happiness lies only in giving her husband, Harish, happiness and peace of mind. After Virmati's marriage her attitude towards her life changes: “Since her marriage she had learned to look at space in a new way; to define it and mark it, to think of what was hers and what wasn't in ways that would have been unthinkable in the fluid areas of her maternal home. She felt contrite” (227).

Virmati feels very much depressed and lonely as she does not have any companion at home other than Harish and he is the only person who can help her to become closer to the other members of the family. Ganga, on the other hand, is very tensed and disturbed about her co-sister. Ganga feels quite relief when Virmati goes to Lahore to do her M.A and she deliberately tries to weave a family structure that comprises only Harish, Ganga and her children. But to her disappointment, Ganga, with her children and Kishori Devi, has to move to Kanpur during the war of Independence and Virmati comes back from Lahore to Amritsar to become a housewife and live with Harish. Therefore Kapur portrays a class of women in her novels who are always struggling to achieve independence and self identity but at last reconcile themselves to the traditional way of life. At family, they have lifetime bondage with each other. At the same time there arise some unexpected and unwanted problems in this relationship and hence solution must be sought out to lead a harmonious life.

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**IDENTITY FORMATION AMONG BLACK WOMEN IN GLORIA NAYLOR'S  
WOMEN OF BREWSTER PLACE**

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In the post-modernist and post-structuralist era concepts with fairly obvious meanings suddenly turned problematic. One such concept is that of 'identity'. A very simple definition of 'identity' can be 'a way of understanding, experiencing and knowing the world'. The theory of Deconstruction has pointed out that meaning is arbitrary and indeterminate. According to this theory meaning exists only in a shifting and unstable relationship to the webs of signification through which it comes into being and because human beings have no access to anything meaningful outside these sometimes disparate webs, there can be no objective truth, knowledge, experience and understanding can therefore never be 'objective'. This also makes meanings epistemically unreliable.

Does this mean that there is nothing like an 'identity'? The fact is that 'identity' and experience are fundamentally related to social relations. The social reality around us quite clearly indicates that identity is significant in any society for goods and resources are still distributed according to identity categories. Who we are, that is who we perceive ourselves to be or are perceived by others to be - will significantly affect our life chances - where we live, whom we will marry (or we can marry at all) and what kind of education and employment opportunities will be available to us. Identity is therefore both 'individual' and 'cultural'.

'Cultural identities' are both 'wounded' as well as 'invigorating'. On one hand people who organize on the basis of identity become invested in their own subjection through their paradoxical attempts to relieve their sufferings. This happens because of a combined feeling of humiliation and impotence to exact revenge on those who enjoy 'superior strength' by dint of good fortune are not subjected to the 'unendurable pain' of being subordinated owing to historical and other reasons. 'Suffering' is then turned into a 'social virtue' and revenge is sought through a production of guilt. Identities are therefore not simply products of structures of power; they are often assumed or chosen for complex subjective reasons that can be objectively evaluated. Also 'cultural identity' may not always be 'wounded'. It can be according to Moya 'enabling, enlightening and enriching structures of attachments and feeling'. Moya's contention is that "an ability to take effective steps towards progressive social change is predicted on an acknowledgement of, and a familiarity with past and present structures of inequality - structures that are often highly correlated with categories of identity. This correlation undoubtedly accounts for why identity has been fundamental element of social liberalism as well as social oppression." (p8)

One can say that identity is a result of the conflict and assimilation of the external forces and the internal perception of external reality. Who we understand ourselves to be will have consequences for how we experience and understand the world. On the other hand our understandings of ourselves as 'social beings' (our identity) depends upon our understanding of the structure of the society and our experiences in that society.

In the post 1950s we have several black writers writing about how black people perceive themselves and are perceived in the white society. Gloria Naylor's 'Women of Brewster Place' gives a vivid account of the forces that play a decisive role in forming black identities on both 'personal' and 'cultural' levels.

The novel begins with 'Dawn', the birth of Brewster place - 'the bastard child born out of clandestine meetings between the alderman of the sixth district and the managing director of Unico Reality

Company". These men agreed to erect four double housing units on some worthless land in the badly crowded district. The neighborhood of Brewster place was filled with people " who had no political influence ; people who were dark haired and mellow skinned - Mediterraneans - who spoke to each other in rounded guttural sounds" (p2). Brewster place later on rejoiced in the multi coloured 'Africa' children of its old age, became especially fond of its coloured daughters as they milled like determined spirits among its decay, trying to make it a home. In other words Brewster place was a place rejected by all those who could afford to reject it and a home for those and only those who could have no other place they could call 'home'. The place in a very significant way defines for them their identity. The place and people are a rejected lot. This being the external reality weird almost all the characters mentioned in the novel trying to assert an identity formulated by themselves for themselves.

Mattie Carmichael is a character who fights against her people to protect the life of her child. She makes the child the centre of her life and lives only for him. But she has no time to shape his future. He gets into bad company, murders a man and runs away. Mattie, who had tried to define her identity through her son realises late in her life that it is the 'cultural identity' of her people that creates problems and makes life impossible for them and there is no point in running away from this reality. When Ceil (the girl with whom Mattie's son Basil has grown up) tells Mattie that, "I had to get away; you know that I needed to leave Brewster place as far behind me as I could. I just kept going and going until the highway ran out. And when I looked up, I was in San Francisco and there was nothing but an ocean in front of me, and I couldn't swim, I stayed". (p 177) Guess he hasn't been as lucky as you yet. Ain't run out of highway to stop and make him think." (p 178) Mattie realises that it is essential to stop and think - define oneself to oneself.

Just like Mattie there is Etta May Johnson who has also decided how she will live and behave in this world. The lines quoted by the writer throw light on her identity -

There ain't nothing I ever do  
or nothing I ever say  
That folks don't criticise me  
But I am going to do  
Just what I want anyway  
And don't care just what people say  
If I should take a notion  
To jump in the ocean  
Ain't nobody's business if I do ...,

Etta is defiant to the very core of her heart and has decided to lead her life the way she likes. This defiance combined with the experiences she has in life shape her into as scheming and calculating person. She begins a deliberate search for 'a man' when he realises that age has started catching on her. As a woman of the world she has learnt to come to terms with herself and can smile through her failures.

Kishwana Browne is an educated unemployed 'Afro' and is fiercely conscious of her black identity. She has changed her name from 'Melanie' to 'Kishwana' because 'Kishwana' sounds 'African' while Melanie doesn't. She has left her parents' house because she feels that they and her brother have accepted white standards and have shoved their black identity into the background. "Kishwana still resented the stance her brother had taken in college. When everyone in school was discovering their blackness and protesting on campus, Wilson never took part, he had even refused to wear an 'Afro'. This had outraged Kishwana, because unlike her, he was dark skinned and had the type of hair that was thick and kinky enough for a good 'fro'."(p80)

Kishwana' mother cannot understand why her daughter had to come and live with the kind of people that lived in Brewster place. This enrages Kishwana who retorts angrily, "What do you mean these people. They are my people and yours too Mama -we are all black. But maybe you have forgotten that over in Linden Hills. (p83)

Kishwana wants to identify with the poor. She found the school she was attending 'bourgeois and counterrevolutionary' and feels that her place is in the streets with 'her' people and that she must fight for equality and for a better life for her community. Her mother however points out that the revolution she is talking about died out. This means that her mother is convinced that a positive sense of identity cannot be achieved only by reacting to external forces.

The writer describes the black young men of Brewster place who also seem to be reacting only to external reality - "These young men always moved in a pack, or never without two or three. They needed the others continually to verify their existence. When they stood with their black skin, ninth - grade diplomas, and fifty word vocabularies in front of the mirror that the world had erected and saw nothing, those other pair of tight jeans, suede sneakers, and tinted sunglasses imaged nearby proved that they were alive ... They continually surnamed each other man and clutched at their crotches readying the equipment they deemed necessary to be summoned at any moment ..."

Those do not have the guts to target the powerful. "Bound by the last building on Brewster and a brick wall, they reigned in that unit alley like dwarfed warrior kings. Born with the appendages of power, circumcised by a guillotine, and baptized by a steam of a million non-reflective mirrors, these young men would not be called upon to thrust a bayonet into an Asian farmer, target a torpedo ... They only had that three hundred -foot alley to serve them as stateroom, armoured tank, and executioner's chamber. So Lorraine found herself on her knees, surrounded by the most dangerous species in existence - human males with an erection to validate in a world that was only six feet wide." (p 180) So Lorraine is raped by the Black boys mainly because that is the only way they can assert their 'identity'.

Lorraine cowers before the boys and others because though she has accepted her own 'lesbian' sexuality she cannot bear the pressure from the external world which treats 'lesbianism' as an abnormality. When her partner Theresa calls her 'dyke' she rushes out of the house alone and unprotected.

The only person in the novel who seems to have balanced the external pressures and internal assertions on her identity is Kishwana's mother 'Mrs. Browne'. She is forever conscious and proud of her heritage. "I am alive because of the blood of proud people who never scraped or begged or apologised for what they were." she states unequivocally. "They were asking only one thing of this world - to be allowed to be. And I learned through the blood of these people that black isn't beautiful and it isn't ugly - black is. It is not kinky hair and it is not straight hair - it just is." (p 86) Mrs. Browne's sense of identity is certainly not a result of 'wounded attachment' as it is in the case of Kishwana and the Black youngsters. She is ready to acknowledge and derive strength from her 'cultural identity'. When Kishwana accuses her and tells her that by living in Brewster place she is, "trying to be proud of my(her) heritage and the fact that I was of African descent. If that is being what I am not, then I say fine. But I'd rather be dead than be like you - a white man's nigger who is ashamed of being black." (p 85) the mother not only advises her to accept herself as she is ( a black with African descent) but also explains how conscious and deliberate her behaviour as a mother has been -

"When I brought my babies home from the hospital, my ebony son and my golden daughter, I swore before whatever gods would listen - those of my mother's people or those my father's people - that I would use everything I had or could ever get to see that my children were able to meet this world on its own terms, so that no one could sell them short and make them ashamed of what they were or how they looked - whatever they were or however they looked. And Melanie that's not being white or red or black - that's being a mother."(p86)

Unlike the postmodernists Naylor seems to support the claim that identities are both inward as well as outward referring to our shared world. Identities are not arbitrary and unconnected to social and economic structures. However if perception of identity is based only on outward and external reality it results in a twisted, even perverted persona but when in spite of wounding external reality the persona is able to have a positive internal vision the adverse external circumstances can become invigorating, life sustaining and

empowering as in the case of Mrs. Browne.

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## THE INFLUENCE OF ANIMAL GENRE IN PRESENT DAY CGI AND ANIMATION MOVIES

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### **Abstract:**

*The concept of animal talk is not a new thing. Each person would have wondered what if animals could talk. I believe they have their own way of communicating and it is evident to see that trait in our pets. They show visible gestures of communication where they do not require to talk to convey the message. People with pets will agree to this statement. There is no limit to a man's fantasy and imagination. With the latest technology we have come up with ways of applying this concept in concrete ways and methods. The CGI movies deliver a wide range of films based on this idea. The present day movies show a visible increase in such type of movies and it is receiving popularity among children and adults alike. The major contributors are Disney, Dreamworks and Pixar. They have given us some of the best and memorable movies that had a great impact in our lives. This article is to prove that how animal genre CGI movies have influenced us to develop ourselves morally and intellectually.*

### **Introduction:**

The animal fable is one of the oldest forms of children's literature. This short story in which an animal is associated with a human trait is usually accompanied by a moral at the end. Animals act like humans; they talk and often wear clothes. The animal is the hero of the story and we see everything from the animal's perspective. This type of story is often used to comment on human behaviour. The harshness of the animal's life is frequently highlighted. Animal stories appear in a variety of forms but all include one or more animals as the focus of the story. It is not surprising that animal stories appeal to children. Very young children do not see animals as "other"; they believe that animals have human characteristics. Some of the most well-known picture books focus on animal protagonists. Authors use animal characters because they can convey ideas by analogy, ideas which have greater impact than if child characters are used. Children may be more likely to recognize this trait in themselves if depicted humorously in an animal than if depicted in a child.

Computer-generated imagery (CGI) is the application of computer graphics to create or contribute to images in art, printed media, video games, films, television programs, shorts, commercials, videos, and simulators. The visual scenes may be dynamic or static, and may be two-dimensional (2D), though the term "CGI" is most commonly used to refer to 3D computer graphics used for creating scenes or special effects in films and television. The term 'CGI animation' refers to dynamic CGI rendered as a movie. Computer graphics software is used to make computer-generated imagery for films.

2016 has seen an immense display of such movies. It's a whole new age for animation, and the animated movies released in 2016 are the proof. The genre of animation is no longer dominated by Disney and DreamWorks and, more surprisingly, animation is no longer synonymous with "kid friendly." The animated movies already released in 2016 and still to come have tackled adult themes, the race relations-heavy Zootopia as well as more ridiculous comic themes (Ice Age: Collision Course), proving that animated movies are much more than they used to be.

We are only taking the list of movies where animals are the main protagonist and the story is told from their perspective. Sometimes these movies get so popular that they will have spin offs, direct to video

sequels, video games and probably a TV series.eg: Kung Fu Panda, Lion King. Each movie has a moral to tell. We can also find animals given a secondary status along with humans Eg: mice in Cinderella.

### **Lion King (1994):**

The Lion King is the greatest contribution of Disney which is a rendition of the popular Shakespearean Tragedy 'Hamlet' with an adapted storyline. The story revolves around the life of Simba, a lion cub who is the main protagonist of the movie. The entire movie is focussed on Simba's development into an adult and his progression to becoming the King of the African Jungle. His father the former King Mufasa was betrayed and killed by his uncle Scar, who is power thirsty and cannot abide by the rules of 'Circle of Life' which is a concept adopted in the movie. Scar tricks Simba and makes him believe that he was the one who killed his father and asks him to flee the pride lands so that he doesn't have to live in shame and suffer the pain of being an outcast. Scar sends his minion hyenas to kill Simba on the run but he manages to escape. He is found by Timon and Pumbaa, a Meerkat and Warthog who are themselves outcasts. They raise him and the trio has a philosophy to life known as 'Hakuna Matata', which means 'no worries'. Simba was living in the present but an unexpected visitor Nala; his childhood friend from the past opens his eyes and explains to him the pathetic reign of Scar and the downfall of pridelands. Nala requests him to return and take his rightful place as the King of Pridelands. Simba is hesitant first but a little boost from Rafiki(the shaman) and his father's ghost he attains divination and runs towards Pridelands, defeats Scar and conquers his throne. The movie is in 2D but it feels realistic and not a moment do we feel that we are watching a cartoon. It is considered as the highest grossing film of 1994 and the second highest grossing film of all time. Its legacy is so great that it received two more sequels. The characters Timon and Pumba became so popular that they received a TV cartoon show which ran for three seasons. A recent spin off to this is the TV show 'The Lion Guard' which revolves around Kion, Simba's son. Another major factor that made this movie a blockbuster is the music. Popular artists like Elton John, Tim Rice and Alan Menken are the masterminds behind the heart wrenching soundtracks which is still regarded as an anthem. Another astonishing feature of the movie is that the animators brought to life the realistic depiction of the African Savanna.

### **The Dinosaur (2000):**

What if dinosaurs could talk? Well Disney's next big rendition to bring back the million year old creature paved way to this fantasy. The story of this movie revolves around Aladar, an Iguanodon. Aladar gets separated from his mother when he was an egg and ended up in the neighbouring island of the Lemurs making him the only dinosaur in their island. He is raised by the Lemurs and is a member of a family consisting of five including him. An unexpected meteor attack destroys their island, they save themselves and end up in the neighbouring island of the dinosaurs which is partly destroyed. Aladar finds his source of origin and is fascinated by the new world and he turns out a legend among the herd which was moving towards the nesting grounds which is a hectic trail. He saves the herd from near destruction and ends up as their hero and leader of the pack. This movie takes us back to the era of dinosaurs and leaves us dumbstruck. For a moment we could relate ourselves to the dinosaurs as they were the dominant species then as we are today. The concept of this movie was contemplated way back in 1988 but was shelved due to various technological limitations and a much darker and violent tone on the storyline. The CGI effects are coupled with "real-world backdrops to create a 'photo-realistic' look". The movie received mixed reviews from critics based on making the dinosaur's talk which they felt was unrealistic but that was the whole point that made the movie a success, to think from a dinosaur's perspective. The music score of James Newton Howard had a good impact on this movie and it turned out to be the fifth highest grossing movie of the year 2000.

### **Finding Nemo (2003):**

This Disney Pixar masterpiece takes us to an adventure under the sea. The movie is a father's quest to find his kidnapped son. The father being a clown fish who is so protective of his son and eventually

makes him lose his son. He ties up with a forgetful, crazy optimistic regal blue tang, Dory and pursues his quest to find his son with her help. The movie takes us to the breath taking views of the Great Barrier Reef and has environmental implications to protect the ocean and aquatic life. The movie received worldwide acclaim and was the highest grossing animated movie of that time and the second highest grossing movie of the year 2003. The character Dory became so lovable among a huge audience that Disney and Pixar released a sequel to the movie in 2016, 'Finding Dory' which turned out to be a huge success.

#### **Bee Movie (2007):**

This is another movie with environmental implications. It lets us to see the unbalanced state of our planet if the bees refuse to pollinate the flowers. The main protagonist of the character is Barry the bee, Jerry Seinfeld had done a tremendous job by rendering his voice for the character and talking from a bee's perspective. It also takes us to the fantasy world inside the beehive where their system of working is well organized and exciting. Unlike its counterparts Dreamworks 'Antz' and Pixar's 'A Bug's Life', this movie did not make much impact but it surely had a deep message to deliver.

#### **Ice Age (2008):**

This movie became so popular that it created a franchise running over to create four sequels and probably yet another to come. Like the Dinosaurs this movie takes us back in time. This franchise talks about the trials and adventures of three unlikely friends, Manny(a mammoth), Sid(a ground sloth) and Diego(a sabre toothed Tiger). Every movie in this franchise has been a box office hit the last one being released in the year 2016. This movie has a subplot which tells the story of Scrat, a sabre-toothed squirrel who is obsessed with collecting acorns, constantly putting his life in danger to obtain and defend them. He has his own stories in the film which mostly independent of those of the main characters, though the two do intersect at times. Scrat's misadventures deserves its own mention. The main trio makes up for most of the comic sense in the movies constantly meeting new friends and villains on the go and some of them become part of their pack. They are often criticised by their fellow Ice Agers for being an unconventional group, but still they accept them for always saving the day. Another impressive feature of this franchise is that there is a progression of evolution and time period in the chronology of releases. The first one is during Ice Age where the whole herd is fleeing from the cold, the second talks about the Meltdown which is much hotter compared to the Ice Age. The third movie talks about the Dawn of Dinosaurs, even though Dinosaurs existed much before the Ice Age, this movie talks about a parallel universe where dinosaurs still exist which is beneath the actual world. The fourth is Continental Drift and the recent instalment is Collision Course which is in pursuit to save the planet after a meteor attack. The movie speaks for itself, every time you see a trailer of the upcoming movie you just cannot wait to see them. What makes this movie so fascinating is the unruly characters and their personalities.

#### **Kung Fu Panda (2008):**

The movie is an action packed comedy martial arts film produced by Dreamworks and takes us to ancient China and their culture. Martial arts plays a vital role in their culture and this movie plays tribute to this ancient combat art form. The movie can be considered as a Bildungsroman in so many levels. The story circles around Po, a clumsy obese panda who despite his cloddish behaviour ends up being the greatest warrior China has ever seen. The best thing about the movie is the character portrayals and highly talented ensemble cast who had their own personalities to deliver to their respective characters. The movie's popularity landed it with two sequels each one getting better every time. The last bit answers to a lot of unanswered questions from the first two instalments. Po's unorthodox way of fighting paves much of the comic sense in the movies. Every movie puts Po in a position where he loses faith and doubts his potential and comes back on track with strong determination. Each movie had a lesson to teach, the first movie teaches us to believe in oneself, the second teaches us to find our inner peace and the third teaches us to go back to our roots and it is a quest to find oneself and our place in this realm. The film became DreamWorks' biggest opening for a non-sequel film and the highest grossing animated film of the year worldwide.



**The Angry Birds (2016):**

Ever since the Angry Bird video game released back in 2009, it had made such an impact on our lives that we could find people playing this game in their mobile phones everywhere. The video game is so captivating and the idea that flightless angry birds fighting over pigs to get back their revenge sounds amusing and the method to fight them was the brilliant idea that kept this game going. To use a slingshot to launch birds at the pig's stations and to destroy them just got way too crazy and have created a huge fanbase for this game. The amusing fact about these birds is that they are all angry and they have their own personalities and powers. It was like a dream come true for the angry Bird fans to see them in a full length 3D CGI Movie. And it is expected to have a sequel very soon.

**Zootopia (2016):**

Zootopia is a surprisingly fresh rendering from Disney's end. As the name suggests it is a utopia where anthropomorphic mammals both predators and prey live in harmony. The astonishing feature of this movie is its background realistic animation and characters. The main protagonist of the movie is Judy Hopps, she is the first rabbit police officer in urban Zootopia. Unlike Disney's other female characters she is determined to chase her dreams of being a police officer and serve her city. The film was praised for its animation, voice cast, humour, and themes about discrimination and social stereotypes and racism. Zootopia is divided into 12 unique ecosystems within its city limits, Tundra Town, Sahara Square, and The Rainforest District are the main ones, and this is mentioned during Judy Hopps training session in the Police Academy. We can see that the main antagonist of the movie is an innocent looking clumsy sheep, Dawn Bellwether who turns out to be not innocent at all. Another main feature of the movie is that the protagonist and the antagonist are played by female leads. The movie won numerous accolades and awards for its story, soundtrack, and concept and was highly praised for its focus to detail animation. It opened to record-breaking box office success in several countries and has earned a worldwide gross of over \$1 billion, making it the third highest-grossing film of 2016 and the 25th highest-grossing film of all time

**The Secret Life of Pets (2016):**

Ever wondered what your pets do when you go out? Well that is exactly what is depicted in this Universal Production. It is no secret that our pets have their own personalities, it is evident and we can live with this fantasy concept that can be real. What ironic about the movie is that the main villain is a cute little rabbit named Snowball voiced by Kevin Hart. A group of pets gang up to save their friends from the clutches of this bunny. The story has a wonderful message to deliver. It shows us that a pet animal can do wonders in our life and that we should never mistreat or abandon them. Upon release, it received positive critical reviews and grossed \$875 million worldwide, becoming the 6th highest grossing original animated film not produced by Disney or Pixar

**Sing (2016):**

Sing is the last animated movie to have released in the year 2016 and produced by Universal Pictures. The concept of the movie is not something new but delivering that message through anthropomorphic animals is new. It talks about reality shows and its impact in our lives. The movie showcased the voice talents of an amazing ensemble cast.

Other movies that deserves a special mention includes 'Spirit: The Stallion of Cimarron' (some legends can never be tamed) which portrays the story of a stubborn mustang who never lets to be tamed, the soundtrack rendered by Bryan Adams is a plus for the movie. 'Madagascar' which tells the funny misadventures of four unlikely animal friends who escape from Central Park Zoo in New York. It became so popular that it landed two sequels which were equally super hit. 'Ratatouille' which speaks of an unconventional relationship between a rat and a chef in a French restaurant where the rat becomes the head chef in the end cooking exquisite cuisine for the restaurant visitors. Jungle Book, this classic rendering of Rudyard Kipling tells the story of mowgli, an indian boy who was rescued by the animals in the jungle. Disney even released a live action movie for this with a twist in the plot in 2016 which was a huge success.

The dawn of 2016 saw an uprising of animal genre 3D CGI movies which shows us that it has an impact on human lives. It is appealing to both children and adults alike and it is important that creators of this genre must focus on movies that talks about current scenarios, movies that depict the problems faced by our mankind and movies that will make a mark in moulding a better future.

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**Form IV (Rule 8)**  
**STATEMENT ABOUT OWNERSHIP AND OTHER PARTICULARS ABOUT**  
**LITERARY ENDEAVOUR**

**Place of Publication** : LITERARY ENDEAVOUR,  
At Laxmi Niwas, House No. 26/1388,  
Behind N. P. School No. 18, Bhanunagar,  
Osmanabad 413501, (MS)

**Periodicity of Publication** : Quarterly

**Language of Publication** : English

**Printer's Name** : Sou. Bagyashri Ramesh Chougule

**Nationality** : Indian

**Address** : At Laxmi Niwas, House No. 26/1388,  
Behind N. P. School No. 18, Bhanunagar,  
Osmanabad 413501, (MS)

**Name of Printing Press** : Shri Laxmi Offset and Printers,  
**Address** : Bhanunagar, Osmanabad,  
Tal & Dist. Osmanabad 413501 (MS)

**Publisher's Name** : Sou. Bagyashri Ramesh Chougule

**Nationality** : Indian

**Address** : At Laxmi Niwas, House No. 26/1388,  
Behind N. P. School No. 18, Bhanunagar,  
Osmanabad 413501, (MS)

**Editor's Name** : Dr. Ramesh Chougule

**Nationality** : Indian

**Address** : At Laxmi Niwas, House No. 26/1388,  
Behind N. P. School No. 18, Bhanunagar,  
Osmanabad 413501, (MS)

**Owner's Name** : Sou. Bagyashri Ramesh Chougule

**Nationality** : Indian

**Address** : At Laxmi Niwas, House No. 26/1388,  
Behind N. P. School No. 18, Bhanunagar,  
Osmanabad 413501, (MS)

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