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01
**ITALIAN POETRY IN THE MODERN TIME -
 1900 TO POST SECOND WORLD WAR**

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Introduction:

Italian poetry in the twentieth century can be identified to be lyrical in nature and is found to exhibit a great deal of subjectivity. This has been a subject of contention over the years by a number of critics. The need for objectivity and its relation lack of realities exhibited by the poets in their inability to define a particular role thereby limiting the expression is something which needs to be discussed (Martel, 2011). At this juncture the researchers would like to quote Squarotti who indicated that in modern Italian poetry there is still an ongoing battle to liberate the subject matter from the tyranny of the "subject" himself. This can be observed from the comment on search for "*a punto di vista diverso dall'io come fonte del discorso poetico*". Along with this aspect there is also recurrence of the themes related to concept of the poet being considered as a "vate" one who is inspired by a divine power or one who narrates in a quasi-prophetic voice. This type of poetry is also quite common in modern Italian poetry as observed from the works of Ungaretti to Pasolini. Nevertheless this also in its broad outlook is found to form a part of the phenomenon of a "*rifiuto dell'io*" which dominates this period as the search of the poet to express himself (Ó Ceallacháin 2007).

Along with this concept of subjectivity there has been a great deal of involvement of egocentricity at its extreme limits and is often presented with a poetic voice which is completely subjective. With the impact of the world wars and the industrialization there was a change from lyrical subjectivity to poetic realism (Payne, 2004). There were some poets who engaged directly in the objective reality of the world and moved away from the subjective impact of the same on their lives. With this background in mind the authors now delve into more specific themes between the years 1900s to early 1950s. The classification presented by Ó Ceallacháin (2007) has been used to discuss the same. These classifications are not very clear and may overlap periods at different points.

Avant Garde Experimentation (1900-1920):

This period extends from the beginning of the century to the end of the First World War when there was an in depth range of innovation and experimentation (Lorenzini, 1999). This phenomenon has been identified to lead to the use of a label "*avanguardia storica*" dealt with the work of futurists (Moroni and Somigli, 2004). Some of the most popular poets in this era included the famous Corazzini, Marinetti and Campana. The views presented by these authors presented contrasting temperaments among varying authors strongly drawn from the views of symbolists of the 19th century (Mazzoni, 2002).

The poetry by Govoni, Corazzini and Gozzano (Mengaldo, 1978) can be identified to be dominated by the theme of melancholy. However their works also presented the first significant challenge associated with the perception of crisis in terms of ideological and artistic certainties. A very good example is the declaration of "*Io mi vergogno. si, mi vergogno d'essere un poeta*" by Gozaano indicating his shame. Similar presentations by Corazzini and Govoni indicate that there was a great deal of crisis as well as uncertainty which had befallen the society as a whole due to the rapid urbanization brought about by industrialization and consumerism (Govoni 2000, Corazzini 1978). Thus it can be concluded that most poets in this era had different views in terms of intellectual themes, poetic subjectivity.

Lyrical introspection (1915-1945):

This generation is often identified as the Hermetic Generation and was marked by the publishing of the book "*La Poesia ermetica*" by Francesco Flora (1936) wherein the use of the term hermetic marked the beginning of a long process of critical discussion. In his critical review Flora indicates that modern Italian poetry maybe considered being obscure and sterile and is dependent on the French symbolist tradition (Payne, 2004). Following this anthologies published by Luciano Anceschi identified that a better terminology to identify with the works in this era involves an approach called as "*lyrica nuova*" or the lyrical introspection years. Anceschi identified that despite the equivocal nature of the term ermetico there is a need to acknowledge an atmosphere in terms of '*crisi della parola*' and "*crisi dell'uomo*" (Anceschi, 1952).

The poets who were famous in this era involved Mario Luzi, Piero Bigongiari and Alessandro Parronchi, Salvatore Quasimodo and Algonso Gatto. All these poets presented a central theme that was found to revolve around aesthetic and ethical ideals which promoted the concept of moral commitment which may be achieved through poetry (Ó Ceallacháin, 2007). The poetry in this era also contained a large amount of mysticism associated with it and promoted the concept of redemption through poetry. The strength of the poetry in this era involved the promotion of purity of poetry in a manner that it is not touched by the mundane and non bona fide realities of life.

Realism and existential lyricism (1945 - early 1950s) :

Even during the avante garde years and the period of the hermetic movement there where personal issues and subjectivity was most often discussed themes there were some poets who chose to look at the reality of the external world when it comes to their poetry (Martel, 2011). A very good example of this fact was observed in the work of Cesare Pavese whose collection *Lavorare Stanca* reflected the tragedies of the war and the harsh realities of life (Giancarlo 2000). Following his seminal work there were a number of other authors including Sandro Penna and Attilio Bertolucci. Both these authors dealt with realities as reflected from the emotional and physical realities presenting a delicate balance discussed by Bertolucci and the highly crafted style presenting the views of realities. This era marked by the fall of Mussolini in 1943 along with the liberation from Fascism in 1945 resulted in the rise in poetic realism. This era marked the emergence of new themes and new voices which had realism as its focus. This can be identified as the year of neo realism wherein there is representation of historical and social realities (Moroni and Somigli, 2004). This can be observed by the idiosyncracies exhibited in the voices of Giovanni Giudici and Giovanni Raboni. These two authors have made personal contributions to poetry in terms of "linea lombarda" dealing with the harsh realities of life. The poems which were presented in this era were found to engage the audience wherein the author is found to extend beyond the self (Ó Ceallacháin, 2007).

Conclusion:

While this paper has been an attempt to summarize the major themes in Italian poetry in modern times any such attempt involving a schematic reduction of a multi-faceted and inherently complex body of work will definitely be associated with the risk of gross simplification. In this paper the authors have justified the central theme as the framework for classification however it can be seen that there can be application of entirely different frameworks based on author style and other elements of poetic tradition to analyze the work of Italian poets in the twentieth century. This work has attempted to present a literary mapping by presenting the affiliations between generational as well as geographical relationships of poetic themes.

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02
**THE ENDLESS EXODUS: A JOURNEY THROUGH
 AYYAPPA PANIKER'S *SOUTHBOUND***

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Abstract:

Ever since life began on Earth, the human being has been on an incessant journey, seeking unexplored oases and unchartered realms both inside and outside. A glance through our myths, legends and history unravel a plethora of such cruises to possess the hitherto 'unpossessed.' Ayyappa Paniker, who is widely acclaimed for launching a new poetic sensibility in Malayalam, unveils the search for life, love, roots, tradition and meaning in the poems that he wrote. This quest again forms the crux of one of his best poems, 'Gotrayanam' translated into English as 'Southbound'. It recounts a tribal leader's exhortation to his people as they set out on a journey which is reminiscent of the historical Aryan movement towards the south of India. It is the tale of a collective voyage which transcends the mere physical dimensions of the journey to encompass the tribe's discovery of their own selves. Reading through the poem, we find that the 'gothram' is no more the Aryan race, but the whole of humanity. This paper seeks to traverse their path once again and examine how the journey unveils the process of the human being's maturing into life.

Key Words: *Incessant journey, tribal leader, gothram.*

And when old words die out on the tongue,
 new melodies break forth from the heart;
 And where the old tracks are lost,
 new country is revealed with its wonders.

(Tagore, *Gitanjali* 26)

The story of the human being is also the story of incessant journeys, seeking unexplored oases and unchartered realms both inside and outside. A glance through our myths, legends and history unravel a plethora of such cruises to possess the hitherto 'unpossessed.' On the way we meet Moses and the Israelites trekking towards the promised land of Canaan, Ulysses enticed by new adventures, Rama on the fringes of *Panchavati*, the Pandavas resolute for the *mahaprasthan*, and even Magellan circumnavigating the Earth. Thus the motif of journey dovetails all epochs and all ethnicities.

Ayyappa Paniker is widely acclaimed for launching a new poetic sensibility in Malayalam. Breaking away from the shackles of conventional poetic language and form, he made poetry a canvas for experimentation. His poems are not bound in a particular time warp, but can be extended to the past and also into the future. He unveils the search for life, love, roots, tradition and meaning in the poems that he wrote. It is this quest that forms the crux of one of his best poems, 'Gotrayanam', translated into English as 'Southbound'. It recounts a tribal leader's exhortation to his people as they set out on a journey which is reminiscent of the historical Aryan movement towards the south of India. The epic poem is moulded into twelve sections; the first one titled 'Desire' and the last one 'Journey.' Written in the *anustuph* metre, it is the tale of a collective voyage which transcends the mere physical dimensions of the journey to encompass the tribe's discovery of their own selves. In the words of Krishnarayan, the poem is "an important humanist statement which offers to a wounded generation a religion which is as new as it is old, a very personal creed composed of pain (resolved into acceptance, if only somewhat), love (consisting in kindness and charity)

and widely improbable as that may seem even just a little joy” (180).

Like the Buendías clan in Márquez's masterpiece *One hundred Years of Solitude* who crossed the mountains to locate Macondo, the tribe sets out on its journey towards Aryavarta. Their destination is unknown to geography and their time of arrival is unknown to history. For them, 'Only the movement matters/thus the endless exodus.' (8). Theirs is also a journey inward, symbolizing the quest for one's own self. In spite of all uncertainties, they are determined to move forward and never to let their minds down. Their grandfathers did not tell them where Aryavarta is and thus they have to draw the maps themselves. Like Ulysses who exhorted his followers to “follow knowledge like a sinking star” (Tennyson 146), the resolute leader tells his clan: “Not a step's waver/at this departing hour/Not a moment's repose till/The distant far is reached” (7).

Paniker also criticizes the counsels of the past that forbid people to digress from long trodden paths. This generation of Aryans have dared to throw away the idol, the conch and the lamp to follow the beckoning of future. With sun as their target during the day, moon during the night and with the radiance of the mind blazing their trail on moonless nights, they too have pledged to “strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield”(Tennyson 147). The leader also invokes the valiant predecessors like Gautama, Kashyapa, Vasishta, Parashara, Vishvamisra and Bharadwaja who went along the untrodden paths. The journey is a continuum; once they have begun it, there will be no return to recall the past. On a metaphorical plane, the journey is life itself with the instance of birth marking the commencement of that long voyage; “for man the traveller/travel itself is life” (19).

The poem carries the readers away to the beginning by reminding how all societies came to be 'constructed.' When people started leading a settled life, kingdoms were born with kings to rule them. People learned the new jargons of 'mine as well as the alien'(19), rules of judgement were writ, gods were divided and the entire order changed. From this dimension, Paniker also states the impermanence of life by saying, “Nothing is constant/except the inconstancy” (23). Thus the poem celebrates movement and change as inevitable to human existence.

He portrayed the abyss where human beings, 'caught in the labyrinth of their daily grind', plunge and push to buy and sell them (Paniker *Selected Poems* 14). He foresaw the earth turning into a desert and the hands of man becoming attuned to violence (Paniker *Days and Nights* 212). He lamented the folly of human beings who 'after putting out every lamp...cries for “light, more light!” (Paniker *SP* 38) In 'Gotrayanam' too, he elucidates the destiny of man in the third section titled “Man's Fate”. The mind struggles in vain believing that happiness is within an arm's reach; profits prove to be losses and success turns out to be defeat; disasters and tidings obstruct the paths and the lover of life trots alone, restless and angry because, “along the path we tread are war/Disease, death, murder, deceit;/To-be or not-to-be riddles” (14). The only complete man, then, is the one who dares to tread a different path and put an end to the sorry plight of the race. It is he, who is born to create history and all creations await him. The reader is reminded of the redeemer whom Paniker alludes to in “A Textual Variant,” “To redeem the promise/Given at creation/A Kalki shall descend/Brandishing the world” (37).

It is this speculation about the impermanence of life and man's dolorous fate that leads him to assert that human beings complement each other. The strands of divergent nationalities, language, culture and colour shall be interwoven if the human race is to progress. The soul of one man shall merge with that of the other since we share an interdependent existence. We owe each moment of our life to others around us. The whole Creation rests on the scaffolds of interdependence. Paniker inscribes the reciprocity of Being thus:

When the hands are exhausted,
 Then the feet shall take over;
 When the feet begin to falter,
 Then the hands shall lend support;
 When the hand and feet are tired,

The mind shall give the lead;
And when the mind is flustered,
Then the soul shall keep guard! (25).

This mutuality prevails not only in the relationships among human beings but also in that between human beings and Nature. Paniker tangles the infallible knot saying, “fire is father, water mother/air spouse and earth children” (28). He expounds how human settlements are interlaced with the bounties of Nature. The leader asks the tribe to touch the earth in salutation, circle the orbit in imagination and bow to the sun and moon in meditation before they set out on their journey. The elements, the Pole Star, the nine prophetic planets are all alluded to during the course of the poem. Even beauty and virtue stand as complementary. When beauty is disdained, virtue gets decayed and when virtue decays, beauty is out of shape. Nature too stands supreme in an impeccable harmony. Whatever rises to the dizzy heights are the Himalayas and whatever flows incessantly is the Ganges; the holy river purifying the mighty mountain. Thus the wheel stays complete: the elements of Nature in a perfect consonance, human beings complementing each other's existence and Nature and Humans bound together as strands of the same web.

The poem illustrates the magnificence that clasped hands confer on the sense of touch. It celebrates the 'sense of touch', that brings human beings closer to each other.

With my hand on your head, I bless you
Stroking your forehead, I bless you
Touching your long eyebrows, I bless you
...My hands clasping your hands, I bless you (40-41).

'Clasped hands' here are the symbol of oneness despite the inherent heterogeneity. Trust and solidarity are the pillars that will support the generations to come. The leader narrates the story of the shepherd to exemplify this. When the demon asks the shepherd to choose between himself and the sheep, he happily sacrificed his own life to save the sheep.

The *mot-clef* that the poem offers for harmony and solidarity is love; for, “A little love sure/is man's best treasure” (21). The word Paniker uses is *sneham* and as Krishnarayan says, it has no other equivalent in English than 'loving kindness' (175). The entire human life is spent in search of the life-sustaining unguent of love bereft of which demons came to be born. It will act as the vanguard to lead the human race out of calamities. It will remove the cobwebs of hatred to usher humanity to a fresh dawn of aspirations.

As the poem implores to “hold on tight/ to the string of love” (30), the Mother emerges as the abode of selfless love. The tribal leader exhorts his companions to take care of the mothers in their clan since the mother's womb is the cradle of all creations. A thousand temples are equivalent to a pilgrim centre; a thousand pilgrim centres are equal to one cow, whereas a thousand cows are equal to a mother. Without the mother, no individual, no community, no society can exist. Thus it is important for mothers to survive and the leader says, “If tomorrow we fade away/ Mothers will the future keep/Where we ultimately reach/Remember that is our mother” (39). Life is a continuum; the voyage is a continuum and the human traveller clinches steadfast on his unwavering journey.

The poem too offers a continuum; with each knot the reader untangles, fresh knots appear; new meanings unfold. The end of the poem marks the moment of departure. From the desire for the journey, the reader moves through the preparations and invocations, to the moment when the journey begins. The actual journey, however is left out for the reader to imagine, thus making each of them a participant. The rhythm of the poem blends perfectly with the rhythm of the tribe's movement and the throb of life. The 'gothram' is no more the Aryan race, but the whole of humanity. In Krishnarayan's words, “...at the centre of the poem is not the Aryan ancestor who led the great wave of migration in an earlier time but the scion of mixed parentage who relives the experience today” (191). The journey unveils the process of the human

being's maturing into life. It is a whirlpool of love, life and memories. It craves for a future where customs, rites and beliefs of different races intermingle and all humanity is bound by a single string, the string of love.

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03

RAMANUJAN'S POETRY: A REALISTIC PERSPECTIVE

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“True realism consists in revealing the surprising things which habit keeps covered and prevents us from seeing.” - Jean Cocteau

Abstract:

Attripate Krishnaswami Ramanujan (1929-1993) is one of the greatest modern poets of his generation. Startling originality and moving artistry are the key features of his poetry. His Indian experience is at the heart of his poetry. However, interestingly, none of the poems are vogue generalizations about India. On the other hand, they are rooted in peculiar experiences. His attitude towards India is more realistic than his contemporaries who portray India as a metaphysical rather than as a concrete, pragmatic space. His Indianness is, therefore, tempered by the right dose of irony and cosmopolitanism. Ramanujan is, therefore, a poet whose description of the Indian landscape is artistically realistic and in portraying his motherland realistically he has no parallel. The paper aims at studying Ramanujan's verse from the realistic perspective with special reference to his poem *A River*.

Keywords: Indianness, realistic, concrete, irony.

Realism is a literary movement which attempts to give a truthful description of the subject matter. Since it, in a way, is a revolt against Romanticism, therefore, it presents the subject matter without artificiality and embellishment. The poem *A River* is representative poem composed by Ramanujan. The poem is a realistic description of the river (Vaikai) in the city Madura- the seat of Tamil culture and the center of great learning. Instead of handling his theme in romantic cliché Ramanujan presents a realistic view of the river. Ramanujan presents a critique of Tamil culture and Tamil poetic tradition: “The poets only sang of the floods.” The river has been a favorite subject for Tamil poets through ages. These poets have, in a way, overlooked the realistic aspect of the subject. “These poets,” Ramanujan says “depended on stock cliché, stereotypical description of the river and it was usually the beauty of the river that was praised.”

“He said:
The river has water enough
To be poetic
About only once a year.”

These poets fell into the tendency of idolizing the river and in the process ignoring the grim realistic side of the river:

“And then
It carries away
In the first half-hour
Three village houses,
A couple of cows
Named Gopi and Brinda

And one pregnant woman
 Expecting identical twins
 With no moles on their bodies
 To tell them apart.”

The greatness of the above lines lies in the fact that the traditional praise for the river has been contrasted with what is actually experienced by the people during floods. To other poets the flood is a source of inspiration. They highlight the aesthetic aspect of the river. But Ramanujan revolting against this traditional description of the river presents it more realistically. Apart from presenting the grim realities of the river, Ramanujan hints at the sterility of new Tamil poets who still quote the old poets:

“The new poets still quoted
 The old poets, but no one spoke
 In verse
 Of the pregnant woman
 Drowned, with perhaps twins in her,
 Kicking at blank walls
 Even before birth.”

In the above lines Ramanujan’s treatment of the subject matter presents a sharp contrast with other poets who almost always celebrate the beauty and mystical aspects of the river. Ramanujan here highlights the darker side of the picture by giving details of its unappealing aspects and the destruction that it causes during floods. The poem is a beautiful piece of cynical criticism aimed at the poets who ignore the realistic approach of the subject matter and mindlessly ape the same lines quoted by poets for aeon. The poem, therefore, is a representative Ramanujan poem containing his quintessential ironic treatment of his Indian subject matter. The river idolized by other poets here “dries to a tickle”. Which, in turn, makes many of its hidden imperfections and unappealing aspects visible:

“Straw and women’s hair
 Clogging the Watergates
 At the rusty bars
 Under the bridges with patches
 Of repair all over them. ”

Ramanujan’s portrayal of “women’s hair clogging the Watergates,” “bridges with patches” presents a typical depiction of rural India. He portrays it so artistically and realistically that even a lay man can comprehend it.

Ramanujan’s short poem Lies is another poem based on his realistic observation wherein the poet deals succinctly with hypocrisy or pretention. Despite feeling a deep repugnance for a tender baby the visitor describes him as beautiful. In fact, a baby just born, before being washed, presents a repulsive sight. But people praise it as a picture of loveliness:

“The new born baby was ugly, moist
 Hairy all over like a wet rat:
 Every visitor said
 She was a beauty,
 Had her mother’s eyes.”

The artistic depiction of the subject matter, here the new born baby, coupled with a satiric vein is Ramanujan’s forte. The new born baby is not embellished but presented as he is. This feature is what makes

Ramanujan a different and an outstanding poet.

Indian sensibility colors all of the poetry of Ramanujan. The typical Indian poetry of Ramanujan is located in a peculiar Indian landscape where the family is, for example, viewed not only in terms of the warmth and affection that it gives but it is portrayed more realistically whereby Ramanujan often illustrates it as a means of conflict and argument:

“After a night of rage that lasted days
Quarrels in a forest, waterfalls ...”

Relations, the title poem in Ramanujan’s second volume of poems is replete with realistic imagery. The turtles, the kitten and the scorpions have all been made to live before our eyes in this poem:

“Someone’s cleaning out scorpions
From the many armpits of Shiva
One leg in the air
Broken by time
Or a passing Muslim
From Ghazni.”

His portrayal of mother giving farewell and advice to the grown up son departing for America in the poem “Images” evokes a realistic Indian picture in the mind of the reader:

“Mother’s farewell had no words,
No tears, only a long look
That moved on your body
From top to toe
With the advice that you should
Not forget your oil bath
Every Tuesday
When you go to America”

“Satire is people as they are; romanticism, people as they would like to be; realism, people as they seem with their insides out.” (Dawn Powell)

Gustave Courbet's (a French painter) quote aptly sums up Ramanujan's realistic and concrete depiction of the subject matter in his poems: “The essence of realism is its negation of the ideal. Jarring realism is the hallmark of Ramanujan's poetry. Ramanujan, as a mature artist, depicts things as they are with a tinge of bitterness. He presents a truthful picture of the subject matter. With his intellectual credentials and stylistic devices coupled with his objective expression, he is a class by himself.

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THE POETRY OF EMILY DICKINSON: AN INTERIOR JOURNEY

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Emily Dickinson shines and scintillates like a diamond in the galaxy of American Literature. Various acclamations as the “Amherst Nun”, “the Belle of Amherst,” the Female Blake,” “the New England mystic”, and “the Epigrammatic Walt Whitman”, Emily Dickinson stands out as a pioneering anticipator of the twentieth century trends and tendencies, technical devices and stylistic innovations. No tradition she belongs to; no models she emulates; no contemporary she imitates; no philosophies of others she borrows; no avocation she pursues except poetry writing; no worldly fame she counts. Known for her originality of thought and expression, chiselled phrases and startling images and surprising verbal arrangement, Emily emerges in the pages of Spiller as “the great poet of all times and perhaps the greatest poet of all women poets”.

The poetical oeuvre of Emily Dickinson reads like her Odyssey enfolded within its folds her interior journey. It is a great Souls' journey to take its place in the universe. It is an outlet for her inner conflict, emotional disturbance and agonizing experiences. Her poetical lines are the longitude and latitude of her landscape. Her poetry is a journal where she draws her career graph recording how far her inner life is depicted in her lyrical outbursts. Her soul is a workshop where she forges marvels of poetry through the tool of imagination.

An intriguing, playful girl, Emily lived an obscure life in solitariness, as a shy recluse dressed in white robes. She lived unknown and to be no one. Confining herself to the home she was born in and to the garden she moved around. She preferred to be nobody in the eyes of the world in order to be somebody within herself. Her withdrawal from life is no retreat from or renunciation of life but an adventure into the fathomless depths of life. Her room was her native soil and her visit to the garden was a trip to foreign strands. Her mind contained the universe. The external world she renounced but she returned to the inner world. With the insight of a poet and the vision of a mystic she explored her inner world. Her mind is the store-house of innumerable experiences and incidents to which she was exposed in the outside world. She has to nurture her poetry aflame with mystical meanings lit with the oil of her inner soul. Her poetry is a spiritual and emotional salvation.

Emily's poems have recourse to her inner life rather than her outer life. She is an addict to truth which she seeks through her interior journey. She gains more in sublime spiritual satisfaction than in worldly fame and popularity. In her poetical moments she enacts her inner drama. She eschewed all outside contact and lived the life of a poet-hermit.

The themes of her poetry embrace myriads of memories and moments with friends and family, with aches and ecstasies of love, the impact of the environment with flora and fauna, the sublime vision of the Infinite and Immortality. Well her poetry can be called a Spiritual Autobiography.

Emily's poetry has a special appeal to the Indian readers because our Upanishadic tradition lays stress on inner life than on the life in the outer world. Our home is where we gather grace. It is also in tune with the Christian theological dictum: “The Kingdom of Heaven lies with you”. Various factors are at work in determining the woman she became and the poet she blossomed into. She lived a cocoon-like existence and her poetic genius bloomed unnoticed. Her poems make inroads into her inner life. Any endeavour to delve into the exploration of her inner life has to take into account the style of life at Amherst with its

characteristic features of conventionality and puritanical morality exercising its influence upon her inner development. The various members of the family had an impact on the formation of her inner life. It makes a pointed reference to other social influences shaping the course of her career how the school she attended and the book she coned contributed to her inner development, how the institution of religion was a shaping force in her poetic career and how her seclusion moulded her inner being.

Her love lyrics are imagined dramatization of her unfulfilled longings accompanied with pangs of frustration. The 'He' of her poems defies identification with anyone in particular. Her love poems lend themselves to their being interpreted as reflections and revelations of her highly emotional or effusive love experience. The love she imagines to be courting refers to her inner experience of the soul on a spiritual plane, not on a mundane level. These inward feelings felt in her imagination are woven with the mystical concept of divine love running parallel to the concept of Radha-Krishna love. All these love experiences she undergoes are enacted within her soul.

In her acquaintance with and appreciation of Nature, there is keenness of observation as well as novelty of expression. Emily's companionship with Nature is an outlet for her moods and tones registering her early intimacy with Nature. She communes on a higher spiritual level with a drop of dew on a blade of grass or a petal of flower, the warbling of the robin in the garden, the kissing of a snake in the grass and the sound of the locomotive on its track.

The grand spectacle of Nature with its sights and sounds appears as a child's garden of plants and flowers and birds. It is a carnival of entertainment. But Nature delights and destroys. In its indifference and hostility to man, Nature is a symbol of the mystery of Death. The mysterious relationship between Man and Nature defies any rational explanation. In her attitude to Nature she belongs to no movement. Nature in Emily is a manifestation of the truth of the inner universe.

In her inner life, Emily probes into the depths of her soul to know the problems of Death. To her, Death is a leveller of man-made distinctions. Death is no more a thing to be lamented but a thing to be welcomed. It causes no pain but protects man from life-long misery. The man dead is happier than the man alive. Death is not the end of life but a beginning of another life-- an opening to new life. Death is not something to be dreaded but something to be delighted over. Death is a welcome relief. In her conception of Death she is Browningsque and Whitmanesque.

The death of her dear and near ones early in her life, the close proximity of the graveyard to her orchard and the sight of funeral processions passing by exposed Emily to scenes of Death. She consoles herself that there are others to fill the void left by the departed. It is no wonder that Emily thought about and wrote about Death. She transfers her experience into the lovely poems.

Emily stands as a forerunner of the twentieth century trends, tendencies and stylistic innovations. The stylistic devices Emily uses and the technical tools she employs to make the abstract concepts concrete. Emily's style is the clarifier and enricher of the meaning she wants to convey. In the matter of originality of thoughts, form, expression and images she has a few equals. She writes poetry not for the world but for her inner world. The images lend themselves to the interpretation of her various moods and varied ideas and concretize the abstract concepts in which her poetry is couched. She plumbs into the depths of her inner world and writes poetry with no ornamentation or decoration, no ambiguity or verbosity. Her language is cryptic and her poetry is a short-hand registration of facts.

Emily Dickinson is a poet *par excellence* in her faculty of imagination, fecundity of knowledge and profundity of insights. Her poetry is a rich repertoire of stylistic devices. In her poetry there are echoes of Donne, Emerson and Whitman which pave the way for a comparative study between Emily and the poets referred to.

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EXPLORING 'PATRIOTISM' IN CHINUA ACHEBE'S *THINGS FALL APART*

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Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) portrays the issues of patriotism and reflects the political and social conditions of Nigeria. The novelist reveals that period of Nigeria, when colonialism and Christianity was in direct attack. The novel is set during the late 1800s or beginning of the 1900s in a small village called Umofia situated in the south-eastern part of Nigeria. The time period indicated in the novel is important because it was a period in colonial history when British were expanding their influence in Africa, right before the arrival of white man economically, culturally and politically. Umofia is an Igbo village with very well-defined traditions. This well-defined traditional Igbo village is torn apart by the coming of the white man. The whole novel centers round Umofia where Achebe presents different aspects of patriotism and nationhood like 'good patriotism', 'bad patriotism', 'pitfalls of national consciousness and many other things.

In Africa, patriotism emerged as a kind of reaction to colonialism. Achebe was for patriotism as he believed that it could protect one's cultural heritage. He was against colonialism and its attendant exploitation and despised the invitation to throw away one's own identity in exchange for an alien one. This attitude can be perceived in the character of Okonkwo in the novel, *Things Fall Apart*. He is portrayed as a strong reaction against British colonialism. His patriotic zeal can be seen when he attempted to rebuild Umofia from the clutches of the British imperialism. This can be perceived in Chapter Twenty of the novel, *Things Fall Apart* when Okonkwo returns to his native village, Umofia after seven years of exile. Okonkwo knew that British imperialism was creeping into his village and his seven years of absence, has made him lose his position in the village. His sense of patriotism towards his village can be seen through his concern over the emerging loss of traditional culture and values. When he returned to his village after seven years of exile he was terribly disappointed and disturbed. His patriotic zeal or extreme possessiveness for Umofia can be seen when he abandoned his own son at the cost of his dear village, Umofia. Okonkwo's return is not as memorable as he had expected, because too many things have happened and too many changes have taken place in his village. He deeply mourned the drastic change in his village:

Okonkwo was deeply grieved. And it was not just a personal grief. He mourned for the warlike men of Umofia, who had so unaccountably become soft like women. (2001:133)

Patriotism is a problematic and debatable issue. It is a problematic issue because of the divisions within the nation. In the novel, *Things Fall Apart* divisions within the nation can be seen. People of the same nation are divided among themselves. Most of the natives in Umofia with the arrival of British or the whites have converted themselves to Christians. They come under the clutches of British rule and gradually began to eliminate their own culture and traditions. One such good example is how Okonkwo's son Nwoye who had converted himself as a Christian. In the Sixteenth Chapter of the novel, *Things Fall Apart*, Nwoye has been portrayed as coming under the direct influence of British imperialism:

But there was a young lad who had been captivated. His name was Nwoye, Okonkwo's first son. It was not the mad logic of the Trinity that captivated him. He did not understand it. It was the poetry of the new religion, something felt in the marrow.... (2001: 108)

It can also be seen that Okonkwo's son had changed his name from Nwoye to Issac. This is not the only

case with Nwoye. Most of the people in the village under the direct influence of British imperialism came to lose their culture. It was people like Okonkwo and Obierika who felt aggrieved with the fall down of their culture. It is the patriotic sentiment that ignites Okonkwo because of the violation of the principles of his Igbo culture and traditions. However this is just one view and a one-sided definition of nationalism. Totally relying on this definition, Okonkwo cannot be called as a true patriotic figure. It is true that he tries to save his culture and his Umofia at any cost but as against this, he is also responsible to some extent for Nwoye's conversion to a Christian. It cannot totally be said that Nwoye was influenced to join the church only because of religion, but it was because of his father Okonkwo that he joined the church. Throughout the novel Okonkwo is portrayed as an ambitious man, which was because he refused to acknowledge the idle life of his own father Unoka. This then prompts Okonkwo to instigate his son, Nwoye not to become a lazy fellow. When he finds that Nwoye is becoming as lazy as his own father Unoka, he begins to disrespect and abuse Nwoye who ultimately finds an alternative, by joining the church. After joining the church, Nwoye found Mr. Kiaga, a missionary, to be his new "father":

"Blessed is he who forsakes his father and his mother for my sake," he intoned. "Those that hear my words are my father and my mother." Nwoye did not fully understand. But he was happy to leave his father. (2001:112)

It can be said up to some point that Okonkwo and Nwoye have similar qualities as well as differences. Both are dissimilar because of their work---one prefers hard work, whereas other prefers not to work. Again on the other hand, Okonkwo's fate of disgrace in committing suicide is just the opposite of Nwoye's joining the Christian church, which implies the search for grace. Both men's actions are against the traditions of their village. In this connection, pitfalls of national consciousness can be seen, where violation of "patriotic principle" is generated.

According to Gellner, violation of nationalistic principle gives rise to patriotic sentiment. This is true in the sense that it is the passivity of the dwellers of Umofia which allowed the Christian missionaries to take possession of their village. Things fell apart because Umofia took a passive stance by allowing the religion to stay. The conversion of Igbo people to Christianity seems to indicate that there is a representative attitude of doubt and discontentment within Umofia (and later indicated to be similar in Mbanta). Customs such as throwing away twins and human sacrifice were troubling and no justification could be found within their own religious doctrine. The timeliness of Christianity allowed it to spread because it was the only available way through which they could get their unsettled answer. There were many questions, to which there were no answers in the minds of the Igbo people. The villagers need answers to explain the uncertainties they were feeling and Christianity was the only possible option. This attitude is again characterized by Nwoye while he is in Mbanta:

It was not the mad logic of the Trinity that captivated him. He did not understand it. ... The hymn about brothers who sat in darkness and fear seemed to answer a vague and persistent question that haunted his young soul-the question of twins lying in the bush and the question of Ikemefuna who was killed. He felt a relief within as the hymn poured into his parched soul. (2001: 108)

The missionaries also gained respect and power by flourishing in circumstances that were believed to bring certain death, as prescribed by Igbo spirituality. But the people of Mbanta were overwhelmed by the missionary's victory over death:

The next morning the crazy men actually began to clear a part of the forest and to build their house. The inhabitants of Mbanta expected them all to be dead within four days. The first day passed, and the fourth and none of them died. Everyone was puzzled.....it became known that the white man's fetish had unbelievable power. (2001: 110)

Christianity began to flourish only because of the passivity of the people of Umofia. The people of Umofia were driven away by the British church. Christianity provided an answer to the questions that the

people of Umofia were feeling about their spirituality: the Igbo religion appeared to be false by default and this **was** how Igbo spirituality fell apart.

Although patriotism is an unchanging entity, it is a social construct that is constantly redefined and historically contingent. Patriotism is a shifting kind of entity, meaning that there is not a single definition for patriotism. It varies from person to person and from place to place. In fact the concept of nation along with patriotism is a myth. That is why in the novel, *Things Fall Apart*, perception of one's own nation varies with person to person. In the novel, it can be seen that with the intrusion of British imperialism, different visions of patriotism comes to the forefront especially the cultural clashes among its own people. In this novel, the people of Umofia outcasts their own village people, that is, the "osu" (the untouchables), "thetwins" and especially 'the mother of the twins'. Here in this point, loopholes of patriotism can be seen. It is only because of the negligence of its own people that the members of the same community fall and are torn apart. The "osu" are the first ones to convert themselves with the intrusion of British imperialism. They have been harshly judged by the society, ultimately prompting them to convert themselves to Christians. The own native people regarded the "osu" as:

a thing set aparta taboo forever, and his children after him. He could neither marry nor be married by the free-born. He was in fact an outcastliving in a special area of the village, close to the Great Shrine. Wherever he went he carried with him the mark of his forbidden caste...An osu could not attend an assembly of the free-born...when he died he was buried by his kind in the Evil Forest... (2001:115-116)

They suffered emotional trauma and this has been reduced by the British imperialism. Twins who were normally killed are saved by the missionaries and brought up like regular children. These are some of the loopholes within the village which generates different perspectives of patriotism, pointing at weakness of the spirit of patriotism. The villagers are considered as outcasts, they believed that constructing their own village according to that of the views of Christians would be a better option. This can be proved by bringing forth the arguments of Fanon and Edward Said. According to them colonized subject is never simply and completely opposed to the colonizer. The defect that lies here is that the member of one's own community feels alien within its own nation only because of its own fellow members.

Considering the issues of patriotism in *Things Fall Apart*, the experience of women within the patriotic discourse can also be discussed. The novel represents gender relations as an integral part of Achebe's discourse on nationalism. Women play important roles in the regulation of law and order and in dispensation of justice within an Igbo community before the colonial rule. Evidences are there during the "uri", bridal ceremony that is performed for Obierika's daughter. At this point in the narrative when the women discover that one of Ezelagbo's "young children" had "opened the gate of the cow-shed". (2001: 84) and let loose a cow, they act to ensure law and order:

When they [the women] saw it they drove it back to its owner, who at once paid the heavy fine which the village imposed on anyone whose cow was let loose on his neighbour's crops. When the women had exacted the penalty they checked to see if any woman had failed to come out when the alarm was raised. (1958:10-11)

This incident presents a crystal clear picture of the institutions of justice in traditional Igbo society. Such acts of women in pre-colonial Nigerian society are emblematic of the power inherent in the dual-sex structure of Igbo societies, which allowed women to intervene and dispense justice through the act of sitting on a man. Another example of the function of women's traditional associations is provided in *Things Fall Apart* when Amikwu, "The youngest of Uchendu's five sons" (2001:96), marries a new wife. At the "full gathering ofumuada" (2001:97), celebrating Amikwu's marriage, Njide, Uchendu's eldest daughter leads the ceremony of absolution.

Critics who have placed the images of women in *Things Fall Apart* in an antithetical relationship to Achebe's patriotic project have missed the point. Instead, the novel offers a glimpse into social

organization and regulation of law and order in the Igbo past and the role that women played in these processes. Critics of gender politics of Achebe's novels have argued that his novels foreshadow the power of women to play important national roles after Nigeria attained independence. Diana Rhoads has observed that in *Things Fall Apart* Achebe seems

to be providing the foundation for effective political institutions at the same time when Nigeria was about to achieve independence...such institutions as combining both feminine and masculine principles. (1993:71)

It becomes easier to comprehend the reasons why Achebe consistently draws upon the identity of women in the past to affirm a belief that women in the post-independent Nigerian nation can play roles similar to those of the past. Instead of focusing solely on the conflicts occasioned by colonialism, the domestic conflicts in which women are embroiled become central to the narration of the complex nature of Igbo societies. An example of this kind can be seen with that of the exchange takes place in *Things Fall Apart* between Okonkwo and his "senior wife" when young Ikemefuna is first brought to the Umofia clan and put under the tutelage of Okonkwo:

'He belongs to the clan' he told her. 'So look after him.' 'Is he staying long with us?' she asked. 'Do what you are told, woman,' Okonkwo thundered, and stammered. 'When did you become one of the ndichie of Umofia?' And so Nwoye's mother took Ikemefuna to her hut and asked no more questions. (2001: 12)

Okonkwo's manner would seem to prove that his wives and the women in the community are voiceless. However, Nwoye's mother eventually subverts Okonkwo's presumed authority over her and reduces him to a powerless figure within the clan. By locating the struggle for voice, authority and power between men and women within a local context, Achebe is able to convey to his readers the belief that conflicts in Igboland predated colonialism. He projects the evidence of women's struggles for power in the contest for authority with men, and questions the dominant assumption that the struggle for power can only be articulated at the public political level of the conflicts initiated by colonialism.

Many of Achebe's novels deal with the social and political problems that needle his country, inclusive of the difficulties of post-colonial legacy. *Things Fall Apart* was his first novel. It presents the story of a people torn apart by the invasion of colonial rulers. *Things Fall Apart* represent a pre-colonial Igbo culture struggling against all odds to retain its integrity against the loss of autonomy and through the novel Achebe has made his stamp as one of the most influential and widely acclaimed writers of Africa.

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06
**CONTEXTUALIZING POST COLONIAL IDENTITIES IN
 RUDYARD KIPLING'S *KIM***

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Abstract:

*This paper highlights the problems of identity formation in a colonial framework as embodied in Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* in which he supports the presence of the Raj in British India. The paper tends to examine Kim's identity crisis; which he periodically undergoes as he moves between cultures. He is in constant process of redefining and rethinking his identity (a British, an Irish, an Indian, a Native, a Colonizer, etc.), his confusing amorphous physical characterization, his ambivalent relationship with the native and colonizer, and his Hamlet-like decision. Further the paper examine the influence of genetics on Kim's final decision and tries to explain the ramifications of the decisions and foregrounds it in Kipling's own imperials interest in India.*

All culture is originally colonial (Derrida, 26)

Post-colonialism is an intellectual direction existing since the middle of the 20th century. The aspects of colonialism can be found not only in the history, literature, and politics, but also in culture and identity of both the countries i.e. colonized and colonizers. Colonial powers destroyed the native traditions and culture and they replaced them with their own. This led to the conflict after the independence of the colonized countries as they faced the challenge of developing a new nationwide identity and self-confidence. The ultimate goal of post-colonialism is combating the residual effects of colonialism on cultures. It is not simply concerned with salvaging past worlds, but learning how the world can move beyond this period together, towards a place of mutual respect. Post-colonial thinkers recognize that many of the assumptions, which underlie the 'logic' of colonialism, are still active forces today.

As a literary theory post colonialism, deals with literature produced in countries that once were colonies of others countries, especially of the European colonial powers Britain, France and Spain. Theory provides framework that destabilizes dominant discourses in the West, challenges “inherent assumptions”, and critiques the “material and discursive legacies of colonialism”. In order to challenge these assumptions and legacies of colonialism, post-colonial studies needs to be grounded on tangible identities, connections and processes.

Furthermore, post colonialism deals with cultural identity in colonized societies; the dilemmas of developing a national identity after colonial rule; the ways in which writers articulate and celebrate that identity (often reclaiming it from and maintaining strong connections with the colonizer); the ways in which the knowledge of the colonized people has been generated and used to serve the colonizer's interests; and the ways in which the colonizer's literature has justified colonialism via images of the colonized as a perpetually inferior people society and culture. These inward struggles of identity often occur in works of many post-colonial writers. The present paper is an attempt to make a panoramic analysis of the identity problem in Kipling's novel *Kim* from post-colonial perspective

An important concern of post-colonial literature is related to locale, dislocation and relocation. Displacement or dislocation often leads to a sense of nowhere and identity crisis. “Identity is self-

understanding of a person or an individual” (Erickson, 15). James Marcia expanded Erickson's concept of identity, where in the notion of crises *Vis Vis* confusion prevails. “Certain situations and events serve as catalysts prompting continuum of identity development, these crises create internal conflict and emotional upheaval, thereby causing individual to examine and question their values, beliefs and goals” (Marcia, 12).

In the context of post colonialism much of Rudyard Kipling's writing, fiction and non fiction, focuses on India. Kipling's writing reflected largely common belief held by Britain that the Western world has a moral obligation to provide the Eastern, non-white world what they saw as their superior political and intellectual guidance. He was a great litterateur having dual cultural identities.

One of the most powerful impressions that Rudyard Kipling's works have left on the readers is his ingenuity of maintaining strict racial, ethnic, and national boundaries. Kipling's keen awareness of the fragility of the line dividing colonizer from colonized, Anglo- Indian from native, or white from black, is complicated, of course, by his political conservatism and his frequently turgid articulation of what he understood as imperial duty. His works including *Kim* tries to maintain a balance between dual standards of fragile colonial identities and an authoritarian racial paranoia. Kipling's distinction between an admirable knowledge of the contingency of racial and national identity and his conflicting authoritarian tendency is clearly visible in *Kim*. In this novel Kipling expects important facets of contemporary dialogue of identity as performance. In words of Kerr Douglas:

Kipling imagines a form of white imperial identity that is not threatened by the constitutive rupture of colonial discourse. In doing so, he not only creatively articulates a fundamentally performative ideal of identity, but makes it the central feature of a colonial disciplinary regime (33).

For Kimball O'Hara to give the boy the name that he received from his father, a former color sergeant in “the Mavericks” (an Irish regiment) the shift from childish “games” to the “Great Game” of patriotic defense is tantamount to the discovery of his 'destiny' or 'fate' a development which affirms his identity as a living embodiment of the union between cultures, Indian and British, each of which he knows equally well within the 'two separate sides of (his) head', as the poem prefixed to the Chapter Eight of the novel puts it.

“Two Sided Man”
 “Something I owe to the soil that grew
 More to the life that fed
 But most to the Allah who gave me two
 Separate sides to my head.
 I would go without shirts or shoes
 Friends, tobacco or bread
 Sooner than for an instant lose
 Either side of my head”.

- Kim Chap. VIII

Kim, an Irish orphan, grows up in the streets of the Indian city of Lahore and adapts to the culture and languages of India so well, in fact, that he can pass himself off as a member of almost any religious or cultural group of India. He is at once a Sahib and, by virtue of his upbringing, a part of the colonized society.

Kim, who is known as “Friend of All the World” and includes “this great and beautiful land” as all his people, begins to undergo a crisis of identity when he is first made to go to school to become a Sahib. This question of identity and belonging plagues Kim throughout the novel, leaving him with a feeling of loneliness. Sarup considers identity as “fragmented full of contradictions and ambiguities”. He differentiates between “public” identity, “the outside of our concept of self and “private” identity, “the inside of our identity (44). And throughout the novel Kim is trying to negotiate between his “public” and “private identities”.

Kim's dual identity and his ambivalent feelings towards England and India are depicted in the beginning of the novel, where Kim is presented as a white child who “was burned black as a native..... Spoke the vernacular by preference, and..... consorted on terms of perfect equality with the small (non-white) boys of the bazaar” (Kipling 49).

In the first part of the novel, Kim sets out on a quest to establish his real identity, led on by a package of papers left him by his father. His identity is without any fixed outlines. The color of his skin, a race marker is undecided. He is 'burned black' (1) but not very “black” (21), at the same time he is a “white boy” (124) and has “white blood” (255). Yet he is “bonze” (356) Irish by birth, Asiatic by culture and yet treated as an Englishman. The color of skin as a form of identity is 'erased' thus makes him anonymous. Strolling about the streets in India and getting well along with people from different kinds of classes, he is called “A Friend of the World”. But, at the same time, he is not able to forget his belongingness to his motherland and desires to return to England. This insight is crucial in understanding Kim, for Kipling creates an ideal of British colonial identity that does not so easily crumble before ruptures of meaning. By creating Kim's character Kipling tries to create such a form of imperial identity that is not threatened by its own discordant notes. Kipling carefully constructs a paradigm of a specifically white racial identity that embraces the displacement through which the self is constituted as a form of freedom. In *Kim*, we witness something very different from a panicked and defensive anxiety over epistemological contradictions, and this inconsistency of white identity forms the basis of intense pleasures that are directed back into the service of empire.

Kim's identity is a “hard nut” (204) to crack. Culturally he belongs to Asia, but 'genetically' he is European. This blending of Asian and European features affects him culturally. He faces identity crisis because of his connectivity and feeling of 'being related' to his native culture. Therefore, he accuses Mahbub Ali of “selling him” back to the English. For Kim, Mahbub Ali is a 'traitor' who betrayed him into the hands of the British. This reveals his closeness to the Indians, though he maintains his superiority over them. To be white within Kim is not to realize an Aryan purity; nor is it to cling to a notion of European cultural superiority based on a sense of rigid or permanent cultural boundaries. Some Englishmen in the novel such as the Anglican Chaplain, Bennett, or some of Kim's antagonist at St. Xavier's embrace ideals of national or racial identity that fit one, or both categories. Such characters are without exception portrayed as pedantic and narrow minded, and often as comically prejudiced. The prohibition required to maintained racial decorum according to their traditional notions of identity isolate than from their surroundings, and renders them helpless when thrown upon real India. These characters are, of course, white in a traditional sense, which requires only that they be of European descent, and be recognized as such. They also enjoy the privileges, both symbolic and real, that come from belonging to this exceptional racial category. In Kipling's sense of the term, however, they occupy their white identities uncomfortably and ineffectively. Because they cling to rigid essentialist notions of whiteness, these characters not only do not comprehend, but often actively thwart, the performative work that must be done to sustain their privileged racial status.

Kim's identity crisis is also revealed in functioning of his mind. He is used to speak Hindi, but when Lurgan tries to dazzle him into believing that a broken far is moving, he shifts from Hindi to English. “His mind leaped up from a darkness that was swallowing it and took refuge in the English” (218) Indian superstitions, illusions and cultural influences hardly effect Kim as the white culture, language and blood rank superior in his mind. When Kim is angry or relaxed he thinks like an Oriental in Hindi, but when he is confused and needs to rationalize things, he in English. Kim also searches for a stable religious or social identity. He inquires “am I a Hindu?” (27). He also asks Mahbub Ali, “What am I? Mussalman, Hindu, Jain or Buddhist? That is a hard nut” (204). Ali is unable to resolve the question either by choosing one of these identities or repeating that Kim is white. But, entitling Kim as white apparently cannot foreclose his identity against the possibility that he is also Muslim, Jain, Hindu or Buddhist. The statement that “thou art a Sahib” would appear to open the possibility that Kim could inhabit one or more additional identities, but

it cannot settle the question of which one. Rather than fixing Kim's identity within ethnic boundaries, the statement "thou art a Sahib" apparently opens up endless possibilities. To be a Sahib is to be irreducible to any ethnic identity or even any list of ethnic identities.

Indians are defined by their essential characteristics, while Kim is not. Mookerjee's failure in the game of ethnic exchange affirms the fact that, unlike Kim, he is bounded by his ethnic traits, imprisoned within the limitations prescribed by his essential Bengali being. From the beginning of the novel to the end, India appears before us as a collection of ethnic and cultural essences, as when the narrator very typically observes that "India is full of holy men stammering gospels in strange tongues... as it has been from the beginning and will continue to the end" (Kipling, 80). The timelessness of India, its definitive static's sameness from the beginning until the end of time, is omnipresent as page after page the distinctive characteristics of India, "the East," "Pathans," "Orientals," "Hindus," and "Babus" are named. In contrast, every attempt to define Kim through essential qualities decisively fails. His subject position can only be figured negatively within the text. This failure is most obvious in Kim's constant questioning of his identity. While Kim is frequently proclaimed to be white, both by the narrator—"where a native would have lain down, Kim's white blood set him upon the feet" (94) and by various characters, most authoritatively Colonel Creighton—"thou art a Sahib and the son of Sahib" (167) such statements invariably fail to fix Kim's identity. Instead, they tend to lead to a process of open ended questioning regarding who Kim is. These queries characteristically begin with the statement that Kim is white but end with a question. Thus, "I am a sahib.... No, I am Kim. This is the great world, and I am only Kim. Who is Kim?" (166). Pondering this question eventually leads Kim to "throw" himself "into amazement," letting his "mind go free upon speculation as to what is called personal identity" through the repetition of his own name, mantra-like, in the form of a question. "Who is Kim..Kim..Kim?" (233). As the question yields to the mere repetition of Kim's name, we realize that the name absorbs the question. "Kim" becomes synonymous with "Who is Kim?" and we discover only a question mark in the place of racial essence.

Huree's remark "That is the question" (314), on hearing Kim's question "who is Kim" (167) encapsulates Kim's identity crisis. Kim is fighting with himself to find a fix identity. He is unable to decide whether he wants 'to be' a 'sahib' with all the dignity of grace of Sahibs or not to be a "Sahib" and become a colonized native. He finds the solution to his problem and finally achieves a fixed identity when he decides to be a colonizer. His decision is reflected when he tells the Lama, "I Love thee... and it is all too late. (388). The Lama already had noticed the shift in Kim from native to Sahib, Kim tries to assure him that, "I am not a Sahib, I am thy Chela" (386). This depicts the moral identity crisis faced by Kim. But Kim always had the 'genetic' tendency to become a colonizer and therefore he decides to become a one with the privileges of power and authority.

Kim's focus on the Great Game of espionage and his role as an informant survived different strains of Kipling's identities as both an Englishman and an Indian. The boy's shifts from Westerner to Easterner and back, physically in the 'Great Game' are in fact the expression of his own inner character, comprising of opposing cultural influences in it. When Mahbub Ali entitle him as "Thou art a Sahib and son of a Sahib" (195) Kim alternately declares "I am a Sahib (150), I am not a Sahib (183). Though, he never denies his European heritage, but he never defines himself completely as Sahib. Equally an Indian and a Westerner, he instead slips in and out of various appearances and identities, seeming naturally at home in each. And it is this cultural flexibility that makes Kim fit for the world of spying. The juggling of multiple costumes and characters, which him has performed his whole life simply by nature, allows the boy great success in his acts of espionage. In the final chapter, Kim's identity is discovered in such a way, "I am Kim. I am Kim and what is Kim? His soul repeated it again? Again.... Tears trickled down his nose and with an almost audible click he felt the wheels of his being look up a new on the world without." (289)

Though, there is no direct answer to the question that which identity Kim forged for himself? But by the end of the novel, it appears as if he had achieved a sense of self which he was searching and

struggling although, and which he has been defining cumulatively through his experience.

He achieved a role (i.e. adult role) in which he will be “what he really is”, true to himself neither a pure Indian nor British, a role which will help him to maintain a detachment from everyday life and commitments, a role which will lead his union with Lama. As a secret agent his being the combination of Indian and British will be an advantage, and he can devote his life to helping to preserve the stability of the British Indian world which fostered him.

Kim at the end accepts the European component of his character but to a certain limit, he never wants to cut his emotional and spiritual roots (which are native) and become a white colonizer. He wishes to serve the Sahibs discreetly, tangentially using his native instincts and experiences, but not as a soldier exerting 'white' powers. Though he claims his identity is “a hard knot” to solve, it is easily explained as one spanning multiple cultures.

Kipling longed for freedom from the imperial constraints characteristics of his role. Finding freedom in British India, he made his own way in a new world. *Kim* therefore represents Kipling's need for merging his Indian selfhood and that of its counterpart. Much like Kim, we are never completely at home. As secret agents, we survive the entanglement of our identities whilst probing our agency through *Kim*.

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07

VALUE VS. VALUE: AN AXIOLOGICAL STUDY OF SUDHA MURTHY'S *DOLLAR BAHU*

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Abstract:

This paper is an attempt to analyse the impact of economic issues on the life of an individual. Literature being an umbrella term reviews the factors moulding human life. Economic issues have always been a factor playing vital role in deciding the position of a human being not only in bigger family called society but also the smaller society called family.

Sudha Murty a philanthropist and Chairperson of Infosys Foundation and a well-known Indian writer, better understands the pivotal role of money matters in human life. In her wide quoted novel 'Dollar Bahu' she delineates the life of a middle class Indian girl from middle class family who suffers the consequences of lack of value in family because of the lack of value of her earnings. The protagonist in the novel, Vinuta champions the cause of value of human virtues over the value of money and objects. In the course of the novel Murty has portrayed many characters who confront with each other on the issue of money. Some of them care more for money so all their relations and decisions depend on the material position of the person and some of them care more for human relations so they advocate the importance of human virtues in life. Murty has also discussed the issue of calling metaphorically a daughter-in-law as Laxmi, the Goddess of Wealth in Indian context because she brings good money and pile of objects in the form of dowry. So naturally the one who brings bigger dowry is Laxmi and the one who brings the biggest is Mahalaxmi. In 'Dollar Bahu' Vinuta, the younger daughter-in-law earns in rupees cannot get the place of Laxmi at her in-laws but Jamuna the eldest daughter-in-law earns in dollars that's why she becomes the 'dollar bahu' The paper is a communique on the need of deciding the importance of money and human relations over each other. As a philanthropist, Murty reads the corrupt impact of economic issues on social and personal human relations.

Introduction

Present research paper evaluates the fiction *Dollar Bahu* (2007) by Sudha Murthy on the basis of value theory. The paper is an attempt to apply the ten basic values mentioned by Schwartz, Schwartz and Bilsky- Self direction, Stimulation, Hedonism, Achievement, Power, Security, Conformity, Tradition, Benevolence and Universalism to the text *Dollar Bahu*.

Conceptual analysis

1. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy explains Value theory as a 'catch all label used to encompass all branches of moral philosophy, social and political philosophy...' (<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/value-theory>) It further views that value theory designates the area of moral philosophy that is concerned with theoretical questions about values and goodness of all varieties... (It) encompasses axiology, but also includes many other questions about the nature of value and its relation to the moral category. (<https://plato.stanford.edu/entires/value-theory>)
2. The term value is ambiguous as far as its theoretical insinuations are concerned. It may refer to value in terms of economics and philosophy. It may refer to value as economic worth of goods and services. It may value worth of a human being on the basis of his qualities. Values are further understood as-beliefs, motivational construct, abstract goals, an ordered systems of priorities

(essedunet.nsd.uib.no/cms/topics/1/1/1.htm)

3. Value theory is also defined as desirable trans-situational goals varying in importance that serves as guiding principles in people's lives(essedunet.nsd.uib.no/cms/topics/1/1/1.htm)
4. Thomas Hurka states that value theory says which states of affairs are intrinsically good and which intrinsically evil. (<https://thomashurka.files.wordpress.com>)
5. Encyclopedia Britannica explains axiology as theory of value and further adds that 'the term 'value 'originally meant the worth of something chiefly in the economic sense of exchange value ...Ralph Perry theorized value as any object of interest. Later he explored eight realms of 'value': morality, religion, art etc.' (<http://www.britannica.com/topic/axiology>)

Value Vs. value in *dollar bahu*

Sudha Murthy, a renowned name of Infosys, is a prolific writer who has written fiction and non-fiction. The book *Dollar Bahu* is originally written in Kannada and has been translated into many languages. Sudha Murthy in the preface of the novel makes clear her intention behind writing this book. She says, "I hope this book will show some families that love and affection can be important than money" (From Preface). Being a professional from corporate sector Sudha Murthy perhaps better under the value of value. *Dollar Bahu* narrates the story of a middle class family based at Bangalore. The characters in the family elaborate the idea of value vs. value. The head of the family, Shamanna being a teacher of Sanskrit advocates the virtues that confer on a human being an enriched personality. He considers values in human beings on the basis his virtues. Whereas his wife Gouramma, has a strong belief in the economic perspective of value. For her, money is the deciding factor in human life. Therefore does not value her husband who cannot generate the financial assets. Their elder son Chandrashekhar, a civil engineer inherits his mother's craze for money, Particularly for dollars and aspires to go to America, earn dollars and thus earn social status. His mother too encourages him and feels proud of him when he sends dollars for every event in the family. Whereas Chandru's younger brother inherits his father's perspective of charity and social welfare. Girish's wife, Vinuta comes from poor family; so fails to bring good dowry and expensive gifts. Naturally she is not even treated as *bahu* i.e. *Laxmi* but as a maid servant. Though Vinuta is virtuous and earning woman, she is valued as secondary. Chandru's wife, Jamuna belongs to rich family who brings dowry, expensive gifts, jewellery after marriage, she is honoured as '*Mahalaxmi*' by her mother-in-law. Her marriage with Chandru promotes her as *Dollar Bahu*. Shamanna's family is battle ground for the war between material value and virtues as value. Gouramma and Shamanna, Vinuta and Jamuna are the characters through whom Sudha Murthy comments on the superiority of human virtues over material value. She has commented over various concepts of value theory like hedonism, desire, perfectionism, comparison and aggression, intrinsic goodness, egalitarian value from literary viewpoint. Literature being an umbrella term incorporates philosophical dimension of human life and tries to simplify the abstract philosophical idea through the fabrication of a story and placing the characters in a situations. A novelist does so to explain the abstract and ambiguous philosophical ideas through the means of entertainment, of course, with the ultimate aim of educating the readers. This paper also attempts to elaborate the philosophical tenets on the basis of the main characters whose ideas are based on the value theory and theory of value. The basic values are considered in domestic context in particular and in social context in general.

Thomas Hurka considers values as states of affairs... Since these states are not actions they cannot be right or wrong but they can have positive or negative value. (<https://thomashurka.files.wordpress.com>) Literature believes in transformation in people in the course of life. So their journey could be from good to bad or bad to good. Moreover the factual understanding of human being leads to the conclusion that a human being cannot be permanently good or bad but his situational perceptions leads his categorization as good or bad and there is always a scope for change in a human being. The central character Gouramma in the novel *Dollar Bahu* travels from bad to good. She is a hedonist in initial stages because of wrong

perspective but because of her intrinsic goodness she has the ability to differentiate between good and bad and therefore moves from hedonism, power, and to self-direction, benevolence and universalism. Her surrounding characters and their actions, responses and reaction help to bring the positive change her and to understand the meaning of 'value'

Gouramma is delineated as an ambitious woman she is a traditionalist and thus believes in domestic hierarchical power structure. She feels that financial status of a person increases his value in society. Her lust for money, jewellery, silks diamond, gold, big house, car power stand in sheer contrast with the self-contented, generous and charitable nature of her husband. That's why 'Since her husband had been unable to full fill her dreams, Gouramma had pinned her hopes on her children' (Murthy, P. 19). Every day She prays to God that 'her children should go abroad and earn lots of money' (Murthy, P. 20) Chandru her elder son displays his capacity of earning. He soon gets the deputation in America and thus Gouramma's dream partially comes true. Chandru's fascination for dollar is rightly reflected when talks about dollar to his brother 'The dollar is the most powerful financial instrument of modern times. It is magic money--- (Murthy, P.25). Chandru is instrumental in adding to the principle of hedonism in Gouramma. Her belief is strengthened because of her perspective that

'It was the dollar, not Indian rupees, which could elevate her into the elite circle at social gatherings and marriage halls. The dollar was like the Goddess Lakshmi, with a magic wand' (Murthy, P.25).

Gouramma counts everything in terms of money. Her concepts of happiness and pain are related to money. This further results into comparison and aggression. She keeps on comparing her two daughters-in-law, Jamuna and Vinuta, not on the basis of their virtue potential but on the basis of monetary potential. Vinuta the virtuous but poor is always subsided and neglected whereas Jamuna, the rich girl and dollar *bahu* is always praised and valued.

The Dollar Bahu Jamuna too reflects the value of conformity. She has been influenced by her mother who has taught her to speak well with the relatives but not allow them to stay in her house. She knows the greedy and stupid nature of her Gouramma and Surbhi. But she allows Gouramma to come to America and stay with her because she is pregnant. Jamuna's practical and calculating behaviour is very well displayed when she speaks out her real feelings,

'I give them what I don't like and they don't suspect anything. For example I pass on all my old saris to Surbhi and I tell her due to customs restrictions, I rewrapped them. ... I always believe divide and rule' (Murthy, P.129).

To avoid the robbing nature of Indian relatives she prefers to stay in America. She says 'it is better to send them some dollars as gifts than to settle in India' (Murthy, P.129). By purchasing to and fro ticket for Gouramma and allowing her to stay in her house, Jamuna encashes every dollar spent on Gouramma by making her to do all the household work, to look after them and to baby sit Manasi. Chandru, Gouramma's son staying in America has also his clear views about economic value. He says,

“Everyone there (India) thinks that it very is easy to earn in dollars--- what they don't understand is that we also have to struggle, far away from home, family and culture. We worry about our children who are confused between the two value systems. Actually the price you pay is very high. The dollar is very expensive if you take into account all these points All Indians back home only equate the dollar to forty three or forty five rupees.” (Murthy, P.100)

Chandru fulfils the desires of his mother by staying in America far away from family but he too is aware of the fact that his value for his mother and sister is counted in terms of dollars he sends to them and not for he himself.

Gouramma's daughter Surbhi inherits the commercial approach of her mother. She reflects the value of conformity. She herself is lazy, neither interested in household work nor in education. She is

delineated as greedy and violates the familiar expectations. Gouramma's money minded behaviour also influences Surbhi's nature and life. When Surbhi is noticed watching movie with an ordinary boy Gopinath by Vinuta and reported at home, Gouramma admonishes Surbhi explaining value of money even in deciding alliances. She openly tells her,

“What does he (Gopinath) have? An ordinary job and a small house! If you marry him, your life will be like Vinuta's. You will have to count every penny and try to save all the time. Look at Jamuma! She has two cars; she can spend money in lakhs because she has money in dollars. The dollar is all powerful. --- you can lead that kind of life if you marry someone who is in the U.S. or someone very rich in India” (Murthy, P.59)

Gouramma is ready to buy a rich husband for Surbhi by spending lavishly in Surbhi's marriage. Even in Surbhi's marriage more importance is given to Jamuna because she and Chandru have paid two lakhs whereas Girish and Vinuta are totally neglected because they have contributed only one lakh

Vinuta who is always compared with the dollar *bahu* Jamuna suffers the depression because she is very often flabbergasted by the questions like 'Should a marriage be arranged on the basis of love and understanding or on the love for the dollar?' (P.59). She feels hatred for the word 'dollar' and 'she prayed to God, Let a day come when forty five dollars are equal to one rupee. If that did happen, what would this dollar *Bahu* do? (Murthy, P.137)

Shamanna, Gouramma's husband is the only person in the family who could realize the corrupt and devastating influence of dollar on his family. He stands for unification axiology because he knows the worth of material value and spiritual value. Being a teacher, he knows the true meaning of 'Value' that's why when Gouramma speaks out the need of pleasure life for their children, he emphasizes the need of good education to his children because it is the education, knowledge that could set the right perspective of looking at life. It is he who explains Vinuta at the end of the novel that all problems of life could not be solved with the help of money. He has the common sense of knowing the material value of dollar and tells to Vinuta,

“I can only be grateful that many of our comforts were bought by the purchasing power of dollar. We are now financially better off. Many lower- middle class families have benefitted from their children going to America. Many parents have been settled there. They have been able to build houses and marry off their daughters without too much of trouble” (P. 139)

So he underlines the need of money for leading a comfortable life but being a man of value theory, he is perfectly aware of what happens if the need turns into greed. This he could illustrate from his own life. He states,

“Look at Gouri, her desires were mostly fulfilled because of Chandru. But she does not understand that money is not everything in life.”(Murthy, P.139)

He then explains the corrupt influence of dollar on his family and familial relations. He says,

“Nothing comes free Vinu. And definitely when it comes to financial help. This dollar may have transferred the lifestyle of some families, taken them from poverty to wealth but it has also broken up some families and destroyed peace of mind... If Gouri had been more mature, she would not have been in awe of the dollar and danced to its tune. Her greed burnt the peace and harmony in our family.”(Murthy, P.139)

Shamanna reflects the values like self-direction, stimulation, achievement, security benevolence and universalism.

Though various incidents in the novel throw light on Gouramma's greed for money, Sudha Murthy also explains through Shamanna that her desires were oppressed due to her childhood poverty and even after marriage she to constrain all her desires due to the meagre salary and generous nature of her husband. But the flow of dollars from her America based son and her observation of the ways of the world at once

catapult her desires and consequent comparisons and aggression by Gouramma destroy the peace of her family. But her intrinsic goodness helps her to come out of the maze of the money as well as the influence of the maze runners. Her realization of the true nature of the dollar bahu and the understanding of American life help her in shedding out her assumptions of pleasure life and she comes back to India with a new perception of life and human relations.

Conclusion

Sudha Murthy's *Dollar Bahu* speaks the universal experiences of people who are always caught in the eternal conflict of value and virtue. They feel the need of both in life but very often fail to balance the both and perhaps experience the loss. Sudha Murthy's almost all writing is centred at value theory. She deftly draws the outcomes of the increasing hedonist tendency in human beings. Their constant comparisons with the rich people results into aggression and follow up of wrong means to accumulate wealth. All the NRIs staying in America depicted in the novel have reached to America for the money. Majority of them are compelled to do so because of their family responsibility. There they realize that their hard work is properly paid but they also realize that they are being indirectly robbed by their own relatives in India because the Indians in the novel think of dollars in terms of money. Sudha Murthy's character Shammana rightly says that nothing comes free. Not even money. One has to pay price for everything one wants. Money may be accumulated by losing relations and relations may be earned by losing money. Jamuna has money but no relations. Vinuta has relations but paucity of money. Chandru loses both money and relations because his mother and sister as well as his wife care for his money and not for him. Gouramma, earlier caught between the conflict of value and virtue learns in the course of time that one cannot have both at a time and one has to decide the priority. Shamanna can better understand the places of value and virtue in life. He knows the necessity of money but is also aware that money cannot solve all the problems. Sudha Murthy has effectively elaborated on the idea of need and greed as well as value and virtue. A beautiful thought says-

'God created human beings to love and objects to use

But in this world people have learnt to use human beings and love the objects.'

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AMBIVALENCE ABOUT MASCULINE IDEALS: SOME OBSERVATIONS ON ETHIOPIAN MASCULINITY/IES, LITERATURE AND CULTURE

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Abstract:

The overemphasis on white heterosexual males while discussing masculinity/ies has resulted in the marginalization of other forms of masculinity, especially, Asian and African masculinities. The present paper, a modest attempt to assert the plurality and diversity of masculinities and to focus on different voices, focuses on Ethiopian Masculinities and analyses the transformations brought about in Ethiopian Masculinities by socio-political and economic forces. Oral and written Tigrinya and Amharic Literature is analysed in the light of existing anthropological research on Ethiopian culture. The contemporary Ethiopian literature, the paper argues, doesn't reflect the "purposeful cultivation of ferocity" and the "theme of masculinity as capacity to kill" as described by anthropologists like Mazrui (1977) and Gilmore (1990). The paper concludes that the contemporary literature is marked by an ambivalence regarding masculine ideals, an inevitable result of a society going through major changes.

Keywords: *Ethiopian Masculinities, African Masculinities, Military man, Local militia, political violence, ambivalence.*

Masculinity, for a very long period has been defined from the perspective of the white men. As Asante (2011, p. 11) has said, 'For more than five hundred years, the defining characteristics of masculinity have rested in the hands of European males' resulting in the construction of a standard masculinity based on heterosexual white males which disempowered African and Asian males. Creation of this dominant image of masculinity based on the image created by a tiny part of human population has made other masculinities appear 'erratic, off-centre, or aberrations' (Asante, 2011, p. 12). To stop this marginalization of other forms of masculinity and to assert the plurality and diversity of masculinities, study of new and different voices is very much essential. The present paper is a modest step in this direction. It makes use of earlier research on Ethiopian masculinity/ies and tries to take a fresh look at the current versions of masculinity and/or the changes witnessed due to the changing socio-cultural and economic circumstances.

The aim of this paper is to discuss the representation of masculinity in some written and oral Ethiopian literature in relation to its cultural and ideological context. The paper begins with a very brief review of African and Ethiopian Masculinity Studies and then proceeds on to analyse some Ethiopian literary texts in the light of a few famous anthropological studies on Ethiopian culture.

Interest in the study of masculinity is relatively a recent phenomenon. It developed originally as a response to women's movement and feminisms in 1970s. But in the last few years the limitations and oppressive nature of conventional masculinities as well as the disempowering of Asian and African men due to the construction of a standard masculinity based on heterosexual white males has been attracting steady attention.

African Masculinities and Ethiopian Masculinities

The constructions of African Masculinities are fraught with contradictions and fissures and this is being realized very recently. African males 'share' one part of the identities with African women and another part with white/European men. If African-ness is 'shared' between males and females then 'African masculinity' is defined not just by African males. White/European males help in making African men.

Whether we take a stance for or against the notion of African masculinities, we automatically get involved in a dialogical material world that is always structured by and around power.

However, all these complexities are just beginning to attract attention of masculinity studies. Studies of African masculinities have not been that frequent even if Masculinity Studies has been gaining strength over the last few decades in the West. There have been just a few studies of African-Americans and of the effect of colonization on African masculinity and all of these are comparatively very recent ones. Studies of peoples of Africa (other than African-Americans) are even fewer.

Caldwell, *et al's* (1989) study is one of the very first works on African men and has remained influential in studies of African male sexual behaviour and in studies of AIDS. However it has also been highly criticised for making African sexuality appear “permissive, if not promiscuous, and for overlooking values and morality surrounding manhood and sexuality” (Heald 1999).

Another significant work is that of Silberschmidt (2001, 2005). Silberschmidt has pointed out how poverty in Africa has hit both men and women but how both have responded differently to it: with men withdrawing from their traditional responsibilities (as a bread winner of the family, as the head of the household, etc) and women forced to take on new responsibilities, leading to disempowerment of rural as well as urban African men. With men seeing their honour, reputation, and masculinity in general threatened, they are resorting to acts of violence and sexual aggressiveness to bolster self-esteem. (Silberschmidt 2005, 2001)

Lahoucine Ouzgane and Robert Morrell's *African Masculinities: Men in Africa from the Late Nineteenth Century to the Present* (2005) explores what it means for an African to be masculine and how male identity is shaped by cultural forces. The editors believe that to tackle important questions related to Africa the many forms of violence (wars, genocides, familial violence and crime) and the AIDS pandemic it is necessary to understand how a combination of a colonial past, patriarchal cultural structures and a variety of religious and knowledge systems creates masculine identities and sexualities. The book bears out how vulnerability and marginalization produce complex forms of male identity.

Apart from these pioneering works, there is a small but growing body of literature on African masculinities emphasizing how African masculinities are not uniform, monolithic and static. African masculinities are shaped by the specificities of political, social, cultural and economic contexts. However, most of these seminal works have almost nothing or very less to say about Ethiopian masculinities. The issue of complexities of Ethiopian Masculinities seems a marginalized and ignored area within the literature on African masculinities. Lahoucine Ouzgane and Robert Morrell's remarkable book has no chapter on Ethiopian masculinities. It makes just a passing reference to Ethiopia only once in the entire work - 'the symbolic rule of Haile Selassie in Ethiopia' (Ouzgane and Morrell, 2005, p.3).

Ethiopian Masculinities

Much of the relevant information on Ethiopian men, male bodies, concepts of honour, cultural customs and upbringing, has to be derived from anthropological and sociological works. Dr. William Shack's wrote a series of anthropological works (Shack, 1966, 1974 a and b). His work revealed that ninety percent of Ethiopian students showed a preference for the military man as their 'cultural hero' (cited in Levin). A seminal work in the field is Levine's (1966) 'The Concept of Masculinity in Ethiopian Culture' and later *Greater Ethiopia: The Evolution of Multiethnic Society* (1974). Other few works available are Ali Al Amin Mazrui's (1977) *The Warrior Tradition in Modern Africa*, and David Brakke's (2001) *Ethiopian Demons: Male Sexuality, the Black Skinned Other and the Monastic Self*. Gerschick (2004) notes the use of elaborate hair designs of Karo men of Ethiopia worn as masculine symbols. Professor Donald Levine's (1974) influential work describes what he calls, the “Cult of Masculinity” which is carefully cultivated amongst the majority of the Ethiopian men. There are also a few studies of Ethiopian proverbs and lyric poetry like the study of Alemayehu Moges' Ancient Ethiopian Proverbs in Amharic, Enrico Cerulli's *The Folk-literature of the Galla of Southern Abyssinia*. Jeylan Hussein's study of Oromo proverbs and

Amharic Oral lyric poetry in Raya by Mesele (2007). The main aim of these studies is not to analyse the literary and cultural texts from the perspective of Masculinity Studies but nevertheless are helpful as they often reveal the gender biases reflected in these texts.

Direct competition of physical skill and strength is a feature of masculinity and this appears in some or the other form in virtually every culture on earth. It is also common to find many customs and rituals which endeavour to instill these values in young boys across all cultures. The same applies to Ethiopian cultures. About this Gilmore (1990, p.253) writes

The Amhara, an Ethiopian tribe, have a passionate belief in masculinity called *wand-nat*. To show their *wand-nat*, Amhara youth are forced to engage in bloody whipping contests known as *bune*.

In these whipping matches, faces were frequently lacerated. The participants wouldn't show any sign of pain from the whipping. Any sign of pain or weakness gives rise to mockery and taunts of being effeminate. To further demonstrate their masculinity, boys burn their arms with hot embers (Reminick, 1982, cited in Gilmore, 1990). Norman Mailer (1966, p. 201) has said, 'Masculinity is not something given to you, something you are born with, but something you gain... And you gain by winning small battles of honour.' Kimmel (1994, pp 37-38) observed that often males' bodies are "the ultimate testing ground for identity in a world in which collective solutions to the problem of identity seem all but discredited". In Ethiopian culture, men's bodies become 'the ultimate testing ground' for identity. Men make a kinaesthetic use of their bodies making it thus the key mechanism to perform and achieve gender. In addition to courage, physical skill and strength, Ethiopians, particularly, the Amhara tribe is alleged to be seeing masculinity as 'capacity to kill':

The theme of masculinity as capacity to kill continues in the culture of the Amhara and the Empire they ruled. Donald Levine tells about the place of the purposeful cultivation of ferocity in the process of socialization and educating young people. (Mazrui, 1977, p. 72).

Donald Levine also says that purposeful cultivation of ferocity is given an important place in the socializing and educating of young people of Ethiopia. That could be a reason why ninety percent of Ethiopian students considered military man as their cultural hero. Ali Al Amin Mazrui (1977, p. 73) notes:

In some African societies the expansion of economic and political opportunities for young people has resulted in the decline of the prestige of the profession of combat as such. But in Ethiopia the prestige of the military hero continues to exercise considerable influence on the imagination of young people.

After discussing the differences between the Somalians and the Amhara Mazrui (1977, p. 73) says:

But one cultural factor that they do have in common is the mystique of purposeful ruthlessness as a manly virtue where the occasion arises.

Negussay Ayele (2011) in his article 'Legitimacy, culture of political violence and violence of culture in Ethiopia' that focuses on the "paradox of Ethiopia's unprecedented longevity as one of the oldest polities in the world on the one hand and its pervasive and perennial culture of political violence on the other" also uses Levine's arguments to explain this paradox. After discussing the political violence and opportunities of change in Ethiopia from 1769 to 2009, Ayele says that Ethiopia is sadly unique as it has not been able to shed its culture of violence. Further he insists,

More often than not, political violence has become the preoccupation of a "culture of masculinity," which is often proudly acknowledged by its practitioners. ...the culture of masculinity is embedded as a "default" norm of male behavior. (p.226)

To validate his argument, Ayele refers to how Ethiopians swear by invoking the pain of death - "let me die", "let my father die" to prove the sincerity of their claims/promises. They even swore by invoking the name of the Emperor when he was alive - "Let Haile Selassie die". The author says this seemingly unimportant observation actually reveals the fundamental "political culture in which death, killing and

dying have been seared into the Ethiopian subconscious from generation to generation” (Ayele, 2011, p.226).

Contemporary Ethiopian Literature: An Analysis of Amharic and Tigrinya Cultural and Literary Texts

Given so extreme descriptions of Ethiopians' ideals of masculinity, seeing their representations in recent literature can be a very rewarding activity. However, I have come across almost no research on analysis of Ethiopian literature from this perspective. The present paper is a small step in this direction. In absence of English translations of literature in Ethiopian languages, it depends on the translations of some oral literature and of Tigrinya novels available in the work of research scholars like that of Tesfaye Mesele (2007) and Gebreyesus Teklu (2008). The present paper sought to find out what characteristics of masculinity are represented in this literature and how far it supports observations of sociological and anthropological studies quoted above, especially that of Levine.

Literature whether written or oral plays an important role in reinforcing the cultural ideals of masculinity such as competitiveness, dominance, forcefulness, endurance, confrontation, self-reliance, and willingness to take risks. Tigrinya novel of Abeba Tesfagiogis, entitled *Whom Shall I Account for my Agony* reflects the same ideals of conventional manhood:

While Wubitu was known for her modesty, and honesty, as well as for her expertise in house making, Tigil was also a courageous, soldierly, industrious farmer, judicious and dedicated to truth. During havoc, he used to fight courageously; however, during peaceful times he used to spend his time plowing the land and writing traditional poetry ... (Abeba T., 1973/74, p. 33)

The conservative gender-based division of labour is also reflected in the Tigrinya novels. Mehari, a male character in another Tigrinya novel *The Cub of the Lioness* prefers to serve as an Italian conscript, which he hates from the bottom of his heart, than to serve as a chief cook/bed maker/ dishwasher, since to be a soldier is manly in his opinion. (Birhane, A., 1990, p. 41)

The Oromo proverb 'A male person is dead from his birth,' inculcates fearlessness as masculine self-fulfillment. Often proverbs and folk songs try to hammer these ideals from very early childhood like this Amhara Oral Lyric poetry does:

'There are people within us who beautify their *gombiso*
There are people within us who beautify their *afro*
Who follow us when we go for a battle
And who lead us when we come back home'

A man who is afraid of physical combat and death deserves ridicule and taunts in patriarchal society. The Italian soldier Albertony in Birhane Achame's novel trembles at the sight of sword brandished by Mehari and Mehari pities his 'unmanly' fear. If a man who fears death becomes an object of pity, a man who is afraid of his wife, is thoroughly despised. Te'ame another character in Birhane Achame's *The Cub of the Lioness* becomes a topic of gossip and ridicule and people come to 'see' him once the news that his wife beat him spreads around. That a woman has to be kept in control, if necessary with help of violence, is a masculine value which proverbs take proper care to indoctrinate. For example, consider this Oromo proverb: '*The lady, whose husband spoils her, slips from the tanned hide*'.

A right to violence against women is so much taken for granted, that even in the writing of a female novelist like Birhane Achame, similes such as the following are not rare: The Italian government took our scared country Ethiopia, the mother of heroes by force like a bold man who rapes a woman.

R. W. Connell (1995, p. 77) defines hegemonic masculinity as

...the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women.

Unconscious use of figures of speech as in Birhane's novel reveal how pervasive is the effect of hegemonic masculinity. Through passages of this kind, rape gets naturalized as an action of a brave man.

Obviously, to be defeated by a woman is treated as an insult of the highest order. When Kidan in Birhane Achame's *The Cub of the Lioness* overpowers the bandit Tsigay, this is the conversation which takes place:

'Please Kidan, my sister, do not humiliate me'

'You have been humiliating men for many years... yet you fall into the hands of a woman.'
(Birhane A., 1990, p. 13-14)

If one defines masculinity in terms of a set of attitudes, behaviors or traits, then women displaying these attitudes and traits can be described as masculine or as performing or possessing masculinity. R.W. Connell argues that we cannot define masculinity as equivalent to men and we have to acknowledge that masculine conduct or identity can go together with a female body. Perhaps due to the pressures of the colonial time and the experiences of the Red terror, or perhaps as an effect of the violence surrounding them, many women characters from the Tigrinya novels published in the time of Ethiopian socialist and later mixed economic system (1974-1992) show some conventional masculine qualities. For example, to honour the brave woman Kidan, the 'Lioness' of the title of the novel *The Cub of The Lioness*, a song is sung:

'Dear Kidan the lioness, my beloved Kidan the lioness
May I call you mister or mistress'

Masculine qualities are observed in many other women in the novel like Kindihafti and Te'ame's wife. In the novels of the later period, there is an increased objectification of men, especially in the novels written by women, where often body parts of the male protagonist are described using similes such as likening lips of the man to the sweet millet cane.

However this doesn't decrease the objectification of women or elevate the status of women in either the men's view or in the view of the women themselves. These novels bear out what Tracy Tylka (2006) says in relation to contemporary America: 'Instead of seeing a decrease in objectification of women in society there has just been an increase in the objectification of men'.

The proverbs, lyrical Amharic oral poetry, Tigrinya novels, discussed so far, reflect all of the generalized masculine characteristics. They also prove that masculinities are not static; they are constantly changing from time to time, generation to generation, from regime to regime. There is much violence in the novels like *Forever Banging Door (Tesfaye, 1984)* and *The Cub of the Lioness* as they deal with Italian invasion and the Red Terror. However, the 'purposeful cultivation of ferocity' and the 'theme of masculinity as capacity to kill' (Mazrui, 1977; Gilmore, 1990) seems to be reflected nowhere. Whether it is the folk tales, proverbs, folk songs or modern novels, the revered masculine qualities that get represented are the ability to fight courageously in the time of need and the ability to produce good crop in the farm during the peaceful times.

In recent fiction other masculine ideals are slowly finding a voice. These recent works are yet not sure about these ideals, but are conscious of the socio-cultural changes and are yet contemplating their literary representations. As an example I wish to take up Endashaw Latera's (2008) English short story 'Son of the Father'. I see it as reflecting the changes coming in the Ethiopian society and as a story trying to come to terms with the problems associated with 'constructing' masculinity in the troubled times of change. The two main characters of the story are both male: father and son. The protagonist Kiya is an adolescent boy going through the usual turmoil of growing up and achieving manhood and fighting back the authority exerted by the father. In a way the story deals with the age-old father-son motif. The source of inspiration for Kiya and his friends is no longer the 'military man' but the football stars. Like all his friends in the group, Kiya wants to become a good football player, wants to conform to the ideals of the group of the younger generation. On the other hand, his father Gaddisa is a perfect example of the 'military man' described in Dr.

William Shack's study. He is reputed for his bravery and strength. He works in a government shoe factory during day time and at night works as local militia. He protects the community against thieves and thugs. He is a hero in Kiya's view but the story doesn't project him as a possible ideal for the next generation. Kiya doesn't want to become a local militia. His father too doesn't want him to be one. Gaddisa wants his son to get good education and become a successful man. The story undoubtedly etches a transient time not yet sure which masculine ideal to embrace from three:

1. The residual masculinity of the heroic military man,
2. The glittering world of the football star fast emerging as the most attractive male ideal,
3. The comfortable yet uneventful life of the educated salaried man which is necessarily the most dominant one at present

Local militia, football and school symbolize these available options. The first and the second options, in a way, are relatively unattainable: the first belongs well-nigh to the past and the second to the world of wish fulfillment. The third option, symbolized by school, is the least thrilling of the three and is seen by Gaddisa as the most desirable one for his son. However, Kiya, his friends and actually the entire young generation looks at it with disdain.

The story also reflects the ambivalence of the period regarding masculine ideals. The father's valour, vigour, dedication to the society, according to conventional masculinity, make him an 'ideal man', however, his emotional nature makes him effeminate. This ambivalence of a society going through a major change gets its most powerful expression in Kiya's cry of outrage at the end of the story:

'No, no Dad! You can't! You can't cry. You are the lion-heart. You are my hero' (Latera, p.19)

The short story is representative of the contemporary Ethiopian fiction which is marked by an ambivalence regarding masculine ideals which must be seen as an inevitable facet of a society going through major changes.

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NARRATING DREAMS AND DAUGHTERS: GITHA HARIHARAN'S *THE THOUSAND FACES OF NIGHT* AND MANJU KAPUR'S *DIFFICULT DAUGHTERS*

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Paul Copley in *Narrative* defines “narrative” as a particular form of representation implementing signs which includes “the showing or the telling” of events and the mode selected for that to take place (6). He elaborates the complexity of the narrative by pointing out that “as soon as we start to look more closely at this phenomenon, it is evident that the apparently natural impulse of storytelling or story listening (or reading) is far from simple. Even the most 'simple' of stories is embedded in network of relations that are sometimes astounding in their complexity” (2). In a similar vein Mark Schorer defines technique as “any selection, elimination or distortion, any form of rhythm imposed upon the world of action by means of which our apprehension of the world of action is enriched or renewed” (72).

As the genre of novel developed in India in English, the problem of how to say was not as prominent as the problem of what to say. But gradually the Indian English novelists too gave attention to the manner of storytelling. A novel by an Indian writer in English requires direct involvement of the experiences and values which are valid in the Indian context. The writing of a genuine Indian English novel presupposes historical and geographical awareness of the Indian situation (Mukherjee 29). Apart from this, an Indian novelist often confronts a number of aesthetic problems while presenting the nuances of Indian life through a foreign language like English. An Indian novelist, writing in an Indian language, can easily take certain basic assumptions for granted since both the writer and the reader share a similar background and common experiences. However, readership/authorship of Indian novel in English cuts across diverse ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds which make the writer uncertain of the basic assumptions and it affects the writer's use of devices of storytelling too. While in the early years of the twentieth century, the technique was the primary concern for most of the writers, this concern with narrative technique has been slow to evolve in Indian English fiction. As early as 1938 Raja Rao in the foreword to *Kanthapura* asserts that the epic method is the most suitable for the Indian temperament: “And our paths are paths interminable . . . Episode follows episode, and when our thoughts stop, our breath stops, and we move on to another thought. This was, and still is, the ordinary style of our story-telling” (vi).

The nineteenth century not only witnessed the growth of the male writers in English but also of women writers who were equally competent. However, the works of the women writers differ from that of their male counterparts. Not only there is difference in the kinds of experiences of men and women have, but also in their manner of contextualizing, analyzing and communicating. Traditionally, in India, discourses, sermons, political rhetoric which were of grave seriousness have been dominated by men, while storytelling, lullabies, folk songs etc. have been the domain of women. In fact, narration of the same reality, descriptions, images and comparisons, perspectives and perceptions everything differ when the gender of the narrator changes. In this context Jasbir Jain opines:

It is not a difference of form one cannot say that men write about external facts and women about internal life; one cannot also say that men write about thickly inhabited worlds and women about solitary figures but women do write about the responses of women, of the shadows which they alone can see and the anguish they alone can feel. It is a difference of perspective. (“Gender and Narrative Strategy” 54)

Jasbir Jain goes on to elaborate that male narratives locate public events such as partition, escape,

massacre at the center of the story and when they move to personal consciousness; it is the loss of lineage, of land, of power and of identity. In all male narratives, women are either absent or objectified as victims. In stark contrast, narratives by women writers carve their selfhood and reveal their inner selves through memory, dreams, hallucinations, surrealism and images and so on. Their narratives mainly emerge not from their themes or the subjective relationships but from their aesthetics which move beyond realism and realistic description (“Daughters” 1657).

The fictional form gave women the opportunity to widen their area of concerns and to allow their imaginations to interact as well as go beyond reality. As writers, they valorize and empower what hegemony has labeled as passive, powerless and mute. Thus, women's fictional narratives articulate both the existence of the dominant power structures and the female desire to disavow and defy these structures. However, as Malashri Lal has pointed out, Indian women's writing basically tends to be “non-aggressive” (28) and it can also be argued that the depiction of resistance to socio-cultural context in their writings have done little to dislodge the dominant discourse.

Women writers, by actively shifting attention from social perspectives to personal ones, provided a new direction for fictional development. Women writers project a “self” which is no longer an object of sympathy and sexual gratification for men but a subject with individual choices. Women defy norms and move outside social codes but some of them reconcile to their fate like Virmati, while some move forward like Ida, or there are still others who opt out of marriage and child-bearing like Shakuntala in *Difficult Daughters*, Devi in *The Thousand Faces of Night*. There are others, who accept conventional roles and become restless on being confined within the domestic threshold.

Women writers try to make women readers aware of their plight by speaking about their personal experiences. Humour, irony, fantasy and myths are used with the specialised purpose of exposing the tyranny of the patriarchal ideology. Varied themes like sexuality, mother-daughter relationships and other purely female experiences find expression through their writings. While dealing with such comparatively novel themes, these writers make use of certain narrative strategies. The implication is that not only women writers use strategy, even men do. As Jasbir Jain observes all rebels do this as do all original minds (“Gender and Narrative Strategy” 49). But the statements they make are connected with their thought processes and their world views, or with their ability to outgrow those cultural models and reach out to other consciousness. Jasbir Jain comments:

When the experience which is being narrated moves against the current, is unconventional or unusual, is radical in its standpoint, or displays a strength which may be best muted for the time being, strategy is resorted to. There is no hesitation in laying a false trail or employing subterfuge. Moreover, it is never the same, for then it would become a theory. It may be imagery, or landscape, or scriptural references or character, or subplot, or structure which is being used for this purpose and waiting to be decoded. (“Gender and Narrative Strategy” 48)

In *The Thousand Faces of Night*, Githa Hariharan creates a narrative that shifts and undermines the conventional ideology of womanhood. The novel mainly consists of first-person narratives by Devi and Mayamma and the sporadic presence of a third person narration is also evident. In fact Hariharan makes use of the art of story-telling that takes the narrative forward. The crux of the novel is the re-writing of given narratives be it myths, history or fables which is essentially a postmodern technique called “revisionism”. In Adrienne Rich's words, “Re-vision: the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction, is for us more than a chapter in cultural history: it is an act of survival” (18). Rich sums up the significance of revisionary writing to deconstruct the stereotype images and reconstruct the cultural tradition of women. Until we understand the assumptions in which we are brought up, we cannot know ourselves. This drive for self-knowledge for women is more than a search for identity. We need to know how we have been led to imagine ourselves and instead of passing on that

tradition we need to break its hold over us. Thus revisionism became an important tool in the hands of women writers and hence many old stories were retold in different ways from gynocentric perspective. Many traditional figures of patriarchal mythology have been re-invented demolishing the cultural stereotypes propagated by the male dominated society.

This revisionism is very much evident in Hariharan's *The Thousand Faces of Night*. She has used this technique very effectively to deconstruct the misogyny and colonial stereotypes which project that women have no independent life to live except to serve her husband. By deconstructing stereotypical characters and plots in storytelling, Hariharan has undone the moralities and prejudices of traditional texts. Devi, the young protagonist grows up on tales and mythical stories culled from *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* and the fables of India. As a child, she listened and tried to compare those tales with the real tales of people around her. However, the adult Devi deconstructs them as her perceptions changes with maturity. As Devi recalls that her grandmother had an answer for every question, but “her answers were not simple: they had to be decoded” (*TFN* 27). Thus with age, Devi's perception changes and so does the decodification of those tales. Hence, instead of following her husband blindly like Gandhari, she runs away from the suffocating union in marriage. Even the fable of a beautiful girl married to a snake is deconstructed by Devi. The social prejudice “A girl is given only once in marriage” (*TFN* 33) fails to stop Devi from eloping with Gopal. She deliberately discards those role models like Gandhari revolting through self-penance. Instead she gorges on those mythical women avengers like Amba or the Goddess who rode the tiger and cut off evil, magical demons' heads. After her marriage Baba's moral versions of a “virtuous wife”, a “*sumangali*” only defined her limits as a wife and daughter-in-law. Devi deconstructs those stories culled from Muthuswamy Dikshitar, Jayadeva, Purandara Dasa, Narayana Tirtha, Syama Sastri, Thyagaraja and the devotion of their respective wives to them. In a similar fashion, Hariharan through Devi re-visions them and finally discards them. Devi flips through the pages of Baba's orphaned books and reads about a *kritya* which has been omitted (by Baba, perhaps deliberately). The story is about a ferocious woman who haunts and destroys the house in which women are insulted. Thus Devi deconstructs and reconstructs the stories fit for her “survival violence” (*TFN* 58).

Hariharan's use of dream fantasy is another device to give a psychological insight into Devi's mind. Her urge to live a life of her own often surfaces in her dream visions. Right from her childhood, she is a dreamer and Sita felt exasperated by her daydreaming. But as Devi grows, she realises and confesses: “I lived a secret life of my own: I became a woman warrior, a heroine. I was Devi. I rode a tiger, and cut off evil, magical demons' heads” (*TFN* 41). Devi's suppressed desires find expression through her dreams. Even after marriage she dreams of flying. This time dream fantasy takes an allegorical shape. Devi recounts “I flew swiftly . . . I flew into a castle and when my feet touched the ramparts, I could fly no more” (*TFN* 57). Through these dream visions Hariharan puts the reader into Devi's inner recesses of mind. Before marriage, Devi had more freedom and hence she flew swiftly. The castle resembles the Jacaranda Road house, Devi's marital home. But once she alights in this castle, she could fly no more. She loses both freedom and independence. In her dream she tries to survive through violence “scratch, bite, stab, twist” (*TFN* 58) which she fails to do in real life. Hariharan makes an adept use of this dream vision technique to delineate Devi's real intentions and finally she succeeds in realizing her dream by eloping.

Once Devi flees from the Jacaranda Road house, Mayamma becomes the sole resident of the entire house with infrequent visits of Mahesh. Thus in the later part of the novel, Hariharan delineates the life story of Mayamma who is enacting her past in retrospect. The long chapter infuses Mayamma's present and past. In alternate paragraphs Hariharan reveals Mayamma's past through her conscious reminiscence. The story line is partly narrated by the omniscient narrator who gives details of how Mayamma is living all alone in that big house, and in between the author explores whatever goes on in Mayamma's mind as she does her daily chores.

In the entire novel, the narration shifts but not in a linear manner. As the tale unfolds, the stories of

various characters are interwoven with the lives of the three women Mayamma, Sita and Devi, belonging to three different generations. By doing this the narrator discards what she has said at the beginning of the 'Prelude' "I have always liked the story that comes whole and well-rounded, complete with annotation" (*TFN* ix).

Manju Kapur has established herself as a chronicler of Indian middle-class manners and ethos. She is often compared with Jane Austen since she too explores the domestic sphere with minute details, a domain dominated by women. In an interview with Ira Pande, Kapur opines "I am exploring the spaces that women occupy in domestic relationships. It is a world I know and understand" (*Hindu*). In both *Difficult Daughters* and *A Married Woman*, Kapur makes use of realism as a strategy to present the lives of women in a middle-class family.

Difficult Daughters simultaneously portrays the independence acquired by the nation and the independence desired by Virmati, the protagonist of the novel. The major part of the novel is narrated by the omniscient narrator who seems to know everything but does not take part in the story. According to Genette, such a narrator is called "heterodiegetic" (255), someone who is not a character of the novel, yet knows everything. The novel begins with Ida's narration but she narrates sporadically and becomes the connecting link weaving the information "pieced together" with "material from memories that were muddled, partial and contradictory" (*DD* 258). Ida looks for ways to connect with her dead mother and in the process constructs her mother's life. The role Ida plays in narrating her mother's past is very small and in Genette's view such a narrator who is part of the novel is termed as "homodiegetic" (256). Ida begins with a cryptic statement: "The one thing I had wanted was not to be like my mother" (*DD* 1). Such strong assertion of disowning one's mother at once puts the novel in motion. Even the novel ends in a similar way where Ida remarks: "This book weaves a connection between my mother and me, each word a brick in a mansion I made with my head and my heart. Now live in it, Mama, and leave me be. Do not haunt me anymore" (*DD* 258-259).

In this way, the novel appears to form a complete circle and this circularity gives direction, continuity and speed that carry the story forward. At different points in the novel, Ida takes over the narration of the tale. However, her presence is felt briefly and this breaks the monotony of the storytelling. The novel begins with the funeral of Virmati and Ida's reminiscence of how "contrary to her wishes, she was being burnt with her organs intact" (*DD* 1). We also get a glimpse of the strained relationship of Virmati-Ida. After Virmati's death, Ida travels to Amritsar to discover her mother's past life which had turned her into "a silent, brisk and bad-tempered" (*DD* 2) mother. In the ninth chapter, Ida once again surfaces when she visits AS College with her uncle Kailashnath. She gives a vivid description of the college. In between, the omniscient narrator narrates Virmati's life, and the beginning of her illicit love and her revolt against her family. Thereafter, Ida continues with her narration in the seventeenth chapter where she first goes to meet Swarna Lata Sondhi, Virmati's roommate during her BT in Lahore. Later she gets visa to visit Lahore which has become a part of Pakistan after Partition. There she takes photographs of the Government College Lahore and records all the details of her mother's life. When she learns of Virmati's unwanted pregnancy and her abortion with the help of Swarna Lata, Ida connects with her mother's agony. Ida recalls how Prabhakar had forced her to terminate her pregnancy which led to their divorce as she was unable to forgive her husband. Her conversation with Parvati masi aka Paro briefly comes in the twenty-third chapter. Paro's calling her sister as a "simple" girl invokes disgust in Ida as she says "I hate the word 'simple'. Nobody has any business to live in the world and know nothing about its ways" (*DD* 207). In the twenty-fifth chapter, Ida tries to pick up the loose threads of her mother's marital life and finally at the end bids farewell to her mother's memory.

The epistolary style in the novel adds a new dimension. This technique was first introduced by Samuel Richardson in his novel *Pamela or Virtue Rewarded* (1740). This epistolary mode has come a long way and has been extensively used by novelists. However, instead of writing the whole novel in epistolary

form, Manju Kapur deftly makes use of it to take the story forward. The author introduces the epistolary style when the reader is made to witness Virmati's reaction after comparing the letters from her suitors Inderjit, her fiancé chosen by her family, and Harish, her next door neighbour. All the events and happenings that took place for six months from September, 1939 to February, 1940, are depicted through the letters exchanged between Virmati and Harish. This epistolary technique presents an intimate view of the characters' thoughts and feelings without the interference of the author. The presentation of events from several points of view lends the story dimension and verisimilitude.

Many critics agree that the epistolary technique is mostly concerned with the subjectivity of mind which has become a commonplace usage. Bakhtin is of the view that the letter leads the novel to “the depths of everyday life, its smallest details, to intimate relations between people and into the internal life of the individual person” and is characterised by “psychology and pathos” (396). Bakhtin's observation is very much applicable to *Difficult Daughters*. The reader gets to know details of Virmati's life and how she is locked up in the godown, while Indu is married off to Inderjit to save the family prestige. Virmati is not even allowed to attend the marriage ceremony. She is only let out of the godown on Mahatmaji's birthday to spin in the morning. On the other end, we get a glimpse of the Professor's life. He has moved out to another place with his family to avoid any chance meeting with Virmati's family. The reader gets information of Ganga's second pregnancy which reiterates the fact that Harish is very much involved in his conjugal life while he professes undying love for Virmati. Paro, Virmati's youngest sister, and Kanhiya, the Professor's student, acting as messenger for them, becomes evident from the letters. The chapter concludes with Virmati's letter, informing about her strong stand of going away to Lahore, leaving the Professor and his thoughts behind.

For Ian Watt, too, the letter is particularly useful in providing the immediate imitation of individual experience. Watt argues that “the epistolary method impels the writer towards producing something that may pass for the spontaneous transcription of the subjective reactions of the protagonists to the events as they occur” (192). Ruth Perry argues that the epistolary technique consists of the “outpourings of lavish consciousness heightened by suffering and by isolation” (114) and claims:

Unfolding a story in letters automatically emphasizes the psychological angle of vision as no other narrative form does. Because the letter-writer's imagination is involved in the translation of experience into language a fiction told through letters becomes a story about events in consciousness, whatever else it may be about. (119)

In *Difficult Daughters* Virmati starts writing letter to Harish to communicate her loneliness and get respite from her alienated life. After her unforgivable act, she is forced to live a life of solitary confinement in the godown. Virmati is left alone to suffer the pangs of her deviations. Her family members avoid any sort of communication with her. She burns with anger and humiliation at her family's indifference. But her humiliation reaches its peak when she hears about Ganga's pregnancy and her insistence to meet Virmati. In solitude Virmati learns to control herself. She comes to term with reality and decides to go to Lahore for higher studies. At other times, in that solitary godown her thoughts flow incoherently in her head and Virmati becomes more observant of her surroundings. She relates the godown with that of her grandfather's in Sultanpur, and perceives even the minute details of how “the light in the angan grows dimmer and more mellow” (*DD* 81) in the evening. Away from household activities she feels strange and her existence becomes similar to that of “one pea alone in a whole long pod” (*DD* 92), no use to anybody.

Finally, Manju Kapur takes resort to the dramatic style of adding an “Epilogue” at the end to sum up the entire story. But before that she dedicates a chapter for all the characters who had something to tell about the events that took place throughout the novel. The ending saw the emergence of multiple voices narrating incidents and situations of the country after Independence. Excerpts of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's speech on India's Independence are incorporated to lend authenticity. The Epilogue informed the readers about how Ganga left Amritsar with her children and mother-in-law for their village house in the

United Province and was never able to return to Harish. Virmati and Harish left Amritsar and started living in Delhi where Harish was offered principalship in one of the new colleges of Delhi University. Ida was born but as she grew up she never showed any intellectual brightness. Harish's other two children Giridhar and Chhotti came up to Delhi to complete their studies. Giridhar started his business and married one of his customers despite protest from both the families, while Chhotti joined the IAS to support her mother and grandmother and never married. Ida ends the story by snapping the already strained relationship with her mother by saying "Do not haunt me anymore" (DD 259).

An analysis of the narrative techniques used by these writers verifies the fact that women's writing in India has not only evolved in thematic concerns but women writers have extensively used innovative narrative techniques. In terms of portraying their protagonists, the authors have stopped voicing the emotions and desires on their behalf; instead they let their women characters speak for themselves. They delineate them as strong-willed characters who have the determination and courage to face life's hardships; in spite of all oddities, they do not succumb to any self-negating acts. This evolution of women protagonists could become plausible because the authors deliberately juxtapose the characters to show how these new women differ from the traditional ones. The authors portray their protagonists in a realistic frame and thus lend authenticity to the novels. They also revision myths from the feminist perspective and let the women construct their own meanings out of them as in *The Thousand Faces of Night*. Moreover, they do not stick to any one particular kind of narrative technique. They use multiple techniques to tell the story. Manju Kapur does not solely rely on the epistolary mode in entirety but uses them at moments when the readers should have an intimate glimpse of the inner life of protagonists. Githa Hariharan, too, makes use of multiple perspectives by letting each of the three women tell their stories. These women writers make use of what Forster expounds as "Expansion. That is the idea the novelist must cling to. Not completion. Not rounding off but opening out" (137). Hence, instead of employing a particular technique to narrate their stories, women writers have made use of multiple techniques to tell a single story. These novelists not only differ from their predecessors but also improvise on the art of storytelling. The intermingling of multiple perspectives has helped to create new sensibilities and their slick craftsmanship has created new dimensions and possibilities for the novels written by Indian women novelists.

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NOTES FROM THE UNDERGROUND: THE INSIGHTS OF THE INSANE

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Abstract:

What actually provoked or inspired Dostoevsky to write 'Notes From The Underground' was it a reaction to the concept of utopian socialism and rational egoism, did writer want to show the fallacy of enlightenment ideas, scientific progress and the idea of determinism, was it a refutation to the advocacy of rationality and human reason as put forth by writers like Chernyshvesky in books like 'What Is To Be Done' or did the writer desire to convey something beyond the prevailing zeitgeist and beyond the reasons which were conspicuous.

There is no doubt about the fact that several factors were at play that led to its creation and this wonderful novella got framed into a certain chronotopy. But besides being a product of its times, the book holds certain universality to it, that impels a reader to delve deep into the pages, and contemplate the profound insights that the writer provides us in his endless ramblings through the abysmal depths of human psyche. In this paper my focus would be to lay bare that aspect of the book, wherein Dostoevsky has endeavoured to show the pathetic situation of an intelligent and conscious human being who on one hand is torn apart by the split in his own interiority; split which is mainly induced by the society and of which he is very much conscious, and on the other hand suffers from the attacks of 'the sublime and beautiful', which surely forms the very essence of his being, but fails to hold to it and paradoxically steeps more deep into the mire of his own inner oscillations. And how the protagonist caught in the whirlpool of his personality, utterly fails to transcend his pseudo-self and gain a permanent access to his real-self.

Keywords: *Personality, inner conflict, neurosis, transcendence, individuality, existentiality.*

Dostoevsky is considered as one of the significant contributors to the philosophy of existentialism and science of human psychology. He dexterously interweaves these elements into the fabric of his writing and magnificently reveals the complex workings of human thoughts and emotions. In the novella, 'Notes from the Underground', the writer conveys to its readers that human rationality is not an infallible tool to create a perfect society and free humanity from suffering. Man is not just a physical or psychological being, he is more than that and irrational is as much an essential element of him as the rational. Man by his very nature is capricious and rebellious; he is a hotchpotch of multifarious strains. In the first part of the book, the anonymous narrator engages us with his embittered monologues, which is actually a long diatribe, regarding human suffering, logic, rationality and free will and in the second part(apropos of wet the snow) relates to us some of his bizarre life experiences. Pertinently, the author presents this novella in 'fragments' which is an indication of the fragmented subjectivity of the protagonist, who communicates with his readers in a correspondingly illogical and incoherent style. The underground man is one of the unique characters ever created, and as pointed out by Richard Pevear, 'one of the most remarkable characters in literature, one who has been placed among the bearers of modern consciousness alongside Don Quixote, Hamlet and Faust'(Pevear,2004, p. ix)

In this novella, the writer basically presents before us, the predicament of an intelligent and conscious man, who shows remarkable introspection and exposes that existential arena where multiple selves jostle together and render him inert and sickened. He is miserably caught in the complexities and

intricacies of his own personality. In the beginning he remarks:

“...these opposite elements. I knew that they had been swarming in me all my life and craving some outlet from me... They tormented me till I was ashamed: they drove me to convulsions and- sickened me.”

The underground man, who speaks to us from the 'underground' of his mind, is acutely conscious and quite aware to analyze every thought and emotion that arises in his being. This consciousness of the chaos and confusion that he witnesses in his own mind renders him inert and makes him to loath his own self.

The underground man has reached to a stage where he is tormented by the ravages of his own personality because as he himself admits- it is his awareness of the things that happen in his mind that causes his suffering. But despite being surrounded by such a chaos and confusion, he once in a while gets the opportunity to encounter 'The Sublime And Beautiful' which he considers as a 'means of escape and refuge'. During those moments, he goes into raptures and overwhelmingly cries out:-

And what loving- kindness, oh Lord, what loving- kindness I felt at times in those dreams of mine! In those flights' into the sublime and beautiful'

Such encounters which would have engendered a certain harmony in his being and have helped him to move from the chaos of his personality to the cosmos of his individuality, paradoxically steep him more deep into the mire of his own wavering. This struggle of the underground man to escape his personality and embrace the individuality so as to define the meaning of his life is implicit. But in this struggle, the underground man, explicitly provides us some profound insights which are crucial to the human existence and thus worth understanding.

The underground man, in Nietzschean terminology, is nothing but 'human, all-too-human.' His story is the story of all those human beings who are intelligent, hyperconscious and sensitive to both what is happening inside and outside of them. They consider their consciousness as a disease because it renders them passive and sick. They eventually realize that they are good for nothing and can never become anything; not even an insect. The underground man states:-

... ..I did not know how to become anything; neither spiteful nor kind, neither a rascal nor an honest man, neither a hero nor an insect.

The man of action, declares the underground man, is 'pre-eminently a limited creature' because he displays a particular character but a man of consciousness is and must be a person without any character. 'Character', which is an expression of personality traits, developed over a period of time limits a man existentially. The man of consciousness cannot be limited within a certain character frame.

The underground man has become schizophrenic. He suffers from identity crisis, is alienated from society and is quite unsure about his own motives, desires and impulses, even he is uncertain, about what ails him. And more importantly, it shows us that for an intelligent human being it is going to be a life long struggle entangling him into ever an unresolved conflict. Pevear and Volkhansky in their introduction to the 'Notes from the Underground' make an essential remark:-

“I am a sick man... ..I am a wicked man”. In the space of that pause Dostoevsky introduces the unifying idea of his tale: the instability, the perpetual “dialectic” of isolated consciousness.

Pevear hints at what Bakhtin calls as the, 'interior dialogisation'. The underground man displays an intense interior polemic while confessing to his reader about his troubled consciousness.

There are moments when the underground man feels a certain sublimation and refinement of his self and he begins to appreciate 'the sublime and beautiful' but unfortunately he fails to hold to it and ultimately stops to struggle against his own depravity. He is pulled back to the underground of his unconscious and rendered hopeless. He knew well that he has been degraded and hit rock bottom, there is no escape from this state of being and there is no possibility of any change. This realisation of his position fills him with joy and so he remarks:-

---the enjoyment, of course of despair; but in despair there are the most intense enjoyments, especially when one is very acutely conscious of hopelessness of one's position.

This realisation of the underground man is significant not because man is being degraded to lowliest position or his condition is deplorable but because he has become hopeless to come out of it, he fails to find any escape route and more importantly, he considers it as his normal condition and is complacent with it. Same is the situation of a modern man who is surprisingly complacent with his wretched condition, more so his situation is worse than the underground man as the later, to some degree, is conscious of his wretchedness.

The underground man makes a very keen observation when he compares himself- i.e. a man of acute consciousness with the man of action which he considers as normal, but stupid and an antithesis to himself. He says that man of acute-consciousness is created as a retort to this normal man who comes purely out of nature. A normal man still lives instinctually and not consciously. According to him, a normal man takes secondary causes as primary and makes it a basis for his action, however, behind every primary cause there are other innumerable motivations, and thus no cause is primary. So if there are no primary causes, the underground man then presumably, acts out of spite, but, since underground man lies about being spiteful, and is unable to deceive, by acting like a normal man, he fails to do anything. The underground man cries out:-

Oh, gentlemen, do you know, perhaps I consider myself an intelligent man, only because all my life I have been able neither to begin nor to finish anything. Granted I am a babbler, a harmless vexatious babbler, like all of us. But what is to be done if the direct and sole vocation of every intelligent man is babble that is the intentional pouring of the water through a sieve.

The underground man strikes a comparison to bring home the point that how normal men act mechanically. His (normal man's) consciousness is enough to fulfil his everyday needs but for a man of acute consciousness the matter is not so simple. He not only sees but sees through while as a normal man is unable to understand the intricacies with which the human mind works.

In the second part of the book we see how the underground man points out that people at his office were ugly and contemptible but quite unconscious of the fact that they were loathsome and stupid. He wishes and eventually believes himself to be a coward and a slave and declares that a decent man in all ages must be both coward and slave and it is only donkeys and mules (the normal men) that are valiant. In this contrast, the author rips open the psyche of a hyperconscious man who is reduced to a mouse in presence of a normal man. Unlike this normal man he does not find any justice in revenge. The normal man laughs at his inaction and humiliates him. So he crawls back to his underground, broods over his idea of revenge, fleeces the idea in hundred and one ways and thus causes suffering for himself. The hyperconscious man in his brooding will churn out endless doubts, resentments and imaginings about his inaction thus giving birth to more and more suffering. In his revenge to the officer he saw in the tavern, the underground man wished to go for a duel, but he was not even noticed by the officer so he began to harbour the resentment and let it to build and build thus creating much frustration for himself.

The underground man's transactions with the outer world; be it his behaviour with the office colleagues, or the dealings with his friends or his encounters with the prostitute Liza or his behaviour towards the servant Apollon, lets us know and understand him more deeply. He recalls his days of youth and rambles in tracing his identity, sometimes as a romantic or the cynical and sometimes wants to befriend people. He couldn't socialise normally. He deals with his friends in a peculiar fashion and shows tremendous wavering in thought and action. He simultaneously hates them and demands respect from them. His encounters with Liza are particularly significant. He first delivers sermons to her, and in a

George Sand fashion wants to redeem her by marrying her, but when she visits him once, he humiliates her and tells her that he was just exercising his power and will. Despite his realisation as what he has done with Liza, he doesn't allow himself to seek her forgiveness. He wished to let the feeling of insult linger in her heart and cause a great suffering, which he believes will elevate and purify her. He later on reflects:-

I am now asking an idle question of my own: which is better- chief happiness or lofty suffering? Well, which is better?

One of the significant aspects about the Notes is that it digs deep into the human thoughts and impulses which actually drive human actions to certain ends. It highlights the basic working of rationality and free will in human existence. It deeply discusses the fact that the essential composition of human mind includes both rational as well as irrational and in fact irrational constitutes the very foundation and rational is just a gimcrack built over it. At a place, he remarks:-

I agree that two times two makes four is an excellent thing; but if we are dispensing praise, the two times two makes five is sometimes a most charming little thing as well.

It is argued that man always acts in his own best interest, but the underground man rejects such a line of thought and points out that contrarily man will act against his advantage just to prove that he is a creature, born with free will and has the ability to make his choices independently.

The underground man lashes out at those who propose that rationality and human reason can ameliorate the human life by creating 'civilisations' and 'crystal palaces' (an ideal society created in accordance to the 'laws of nature' and as conceived in the communist social organisation) and that every human action can be calculated with mathematical precision and man can live a good life by following the laws of nature. But they forget that man will be crippled by leaving no opportunity for adventure and it will result in ennui. And it is this boredom which made Cleopatra to insert gold pins into her slave girls' breasts, and made people more bloodthirsty and violent. Thus remarks the underground man:-

“Have you noticed that it is the most civilised gentlemen who have been the subtlest slaughterers, to whom the Attilas and Stenka Razins could not hold a candle.... 'In any case civilization has made mankind if not more blood-thirsty, at least more vilely, more loathsomely blood-thirsty....”

There is no doubt, that man is a creative being and wishes to build things but he has the same potential to destroy and never wants to finish things. Life is to be found in the process, in struggling and not in attaining, but all this eventually leads to absurdity. Man is afraid in any sort of endgame and also of the mathematical certainty of $2+2=4$.

The underground man throws much light on dichotomy of mind and heart in human life. He hints upon the fact that human mind, though a good tool has given birth to schizophrenia and history bears testimony to the madness human beings have created through the reason. But the heart is the very source of life which makes us individuals in the true sense of the word. During his student life, Dostoevsky once wrote to his brother:

“Nature, the soul, God, Love. ...is known by the heart and not the mind”

The underground man vehemently argues that reason can never eradicate the human suffering. All the utopian ideals, rationality and calculations and predictions based on science and reason fall flat when it encounters a complex and intricate creature called the man. Moreover, man shall never try to get rid of the suffering because 'it is the sole origin of man's consciousness. And consciousness is a blessing because it makes a man aware about who he is? And why he is?'

The book paints a picture not of a man of any times, but of all times. It tells us something about our own nature. It provokes a man of acute consciousness to contemplate certain crucial questions which are quintessentially existential. It deals with a certain strangeness, a certain chaos, a certain disorder to which, perhaps, the man has been reduced to. It shows the plurality of man's self, the split in which he has been miserably caught. The underground man is well aware of this mess which he has become, but he doesn't

know how to come out of it. He perpetually remains the victim of his own inner disharmony.

Dostoevsky's insights into the human subjectivity are incredible. He knows well the predicament of the man, and has a deep understanding of the desires, fears and anxieties that pop up in the human bosom ad nauseam. He declares to his opponents:-

Excuse me, gentleman, but I am not justifying myself with this allishness. As for as I myself am concerned, I have merely carried to an extreme in my life what you have not dared to carry even half way....

So in the 'Notes', Dostoevsky makes his readers to understand the fragmentation or dividedness of the human subjectivity and the limitations of one's noetic endeavours. It highlights the disharmony with which a sensitive and intelligent man lives. But he doesn't provide us with any solution to create the required harmony. The underground man seems to be stuck at a point where existential absurdity has rendered him crazy and we find him at the threshold of mysticism. His revelations smell of that individual who is in a state of divine discontent. Like Eliot he is acutely conscious of the hollowness of his inner world but is unable to find out the source of his 'shantiah'. He simply shows us the mirror and faintly conveys to us that humans have the potentiality to achieve this harmony if they can access the sublime and beautiful. The underground man's trysts with the sublime and beautiful were ephemeral but they do provide him intense feelings of happiness faith, hope, and love. The author laments and tells his reader that he is stillborn and prefers 'literature' to 'life'. Towards the end of his Notes, the underground man leaves us to meditate over the following:-

...for we are all divorced from life, we are all cripples, every one of us, more or less. We are so divorced from it that we feel at once a sort of loathing for real life and so cannot bear to be reminded of it....Look into it more carefully! Why, we don't even know what living means now, what it is, and what it is called?

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DOROTHY WEST'S VIEWS ON SOCIAL STRATIFICATION OF AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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Abstract:

The research of journals, works of Dorothy West and other authors, letters, narratives, and inventories reveal some interesting facts about social stratification of African Americans in the United States of America. Presence of Africans in the United States for a long period, almost for more than three centuries caused them to have different odd experiences, ups and downs in their real life. They are stratified according to their race, class and economic status and Dorothy West critically expressed her views on their stay in the United States. She is being a prolific writer remembered for her sharp observations of economic, social, class and racial issues within and outside of African American community. She was active in the Harlem renaissance movement as a teenager and was the last surviving member of the period and was a perfect partner in writing with Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis wife of former president of United States of America John F. Kennedy. Dorothy West highlighted inter racial marriages, biological relationships among the black and the white, social and economic growth of African Americans. There is a talk about civil rights movement, abolitionists, and institution of the church and how the church helped the black to have close association with the white.

Key words: *social stratification, class, economic, abolitionists, biological relationship, the church.*

African Americans settled down in the United States of America are stratified according to their economic and social status. However, social stratification is not an isolated phenomenon; rather it is a result of series of events, incidents, protests and struggle. Research shows forth that stratification of African Americans rests on key pillars Race, class and gender. According to Dorothy West race, gender and class are prominent categories of experience that affect all aspects of human life and even are the basis for many social problems. In her second novel *The Wedding*, one of the main characters born white and one who has biological relationship with the black people named Gram prays to God like this:

My back is bent with the burden of living colored. Lift it from me in my last days. Make my great-granddaughter your instrument. She's marrying a man true white. Put it in her listening mind to live like white. Put it in her loving heart to carry me home to die. With all her life before her, she won't refuse her poor old Gram with all her life behind her. (p 30)

Gram's daughter Josephine married a black man named Hannibal, son of a woman who was formerly enslaved at Xanadu, the family's plantation. Gram, the born aristocrat, lived surrounded by descendants of slaves. She has no choice but has to die among them, no grave to claim her but the one they put her in. Though Josephine was born in rich family, incessant diseases in the family and failure in production due to lack of manpower pushed them to utter poverty. In these unavoidable circumstances Josephine decided to marry former slave of her family to escape from the terrible genteel poverty. There were no one to marry her in her own race because of poverty and her continued sickness. She thought the men with money were white trash that had robbed the aristocrats of their sovereignty, and would rather marry a colored man who knew he was dirt beneath her feet (p 32). There is racial discrimination in the United States of America, but

one cannot separate the black from the white in building relationships among them due to the stay of the black for three centuries and interracial marriages and biological bond among them. Dorothy West projected these issues in her works. The black have had mixed experienced with the white in their long stay in the America and even there formed undivided social and biological bonds among them. However, the discrimination the black facing is not a deep rooted one, but the environment of propagating issues of color to the children of the white by their fathers causing to exist in the American society.

African Americans are striving to achieve equal social status with the white, but it seems, it is still a dream. However, there is a significant change in their social status that can be best illustrated with a brief overview of historical changes. Regarding their present status Dorothy West in her novel *The Wedding* states like this:

They formed a fortress, a bulwark of colored society. Their occupants could boast that they, or even better their ancestors, had owned a home away from home since the days when a summer hegira was taken few colored people above the rank of servant. Though newer comers owned cottages in other sections of the seaside town, some very splendid house in neighborhoods customarily called white, the Ovalites still outranked them. They had been the vanguard. They were now the old guard. It would sound like sour grapes, "so what?" (P2)

There is a steady social and economic progress in the lives of African Americans. Most of the African Americans almost reached to equal status of the white in all aspects. They used education as a weapon to come out of the poverty and poor social living. Now, they have money, enough not only to spend but to save. They are college-bred, of good background and they are living graciously. Many of the blacks are doctors, great professors, politicians, businessmen and their titles made introductions so easy and self-explanatory. Dorothy West's novel *The Wedding* portrays educational achievements of African Americans. In the novel the character named Hannibal son-in-law of Gram and husband of Josephine became the first Negro president of his college, and was the equal of his predecessors, because of his clock-round devotion to duty and his son-in-law Clark was a famous doctor. Clark Coles' father, daughter and his son-in-law were doctors and his mother was a great teacher and a very well-known socialist and one who supported and helped poor dying Negros.

Prolonged slavery even after the United States freedom discouraged African Americans and they could not tolerate this unethical attitude of the white. Indeed slavery was an abominable practice which should have been abolished immediately after the formation of the United States of American constitution as it clashed with the ideals of freedom and liberty for all. Research shows forth that, though the white discouraged the African Americans, they could not stop their all-round progress in all fields and even in the field of science and technology and in sports.

Study shows that The Harlem Renaissance, which is also known as New Negro Movement focused on improved social and cultural standards of African Americans. This movement also helped to develop relation between black and white writers and to project their coinciding ideas and expressions. The black through intellect and production of art challenged the pervading racism and stereotype to promote progressive or socialist politics and lead to racial and social integration. The research revealed that the white appreciated the talent of the black and started to re-examine their false notion that black people are not improved one intellectually and mentally in various fields. Prominent white people encouraged the black to write in depth and to focus their views on various issues. In his literary article Robert C. Hart highlighted relation between the white and the black artists. He focused on the establishment of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and views of its founder Joel E. Spingarn who was a white man. Spingarn being a board member and author of *A History of Literary Criticism in the Renaissance* and *The New Criticism* has very close association with the black people. He encouraged W.E.B Du Bois author of *The Souls of Black Folk* and *The Quest for the Silver Fleece* to write

greatly and has given chance to advance in the literary field. Du Bois quickly became most powerful spokesman and editor of the NAACP Organization journal *Crisis*. Dorothy West met the great literary persons at Harlem at an early age and departed as a last leaf of Harlem Renaissance. She was aware of all the incidents happened from the beginning of the Harlem Renaissance and to the end of the Harlem Renaissance. She focused on these developments and social stratification of African Americans in her works. The magazine established by her "The New Challenge" was the first publication to bring together black art and politics and other magazines would follow its example. Former American President John Kennedy's wife Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis met Dorothy West to encourage her to finish the novel *The Wedding* which focused on improved social living conditions of African Americans. Dorothy helped influence the direction and form of African American writing during the Harlem Renaissance. She was considered a little sister by Zora Neale Hurston and other writers and poets such as Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, and Wallace Thurman. She wrote about unsatisfied people who always feel trapped by their environment, or by racism, or because they are black female. Dorothy was a keen and sharp observer of things happening around her and she focused on real social and economic condition of African Americans and how they have been denied equal status with the dominating white race.

Dorothy West was sympathetic to the aims of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and supported the movement. We could see issues relating to civil rights movement in her works. Critical study shows that civil rights movement helped African Americans to attain self-respect and to grow socially and economically. Research on the works of Dorothy West reveals that the ideals and aims of her coincide with the views of Martin Luther King Jr. who led the Civil Rights Movement using tactics of nonviolence and civil disobedience based on Christian beliefs. In the most of her works she projected Christian beliefs and the faith the black have on the eternal God and how he could redeem them from the bondage of racial discrimination which continues in the American society as an unsolved issue and it seems very difficult to come out this problem. The attitude of some white people about the black is that they entered into the United States as slaves and they ought to remain as slaves and they have to accept this very fact. However, there are some white people who wish that the black people should work hard and grow economically and socially. Dorothy West portrayed these limited white people in her works as their well-wishers and need not to blame that the entire white race has aversion towards them. She projected the point of view of the white in her novel *The Wedding*. In this novel one of the main characters named Shelby Coles at the age of six went out to see if the berries were ripen or not within a stone's throw of her house and got lost following a lovely puppy into deep woods. Through this incident she focused on concept of color line.

"but you live near here, don't you?" the lady asked Shelby, with another stare that confirmed her first impression that Shelby was of the breed that belonged, and was probably a visiting cousin. Shelby answered that she did not live near, not wanting to confess that she had strayed farther than a stone's throw, and not knowing that the distance between two worlds and two concepts of color. (p 61)

Shelby was born light skinned and she almost looks like a white girl. Parents already registered a complaint to find the missed color girl. Many people saw her, but could not recognize her as a color girl. In the point of view of white society that the color plays prominent role and they never accept the black as their equals though the color line between them is insignificant. It's not the matter of rich or poor, rather American society has been divided on the color line and African Americans have been fighting for decades to get redemption from the clutches of color discrimination. The Negro Civil Rights Movement is the major one and which is aimed to end racial segregation and discrimination against African Americans and to secure legal recognition and federal protection of the citizenship rights enumerated in the constitution and federal law. African Americans succeeded in achieving equal rights with the white after the Civil Rights Movement to the maximum extent, but still it exists to some extent. Dorothy West tried to convince the white through her writings that the color line between them and the black is insignificant and that should be

eradicated.

Dorothy West focused on the efforts of the black for generations to attain comfortable economic status in the United States of America. Lionel C. Bascom in his edited work on Dorothy West *The Last Leaf of Harlem*, collected short stories and in the short story named "The Typewriter" the main character J. Lucius Jones, a genitor by profession have had great dreams to become a great businessman in his life. His social and economic condition could not cope with him to attain desired position. He was frustrated and not satisfied with his low social living. He hoped that there might be born a son to fulfill his dreams, but a girl child was born named Millie. As life was flowing monotonously, the rented typewriter by his daughter to practice typing to get a job became a thing of joy for poor janitor as he dictated business letters to his daughter imagining himself a great business magnet. When he was living the life of fantasies dictating business letters to his daughter and as the fantasy reached to the pinnacle, unexpectedly the typewriter had been returned without his knowledge and he could not dictate the final letter and eventually died with broken heart. Dorothy West's critical view is that the life Negroes lived in the past was unfulfilled and there was frustration and uncontrolled anger in them being aliens and under slavery for decades without newness in life and even lack of encouragement to show forth their inner potential to the world. The stress of that time along with the fact of being Negro sheds a new light upon the present day negroes to show forth their inner talent being freed from slavery and having multiple opportunities before them. West's point of view is that one could accomplish desired dreams when we work hard and set goals to become something great in the real life. One of the prominent African American writers Zora Neale Hurston states that it is necessary to show Negro talent to the world to come out of all kinds of prejudice. In her book *Dust Tracks on a Road* she states like this:

I do not share the gloomy thought that Negroes in America are doomed to be stomped out neither bodacious, nor even shocked to the bottom of things. Of course some of them will be tromped out, and some will always be at the bottom, keeping company with other bottom folks .It would be against all nature for all the Negroes to be either at the bottom, top, or in between. It has never happened with anybody else, so why with us? No, we will go where the internal drive carries us like everybody else. It is up to the individual. If you haven't got it, you cannot show it. If you have got it, you cannot hide it. That is one of the strongest laws God ever made. (p 192)

Hurston believes that eternal God created all the human beings equal. It is up to the individual to prove his or her talent to the world and come out of state of low social living. If anyone won't strive he or she will be in the same social state forever. Careful study of history shows that relentless efforts of human beings and aspiration to achieve something that made them great in the real life. One has to aspire for upliftment of his or her social status. After getting redemption from the slavery some Negroes started the business and became great entrepreneurs. Sharon L Jones in her work *Reading the Harlem Renaissance: Race, Class, and Gender in the Fiction of Jessie Fauset, Zora Neale Hurston, and Dorothy West* projects plight of many black families from South to North early to mid-twentieth century, including Dorothy West's father to become successful entrepreneurs and in the real life they became great businessmen and West's father was a successful entrepreneur and fruit wholesaler dubbed as the black banana king of Boston (p 139). Dorothy West in her novel *The Living Is Easy* portrays a character named Bart Judson who aspires to become a good businessman and his wife Cleo Judson desires to attain at least middle class status in the real life and achieved it. Dorothy West's short story "The Richer, The Poorer" which is extracted from her work *The Richer, The Poorer: Stories, Sketches, and Reminiscences* focuses on how a woman named Lottie could work hard and earned money and attained a middle class status. She was conscious of the money troubles her family suffered and that made her determined to have enough money to be able to afford whatever she wanted. She worked hard up to the age of sixty and retired from the work and enjoyed rest of her life giving sustenance and moral support to her sister named Bess who was married and lost husband

and was in need of financial support.

Research reveals that American abolitionists played a major role for immediate emancipation of slaves and they wished that African Americans should grow financially and they had given moral support for their advancement and better living. William Lloyd Garrison agitated tirelessly for total and immediate emancipation of all the Negro slaves. Henry Highland Garnet insisted that the slaves should take up arms for their redemption from the clutches of white slave masters (Africans in America: America's Journey through Slavery, P 330,331). Douglas an African American socialist and writer began to tell his story at abolitionists meetings. His expressed views are like this:

Through his writings and oratory, Frederick Douglas became one of the nation's most persistent agitators against "the grand aggregation of human horrors". He openly declared war on the corrupt institution that still held away over most of his brethren. And he chronicled his experiences as a slave, joining other ex-captives whose narratives offered public testimony that damned the southern propagandathat slaves were content in bondage and well-treated. (Africans in America, p 371).

He also played a key role in focusing the cause of African Americans to the human society and resisted the cunning attitude of southern white slave masters. One could find only slavery related topics in all his writings.

Research reveals that the church gives moral support to the African Americans. African Americans in America have always supported their religious institutions even though they would not support their schools or business enterprises. They donate a portion of their income to the church, and the church is still a major social center in all Negro communities. Though they are basically brought from African continent, they never give that much priority to the worship objects which they used to worship in their ancient days. All the prominent authors of Negro background, particularly Dorothy West also mention the church and church related activities and beliefs in their works. We could perceive that the church played a major role for their redemption from the slavery. The white encouraged them to have progress in all fields and to acquire secure financial status and respected by them, because of their faith in the lord Jesus Christ. Regarding their Christian faith William H. Banks, Jr. in his edited book *Beloved Harlem* states like this:

Harlem is not an exception to this rule, and its finest buildings are the churches. Their attendance is large, their prosperity amazing. Baptist, Methodist, Episcopal, Catholic, Presbyterian, Seventh Day Adventist, Spiritualist, Holly Roller, and Abyssinian Jew every sect and every creed with all their innumerable subdivisions can be found in Harlem (p 104).

The church helped to construct biological relationship between the black and the white and there are inter racial marriages among them. Martin Luther King Jr. who participated in the civil rights movement was a great preacher and some white folk also had given him moral support to continue the movement for the African American rights. On the whole, in the process of time African Americans achieved significant milestones to acquire equal social status with the white.

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**AN APPROACH AND PRACTICE TO WRITING ENGLISH NOVELS ON
LESBIANISM: A STUDY OF POST-MODERN INDIAN WOMEN
NOVELISTS FROM LATE TWENTIETH TO PRESENT CENTURY**

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Abstract:

Now lesbianism is not an unfamiliar term as it was decades ago. Today many literatures are being written along with films to highlight the issue and it has given rise to two classes- one who are in against of it and another, very few who have taken it positively showing liberal attitude. This present paper aims at presentations of this debated issue exploring many hidden realities about lesbianism through select works of Post-Modern Indian Women English Novelists - Shobha De, Manju Kapur, Rita Garg, Anita Nair and Abha Daweswar who have tried to reach the feminine sensibility to understand the reasons working behind this apparent peculiar choice depreciated and derogated in the eye of society.

Keywords: *Lesbianism, Sexuality, Love, Postmodern, Feminine.*

Currently many postmodern Indian women writers are taking interest in depicting lesbian relations in their fictions. Many of them have already produced remarkable lesbian literature over the years, keeping alive the issue of inequality in love through their compelling stories. However, it does not mean that lesbianism is a modern birth in Indian literature as many think so blaming it as a western import. Lesbianism has been an integral part of society ever since it came into being. The main reason behind non-availability or rarity of explicit references about lesbianism in ancient Indian texts and literatures was contemporary social taboo which restricted women to come out into the open. During ancient times, lesbianism was considered an evil practice and a crime that was punished with fine or social ignominy. Books like *Arthashastra*, *Manusmriti* prove that the practice of lesbianism is very old in disrepute and ignoble form. With the advancement of civilization and awakening amongst women, the scenario started to change. In Pre-colonial India, Ismat Chughtai's *Lihaaf* (1941) set the trend. Had it not been written long back, it would have set the trend for writing and bringing into the open more lesbian literature but it did not happen due to prevailing social pressures at that time. After independence Kamala Das' autobiography *My Story* (1976) perhaps was a bold attempt at discussing lesbianism at a time when it was furtively hidden. Literature had been rather conservative in exploring openly lesbianism till 1980s and 1990s till Suniti Namjoshi's *Goja: An Autobiographical Myth* was published in 2000. Since 2000, there has been an extraordinary rise in the number of works produced in this area. The emergence of a new generation of Indian women novelists in the present century who tend to interrogate the tradition and images of women in terms of femininity and female identities and patriarchal value, led to a radical change in attitude towards sex, social roles and marital relationships. This concept makes many Indian woman novelists to explore female subjectivity. Among these post-modern Indian women novelists, Shobha De, Manju Kapur, Anita Nair, Rita Garg and Abha Daweswar are the most glaring personalities.

In most of her novels, Shobha De turns down heterosexuality to welcome lesbianism. She shows her preference of woman to woman relation or lesbianism over man to woman relationship, which she has portrayed in her novels. Factors working behind this woman to woman relationship are a woman feels

needs of another woman better than a man, wants to revolt against prevailing social norms and patriarchy which subordinate her to man and tries to secure a distinctive identity and place without becoming a tool at man's hand. In her novels *Starry Night*, *Strange Obsession* and *Snapshots*, Shobha De raises her voice of denial, deconstructs man-made image of woman and thus creates an alternative female identity which crosses all the social limitations imposed on them, performing dual role of 'man' and 'free woman'.

In *Starry Nights*, Aasha Rani is free from traditional gender roles and sexual constraints. She is a free thinker and lives on her own. As regards sex and gender role she steps out all the boundaries of feminine conduct defined by masculine Indian culture sacrificing heterosexuality on the altar of lesbianism which gives her real sexual pleasure of which heterosexuality, according to her, is devoid of. She loves Akshay Kumar but he treats her badly after his marriage. Her tormented soul gets recovery only after she decides freely to make relationship with women, be it Thai girls or the *Showbiz* reporter Linda. Aasha undergoes never to be forgotten thrill of the female flesh from two Thai masseurs from Bangkok when she goes to Dubai to recover from the trauma of Akshay-affair. There Badshah, the Gold King offers her lavish hospitality. In his *harem* she gathers a unique experience of *Sandwich Massage*. She finds the two girl's ministrations most pleasurable over her body: *"It was an experience, so sensuous, so arousing, so complete, that it was weeks before she could forget the feel of two, smooth, soft, oiled, practically breastless bodies on either side of her, touching, licking, stroking every naked inch, making her skin tingle and come alive in a way she couldn't have imagined possible"*. (De, Shobha: 2012:112) Though Aasha Rani has several sexual relationships in the novel, her experience with two Thai masseurs during Sandwich Massage at Badshah's *harlem* in Dubai is *"the greatest orgasms of her life"*. (Ibid, 112-113)

Aasha Rani seeks another lesbian relationship with Linda whom she meets after her arrival from New Zealand. *"Aasha Rani was thrilled that she had Linda in her life. It came to a point where she wouldn't make a move without her"*. (Ibid, 133) Earlier she has built relationship with many men but every time she has felt there some sort of wanting. The memory of *Sandwich Massage* combining of passion, intimacy and sweetness received from two Thai girls never fades from her consciousness. Whenever she makes sexual relationship with men she feels something missing in those relationships. Sexual relationship with men is phallic-centered as it only revolves around copulation which subordinates other things necessarily needed in love. On the other hand, Lesbian relationship driven by mutuality of love instead of duality of love is unrestrictive and satisfying. Linda provides her fleshy warmth, security, love and of course sexual pleasure which she has failed throughout to get from any of her contacts with man. This experience proves for her the fulfillment of a long felt need. *"In the turbulent life of the heroine, the lesbian experience was something different and something fulfilling, an emotional Oasis."* (Pandey, Prabhat Kumar:2011:207) Linda reminds her same level of sensory pleasure as she received from Thai girls: *"It was a pleasant feeling, Aasha Rani thought. No rough bristles scraping her face, just smooth cheeks and soft lips over her own. A memory flashed in her head of the Thai masseuses."* (De, Shobha: 2012:135) Linda challenges heterosexuality before the same-sex love: *"Stay loose, stay with me, you will forget men, you will forget everything you'e known before."* (Ibid, 136) She shows confident that a woman can play well the substitute role of a man in same-sex love. *"But let me ride first. Let me show you that I can take you like a man too."* (Ibid, 137)

Look how Aasha Rani is entertained by Linda with same multi-sensory experience as she received from Thai Masseurs during her stay at Dubai: *"Her fingers began massaging Aasha Rani's neck as once again she bent over her to kiss her...Her hands moved from Aasha Rani's neck to her breasts. She kept kissing her gently, probing her mouth with an eager tongue. Reaching under Aasha Rani's shirt she unhooked her bra...Her head moved down till her mouth found Aasha Rani's breasts. There was no resistance left any more. Aasha Rani's entire body was floating- her mind was adrift. She let her arms drop to her sides as Linda's warm thigh wedged itself between hers and her hand moved between Aasha Rani's legs. Aasha Rani groaned with pleasure. Linda refused to stop. She'd become more aggressive now and her*

hands pummeled Aasha Rani's body, exploring every inch of it. Unexpectedly she grabbed the bottle of brandy and poured some between Aasha Rani's open legs...The sensation was unbelievably arousing. Aasha Rani wanted to growl and scream with excitement, but she remembers Lucy lying next door, and suppressed the urge." (Ibid, 136-37) Linda's fleshy warmth gives her emotional security, love and pleasure: "Yes, she thought, this is what it should be, tender, beautiful and erotic. In a way it could never be with a man." (Ibid, 137) Here Linda's free and frank confession on superiority of feminine traits, "tender, beautiful and erotic", to masculine traits that combine selfishness, lack of self-control and violence is the main ideal of Cultural Feminism which mainly focuses on the supremacy of women-centered culture than masculine culture reclaiming and redefining female identity.

In *Strange Obsession*, 'Electra Complex' causes Minx's transformation into a lesbian. The novel is Minx's psychological drama of pain and suffering. Her attraction towards her father at her tender age of thirteen, her delusion that it is not she who wants physical relationship but her father and her projection that her father rapes her, all these and many other factors like her loneliness and her childhood beatings received from her father turns her to lesbianism. She develops hatred for her own father and every man: "Listen...My father....yes...the same man who is so powerful, so respected, so feared....is a beast. A beast of the worst kind. He....He ... raped me" (De, Shobha: 1992:45). Minx's disgust to man is so high that she even does not hesitate to undergo for a surgery to remove her breasts. She says to Amrita: "No sweet Heart. Nobody hurt me. Maybe I hurt myself. I thought it would make you happy...It's a tits job...Well...most women go to this surgeon for cosmetic surgery to enhance their breasts-boy! I could give you a few names-but I actually asked him to reduce mine. You know, slice them off" (Ibid, 93). The word, "slice them off" used by Minx in her speech shows her innate hatred she has developed within for men. It shows her inability to bear what man likes in woman.

"According to Jones and Hesnard, lesbians mostly fall into two categories: "masculine lesbians," who "try to act like men," and "feminine" ones, who "are afraid of men." (Beauvoir, Simone de: 2010:420)

In Minx's case, she belongs to the category of "masculine lesbians". Her choice of this category of lesbianism is not the result of her natural outcome but the circumstances are responsible for it. "Refusal to make oneself an object is not always what leads a woman to homosexuality...Circumstances also have an important part in this choice." (Dhawan, R.K:2008:20) Loneliness, depression, ill-treatment and many other negative elements that resulted from masculine torture, exploitation and domination are working factors behind Minx's transformation. Cultural feminism thinks that all men are oppressive to all women as a class and that it is the responsibility of individual men to give up male supremacy, rather than the responsibility of women to change and transform themselves. Minx transforms herself as she feels no choice has been left for her. Challenging the masculine culture which knows little the meanings of patience, feeling and love and is the cause of many ills and evils Minx tries for establishment of feminine culture through her transformation.

In *Snapshots* Surekha does not get physical satisfaction from her husband Harsh Shah, so she chooses the path of lesbianism making relationship with her school-mate Dolly. "There was little they didn't know about one another; menstrual cycles, pre-menstrual headaches, anxieties big and small. Surekha did most of the talking, using Dolly to pour out her daily frustration, minor bickering with her mother-in-law, major fights with husband, arguments with her child's class teacher, defiance from old servants, even dissatisfaction with her sex life. Surprisingly, Dolly was not jealous. She didn't consider Surekha's husband a rival. He was merely the man who paid all the bills and demanded his conjugal rights periodically. She knew Surekha hated having sex with him detested every coupling. But both of them were practical enough to realize that that was the ticket to keeping the marriage going. Besides, as Surekha often told her, 'What is there? It doesn't cost anything. I open my legs mechanically and stare at the clock on the wall across the bed. It's all over in about six to eight minutes'. Dolly's dependence on Surekha was more

profound. Surekha was her crutch, her sanity, her love. There was nothing she wouldn't do to make Surekha happy. And Dolly undertook her little tasks unhesitatingly, ungrudgingly, unreservedly. There was little in life for her beyond Surekha." (De, Shobha: 2013:169)

Both Dolly and Surekha are "an intense, mutually-dependent camaraderie" (Ibid, 170). Having in relationship over the years, the life of one has become meaningless without the other. "Their lives had become inextricably intertwined. Dolly and Surekha were like a well-adjusted, happily married couple. There was no passion to deal with any longer. Just enough physical familiarity to provide regular comfort" (Ibid). In the act of lesbianism they are neither subject nor object, they play whatever role they wish. Their relationship echoes to what Simone de Beauvoir, one of the most famous cultural historians says in her most celebrated book *The Second Sex*, "Inversely, a woman who wants to enjoy the pleasures of her femininity in feminine arms also knows the pride of obeying no master...the association of two women can take many different forms; it is based on feeling, interest, or habit; it is conjugal or romantic; it has room for sadism, masochism, generosity, faithfulness, devotion, caprice, egotism, and betrayal; there are prostitutes as well as great lovers among lesbians". (Beauvoir, Simone de: 2010:431)

Aasha Rani in *Starry Nights*, Minx in *Strange Obsession* and Surekha in *Snapshots* are victims of male dominated patriarchal society where women are supposed to be the desired objects of man, often distant and enigmatic, and not the subject of (not the one who experiences) passion. Shobha De's new women are above age old malist culture and tradition which divides role of woman different from that of man. Shobha De's women create their own domain of feminist culture violating traditional men-made culture and social code. Through lesbianism they undergo a radical change. Lesbianism gives them escapade from desired objects to desiring subject. They are not submissive to injustices imposed on them by the value structure of male dominated culture. Aasha Rani, Minx and Surekha are new rebellious women who want an equal footing with man instead of being flown along the current of male dominated value-structure. In the value-structure of male-dominated culture, familial and societal maladjustments lead women to inner fragmentation thereby forcing them to adopt lesbianism in order to seek emotional outlets. Lesbianism establishes female autonomy over the value-structure of male dominated culture. It opens a new vista to women giving a lesson of how to struggle against male domination. What Linda and Aasha Rani, Minx and Amrita and Surekha and Dolly share are manifestations of the new woman who seeks fulfillment within her own sex as declared by Aasharani to Linda, "Only a woman can really please another woman sexually. Only another woman knows where to touch, when to touch, how to touch..." (De, Shobha: 2012:156) This self-same assertive tone of Aasharani again echoes on another occasion and this time to a man when she says to Jamie, "Actually, if you must know, I prefer girls. They are so sensitive and soft. This, only another woman can know- how to turn a woman on" (Ibid, 218). Here the phrase, "so sensitive and soft" used by Aasharani throws light indirectly on the darker side of masculine traits of insensitiveness and hardness. Cultural Feminism considers masculine culture as an enemy to feminine culture, not for many but for only one strong reason that it depreciates and derogates feminine qualities against which De's new and rebellious female characters raise their voice of protest.

Anita Nair followed the trend of lesbianism with her novel *Ladies Coupe* (2001), which is the story of five women from different backgrounds and deals with lesbian encounters through Marikolanthu, thirty one years old and an unwed mother from rural background. Anita Nair, with a deep, psychological insight, skillfully utilizes the story of Marikolanthu to comment upon the sexual exploitation of Indian women from rural background. Marikolanthu's story recalls her encounter with men and concludes that most men take advantage of women's loneliness, illiteracy, dependence, ignorance and frustration. Marikolanthu undergoes humiliation and debasement, which result in negating her son Muthu, the one who escaped many attempts of abortion. He is the result of her seduction by Murugesan, one of the Chettiar's sons belonging to one of the richest families where her mother works as a cook. She looks after her house when her mother goes for work; later when her mother is seriously ill, she is employed at the Chettiar's house.

There, she is assigned with the work of taking care of a child of Sujata Akka, the daughter-in-law of Chettiar. There develops a deep and intimate lesbian relationship between Marikolanthu, one who is deprived of the society and Sujata Akka, other who is deprived of her husband. They find mutual happiness in their nearness.

Manju Kapoor's novel *A Married Woman* (2002), is more robustly lesbian in plot than Anita Nair's *Ladies Coupe*. The novel takes after its name from Astha, a married woman who gets married to Hemant, an attractive young man. Astha leads a happy conjugal life with Hemant for a few years and becomes a mother of a baby girl, Anuradha. Her husband Hemant insists on taking due care of the child. The keen interest taken in the baby girl enhances Astha's love and affection for Hemant. When Astha was expecting Anuradha, Hemant tells her that he longs for a baby girl. He gives Astha his negative remark over categorization between male and female in India: *"In America there is no difference between boys and girls. How can this country get anywhere if we go on treating out women this way?"* (Kapur, Manju: 2002: 57). Astha is drawn more to her husband. Her enjoyment knows no boundary when she notices her husband's keen interest in the upbringing of their daughter. But what seems real proves false reality in her later life. Soon reversal of situation takes place in Astha's life. Hemant becomes more and more occupied with his business and thus he struggles to spare time to spend with Astha. She observes an unexpected behavioral change in Hemant when he demands a son before Astha. *"I want to have my son soon," declared Hemant, looking emotional and manly at the same time. "I want to be as much a part of his life as Papaji is of mine."* (Ibid, 61) *"Hemant's desire to have a son and his insistence that he would not stop until he has one, makes Astha dissatisfied and uneasy. She cannot fathom her man."* (Chakravarty, Joya: 2006: 202) Hemant's indifference and unsupportive attitude fills emptiness in Astha's life. Astha's craving for Hemant's love and appreciation remains incomplete all the time. Physicality of love completes but there always remains wanting of emotion. *"For Astha a marital life meant participating in all activities, discussing all issues with her husband but for Hemant this relationship meant physical relationship and just fulfilling the social needs of his wife."* (Verma, Anuradha: 2007: 56) However, Astha does not violate sanctity of relationship between her and her husband making relationship with other man, rather she seeks alternate sexuality in Pipeelika's embrace. *"Astha does not want to cross the threshold of her married life: she does not want any other man. What Manju Kapur is hinting at is that had Hemant been more appreciative of and sensitive to his wife's needs, Astha would have felt a more complete woman"* (Chakravarty, Joya: 2006: 204).

Astha meets Pipeelika, a widow woman whose husband Aijaz recently has met a sudden death in an act of religious animosity. Soon there develops intimacy and friendship between them as condition of both women is same one has lost her husband and other is deprived of what she expects from her husband. The meeting proves fruitful in the life of both women. Pipeelika enters into Astha's life like the first few raindrops on parched land. *"Astha's slow discovery of her differences with her husband, her change from a hopeful bride to a battered wife and her meeting with Pipeelika leads her to an immoral, rather amoral, guilt consciousness of lesbian love rationalizing her outmoded morality."* (Sharma, Ram: 2009:02) Pipeelika renews Astha's life with what she later feels wanting in her life. Her presence in Astha's life fills the gap of Hemant in her life. She discovers the long forgotten pleasures of life. There follows a torrid affair between them. Both of them overstep social boundaries to find solace and understanding in each other's arms. Astha begins to go Pipeelika whenever she gets opportunity for gratification of her sexual needs. Sexual satisfaction as observed by Joseph Bristow *"Is a fundamental human need."* (Bristow, Joseph: 1997: 12) Both the women are benefitted of this relationship. While Pipeelika drinks the water of Lethe (i.e. the River of Forgetfulness) to forget her husband Aijaz making lesbian relationship with Astha, Astha takes a sweet revenge on her husband Hemant through the weapon of this relationship. Astha's choice of alternate sexuality in the form of lesbianism destabilizes the whole system of sex regulation.

The physicality of their relationship proves satisfying through their lesbian relationship because it

is based on care, love and mutual respect for each other. Instead of becoming the desired object of male hegemony, often distant and enigmatic, and not the subject of (not the one who experiences) passion, both Astha and Pipeelika go beyond their subalternity of position breaking the age old tradition which divides role of woman different from that of man and create their own domain violating tradition and social code. Lesbianism gives them escapade from desired objects to desiring subjects. Through this lesbian relationship they come under certain circumstances, there was no aphrodisiac more powerful than talking, no seduction more effective than curiosity. With this relationship Astha faces same difficulty of subalternity faced by colonial Indian women as specified by Spivak, “*caught between tradition and modernization*” finding herself torn between two halves-her desire for love and affection and her duty towards her family. “*Astha likes to have a break from dependence on others and proceeds on the path of full human status that poses in threat to Hemant and his male superiority. Although, she finds herself trapped between the pressure of the modern developing society and shackles of ancient biases she set out on her quest for a more meaningful life in her lesbian relationship.*” (Kumar, Ashok: 2008: 134) However, Astha shows 'Astha' (Faith) over lesbianism relationship and tries to hold its grip firmly even after finding herself standing between the forces of traditional male hegemony and the desire of individuality over subalternity.

Contrary to what Spivak asserts in her most celebrated book “*Can the subaltern Speak?*”, “*the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow*”, (Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty: 1988: 271-313) Manju Kapur's female protagonist Astha comes out from the shadowy life of subalternity challenging male hegemony. Through reversal role of her protagonist Astha in terms of subalternity Manju Kapur reconsiders the institutions of love, marriage and relationship: “*Manju Kapur has exposed a woman's passion with love and lesbianism, an incompatible marriage and ensuing annoyance with passion to revolutionize the Indian male sensitivity, she describes the traumas of her female protagonist from which they suffer and perish in for their triumph.*”(Kumar, Ashok: 2008: 165) Thus Astha in Manju Kapur's “*A married Woman,*” appearing as a new woman who is educated, self-conscious, and introspective and one who knows how to carve a life for herself and even one who conveys a personal vision of womanhood by violating current social codes, does not come into the class of sexual subalternity dominated by male hegemony.

In Rita Garg's novel *Precursor of Love*, the Girl is a lesbian who has more than one partner in the book. Her easygoing life and attitude attracts Amilya, the protagonist. A sudden encounter sparks off their friendship. Next friendship turns into love and then their relationship brings about a radical change in their life. The loneliness and alienation in her life pushes Amilya to make friendship with the Girl. The Girl's personality attracts Amilya very much and she treats her as a muse for her novel. Even though Amilya is older than the Girl, it is seen right from the beginning that the Girl has the upper hand in the relationship. In every sense of the word she plays the role of a 'man' in the relationship. She never comes in between Amilya's choice of anything, but successfully tries to manipulate Amilya with her emotional attitudes. Their relationship with each other is symbiotic. Amilya employs the Girl in her novel, while the Girl takes Amilya to fill a void in her life.

Abha Daweswar's *Babyji* is a Bildungsroman, i.e. a novel of growth by American based Indian writer Abha Dawesar, where Dawesar's girl protagonist makes a deep and intimate relationship with a lower-caste woman; heterosexuality is dismantled through lesbianism. Anamika Sharma the teenage protagonist is a young girl of sixteen who comes in contact with three women and enjoys her lesbian relationship with them belonging to different age, groups and social strata in quick succession. A grim and serious attack on patriarchal value structure, male domination and India's hard and rigid social structure are successfully woven into the matrix of this well celebrated lesbian novel.

We have a common thread of lesbianism running through the novels of Shobha De, Manju Kapur, Rita Garg, Anita Nair and Abha Daweswar. Their female characters are not submissive to injustices

imposed on them by male dominated value structure. Shobha De's Aasha Rani in *Starry Nights*, Minx in *Strange Obsession*, Surekha in *Snapshots*, Anita Nair's Marikolanthu in *Ladies Coupe*, Manju Kapur's Astha in *A Married Woman*, Rita Garg's the Girl in *Precursor of Love* and Abha Daweswar's Anamika in *Babyji* are new rebellious women who want an equal footing with man instead of being flown along the current of male dominated value-structure. In a male dominated value-structure, familial and societal maladjustments lead women to inner fragmentation thereby forcing them to adopt lesbianism in order to seek emotional outlets. Lesbianism establishes female autonomy over male dominated value-structure. It opens a new vista to women giving a lesson of how to struggle against male domination. What Linda and Aasha Rani, Minx and Amrita, Surekha and Dolly, Marikolanthu and Sujata Akka, Astha and Pipeelika, Amilya and the Girl, Anamika and her female lesbian partners share are manifestations of the new woman who seeks fulfillment within her own sex. They present the truthful picture of the new reality which is going to be born soon after the ultimate overthrow of age-old value-structure.

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THE KENYAN WRITER NGUGI WA THIONG'O: AN UNDERSTANDING

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Postcolonial literature comprises the writings written in the countries that were once ruled by the Europeans. Most of these countries suffer from the colonial hangover. Some of these countries like India and Kenya have become free politically, but they are not free intellectually. Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) is commonly regarded as the principal catalyst and reference point for postcolonial studies.

African literature exists in a historical continuum. For example, neo-colonialism prevails today in Africa because of the continuation after 'independence' of the economic, political and social practices established by colonialism. Ngugi wa Thiong'o is one of the best postcolonial writers. He is a Kenyan novelist, playwright and postcolonial critic. He is heard all over the postcolonial countries when the issues of migration, foreign domination, language, literature and culture issues appear and reappear.

Ngugi's entire oeuvre is the outcome of his participation in the larger socio-political processes of Kenya. As John Updike points out: "In his crowded, and eventful life, Ngugi has enacted for all to see the paradigmatic trials and quandaries of a contemporary African writer, caught in sometimes implacable political, social, racial and linguistic currents" (Updike 1). "My writing is really an attempt," admits Ngugi in the preface to *Secret Lives*, "to understand myself and my situation in society and history" (Ngugi 20).

Ngugi's life-time achievement speaks of his combined attempt for self-discovery for the once enslaved man. David Cook and Michael Okenimkpe trace the evolution of Ngugi's thought in three phases which run parallel to important stage-posts in his literary career; the early period until his undergraduate studies at Makerere, Uganda; the intermediate phase at Leeds University; and the third phase of post-colonial disillusionment. The post-1980s is the fourth phase.

Born in the village of Kamirithu in 1938, Ngugi was known as James Ngugi until his symbolic decision in 1970 to reject his Christian name and revert to his Gikuyu name - Ngugi son of Thiong'o. Ngugi's father was a peasant farmer who was forced to become a squatter on his own land under the British Imperial Act of 1915. Ngugi grew up in the white-settler dominated Kenyan Highlands. He studied in mission-run Gikuyu schools. In 1955 he was the only student from the Limuru district to attend the prestigious Alliance school. Later Ngugi studies at Leeds University, England.

Ngugi was young when the so-called Mau Mau guerrilla warfare in the 1950s took place. Ngugi's family participated during the struggle. His two brothers joined the army and died. His mother was imprisoned. James Ogude thinks the Mau-Mau struggle gradually develops into an important symbol around which the allegorisation of Kenyan history is built and given shape in almost all of Ngugi's fictional works. Ngugi like Njoroge (in *Weep Not, Child*) joined Makerere University in Uganda for BA and he studied Conrad. He wrote *The River Between* which appeared in 1965, and *Weep Not, Child* (1964). The two novels are known for cultural nationalism. Wole Soyinka once said that these novels insist on accommodation of cultures, and an self-assertion of African identity.

Mala Pandurang observes:

Increasingly sceptical about the value of a postgraduate degree' Ngugi concentrated on his third novel *A Grain of Wheat* (1967). This novel explores, in retrospect, the themes of betrayal, cowardice and individual/collective guilt as a new Kenyan nation state awaited its birth in

December 1963. There are signs of growing sense of disillusionment with the post-independence conditions, and the questioning of 'Uhura' or this 'new dawn' underscores the general mood of the novel (Pandurang 13).

Ngugi after his higher studies in Leeds returned to Kenya in 1967. He began his job as an Assistant Professor of English at the University of Nairobi in 1968. In a conference a few years ago this English professor with two colleagues who had a P.G. degree in Leeds, drafted the proposal on the Abolition of English Department. This shocked both the Kenyans and the Englishmen. This is known as the 'great Nairobi literature debate.' His collection of plays *This Time Tomorrow* (1970) was the last publication to appear under the name of James Ngugi, although he did not legally change his name until 1977. From 1970-71, Ngugi taught for a year in Northwestern University in America, as visiting associate professor. His first collection of essays *Homecoming* published in 1972, deals with the problematic relationships of language, literature and culture. In 1975, Ngugi published his collection of short stories *Secret Lives*.

Ngugi spent the next six years writing his fourth novel *Petals of Blood*, published in 1977. The novel is a deep caustic critique of post-colonial Kenya. Then Ngugi and Micere Githae Mugo coauthored the play *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* in 1976, which is the rehabilitation of the Kenyan Mau Mau leader Dedan Kimathi. It was a great success. Ngugi then with the decision not to write in English anymore wrote the play *NaahikaNdeenda* (trans. *I will marry when I want*). This play was a popular success but the Government banned it exiling Ngugi in 1977. The Kamirithu theatre was raged to the ground. Renouncing English as a medium for his art, Ngugi began to write his first novel in Gikuyu, in prison. *Caitani Mutharab-ini (Devil on the Cross)* was published in 1980. Here Ngugi opts for the mode of the allegorical, didactic oral tale, and incorporates a whole range of songs, proverbs and mythology from Gikuyu folklore.

Ngugi published two more collections of polemical essays *Writers in Politics* (1981) and *Barrel of the Pen* (1983), raising a host of questions on larger issues of language and literature, and the politics of aesthetic and ethical commitment. The most influential text in the setting up of a radical and oppositional critique of African literature has, without a doubt, been *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* published in 1986. The primary theoretical focus of *Decolonizing the Mind* is the link between linguistic and cultural displacement, and the intimate relationship between the imposition of an alien colonial language and mental colonization.

Ngugi published his second novel in Gikuyu in 1987. *Matigari* is yet another biting satire of contemporary neo-colonial Kenya. Matigari Ma Njiruuni, a onetime Mau Mau fighter, emerges from the forest in the belief that he has returned to a post-colonial, now egalitarian, society.

In the late 1980s, Ngugi shifted base to America and taught at the Yale, Smith and Amherst universities. In 1992, he became Professor of Comparative Literature at New York University. He published his next collection of essays *Moving the Centre: The Struggle for Cultural Freedom* (1993) wherein he continues the debate on the interaction between the local and the global viz. the hegemonic control of the West over modes of cultural production and dissemination. In 1998, Ngugi put together a series of lectures delivered on various academic occasions on the contentious relationship between the post-colonial nation state and the dissident artist in *Penpoints, Gunpoints, and Dreams. Towards a Critical Theory of the Arts and the State in Africa*.

Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi was finally ousted from power in the Kenyan national elections of 2002, after 24 years in power. Ngugi subsequently returned to Kenya in 2004 to launch the first volume of *Murogi wa Kagogo*, a 1000 page novel he had been writing since 1997. Originally intended to be serialized *Murogi wa Kagogo* (trans. *Wizard of the Crow* 2006) is written in Gikuyu and translated by the writer himself. This is Ngugi's first novel after a gap of 20 years and spans 700 pages. The major preoccupation of the novel is the relationship between African dictatorship, and global capitalism that sustains the same.

Ngugi talks of the western hegemony in "Europhone or African memory: The Challenge of the

Pan-Africanist intellectual in the Era of Globalization” (2004). Ngugi continues to live in America where he teaches as a distinguished Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of California. He is joint director of the Restoration Project at the International Center for Writing and Translation at Irvine. He edits *Mutiiri*, a New York University-based Gikuyu journal that offers a platform for new writers to express themselves.

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STRUGGLE FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN *SHE PLAYS WITH THE DARKNESS*

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Abstract:

The present paper attempts to study struggle for gender equality in Zakes Mda's novel, She Plays with the Darkness. The novel reveals themes like racial exploitation, gender discrimination and isolation. The post-modern novelists struggle for human rights, Zakes Mda is one of them. Zakes Mda is the most acclaimed South African novelist. He employed 'gender' with different views and idea gender means not only synonyms with women it refers to men and women.

Keywords: *Zakes Mda, gender, Dikosha, Radisene.*

Gender is not synonyms with women; it refers to men and women. Females are inferior in patriarchal society. Gender discrimination is basically a discrimination made between men and women. Simeon de Beauvoir rightly observes, "The women of today are in a fair way to dethrone to affirm their independence succeeding in living completely the life of a human being" (Beauvoir 30). Woman is capable of revolting and demanding justice. Simeon de Beauvoir opens her description with a statement that has become famous in feminist literature: "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman. . . It is civilization as a whole that produces this creature, intermediate between male and eunuch, which is described as feminism" (Beauvoir 89). Black women are exploited in South Africa through white male-dominated society. It constitutes woman's awareness about patriarchal norms practiced in every field of society. It is an attempt to make society aware of injustice and oppression. Women have to undergo their secondary status, perception of processes of gender construction, and woman's subordination in the family and the society. But women reformed it at their own levels.

Mda displays unequal gender roles through the story of two siblings, Dikosha and Radisene. In childhood, Dikosha completes her education up to seventh standard with first class, but her mother was unable to pay the fees for further education. Her twin brother, Radisene even though he had received only a third class in standard seven is lucky, because the Holy Father of the church takes him under his wings and pays his fees at a Catholic high school. Dikosha, a brilliant student, is denied the opportunity to complete her schooling by local church father, who sees no future for an educated woman in their society. So writer also aptly observes: "After all Dikosha was a woman, they argued and bound to find a good man of the church and settle down in blissful matrimony Radisene, on the other hand. . . .He was a man"(5). Being a girl, Dikosha is denied access to higher education as well as advancement. But, being a son, Radisene gets a chance to take higher education. This constitutes Dikosha's awareness of patriarchal home. She observes that society's injustice and oppression are the two things which women have to undergo their secondary status, perception of the processes of gender construction and women's subordination in the family, the society and education. It constitutes her awareness of economic status and inequality of sexes for a long time. Dikosha was angry with the God Father, with her mother, with her twin brother, with herself and after all with everybody. So she cannot speak with anybody. She becomes vocally silent and lonely. Mda explores Dikosha's periodic silence as a weapon against being denied access to education and advancement simply because she is a girl.

The narrator observes, "Throughout that spring and summer she played with the darkness. She, the keeper of memories, sat in her hut, with all the windows closed and played with the absolute darkness that

she created”(169-170). Dikosha is happy in the sadness which she creates for herself. She lives with the snakes. Here, the narrator states:

She loved snakes and was not afraid of them . . . So she played with them, she mesmerized them with her dance. She could handle even the most poisonous snakes, like Marabe and Masumu, although she did not care of brightly coloured snakes, the one of green, and yellow, and blue. She laughed at the hopeless wrath of the Masumu cobra (4).

Dikosha loves Shane, a little boy who meets horrible death in mist. In his funeral everyone is busy to prepare the funeral meal but Dikosha does not take interest in that meal. So the people of the village say “Well, Dikosha is Dikosha. She does what she likes, even if it is against custom. It is because she conceived at a night dance” (169). Dikosha leaves society and rejects all imposed social interaction as means of escaping being ritualized and developed traditional relationship, power with Ha Samane:

Dikosha was filled with love for people of the cave and wished that she could spend all her days with them. She loved peace that reigned among them. No voice was ever raised in anger, and they did not seem to know any form of violence directed at other human beings. Men did not deem themselves to be more important than women. There seemed to be an equality among them that did not exist in the world of Ha Samane (52-53).

Dikosha lives her life in her own way. Her silence differs from Eugene Dawn, Barbarians and magistrate whose silence reflects the idea of frustration, weakness and self-defeat as 'victims'. Dikosha's silence is for her freedom and alienation from the society. The silence of a woman is more powerful than her own speech. Dikosha's silence shows her protest against patriarchal society. She spends her time in dancing and singing. For Dikosha, dance is the language of rebellion. Dikosha's darkness is firmly rooted in her avoidance of socialization, because she is motivated by her traumatic experiences of patriarchal oppression. This attempted escape is ultimately not a tenable solution to her grievances with her society. When Radisene goes from Ha Samane for a job as a teacher, she did not utter a single word. She seems to lose interest even in the songs of the pumpkin though it is her favourite one.

In the light of Dikosha's character, it will be appropriate to see what the scholars have to say about African feminism. African feminism has been aptly articulated by Molaria Ogundipe-Lesslie, who has incisively theorized gender oppression and the intricate web of oppressive systems:

One might say that the African woman has six mountains on her back: one is oppression from outside (colonialism and neocolonialism), the second is from traditional structures, feudal, slave-based, communal etc., the third is her backwardness; the fourth is man; the fifth is her colour, her race; and the sixth is herself” (Molaria Ogundipe-Lesslie 28).

Throughout the novel, Dikosha dances and teaches various forms of dance. At the beginning of the novel, it is interesting that once Dikosha loses interest in the songs of the pumpkin of her youth (after Radisene abandons her and her mother in search of fortune in the lowlands), she sinks further into silence and sadness, and withdraws from celebratory dances such as the famous that the builders enjoy whilst building (on Radisene's instructions) the mansion for Mother of Twins and Dikosha (74), and the sensual mokgibo dance that the women enjoy at Misti's graduation (42). The songs of the pumpkin, lifela songs and the healing songs that Dikosha learns in the Caves of Barwa present personal and 165 communal histories from the singer's point of view. In this connection, Coplan argues: “The songs and dances documented in the novel can be termed as “cultural construction of history”, a form of history and meaning-making that is only recently being nationally acknowledged, through the research being done by various government departments and museums into Indigenous Knowledge Systems”(Coplan xvii). Dikosha's dance is a form of communication and an escape. She indulges in the San rock paintings at the Cave of Barwa. The songs are also very effective as a form of protest against social ills. Dikosha's art has many functions: it is spiritual, ritual, it unites her with others, allows her to celebrate her cultural heritage and identity, and it serves as a retreat when she cannot handle the realities of the community. The contrast between Dikosha

and the other villagers is expressed within the novel's first pages: "Dikosha's loneliness was self-imposed, for people of the village lived in what appeared to be happy communion . . . She felt that if there was neither song nor dance, there was no need to be bothered with people"(4). For most of the characters, it seems that song and dance is purely a way to celebrate, whereas there are many more features to art for Dikosha: it pervades her life and is even present in her sleep, as her dreams provide her with all the new songs and dances which she teaches the others.

Thus, the gender patterns of the Lesotho are imposed on Dikosha from her childhood onwards, as she is denied secondary education because of her sex. Consequently, Dikosha becomes disillusioned with the village, the school and the church, and turns away from all of them. As she is so restricted by the gender patterns in her community, she retreats from it altogether, from the moment her brother abandons her. She does not just stop speaking, but she no longer grows older. She only speaks or interacts with others through her art. Her silence starts gradually as a resistance and rebellion against the society. Her rebellion against her community centers primarily against the wrongs committed against her as she is born in a patriarchal society. She struggle against gender discrimination through silence. Besides, as she feels victimized by the gender patterns of her village, she refuses to adhere to them by submitting to the village's rites of passage, such as marriage rites (5). The fact that Dikosha refuses to participate in the community's rites of passage automatically means that there is no social move upwards for her.

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15

INDIAN ENGLISH FICTION: GROWTH OF NOVEL AS A LITERARY FORM

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Abstract:

The European novel, the English novel, the American novel, and the Indian English novel have different nuances, but their general achievement has been the creation of a world a fictional world where fact and fancy intermingle, a populous world in which we find the living characters the novelists have created: men and women who live a vibrant, reverberating life, who compel the attention, evoke the sympathy, deserve the repulsion, and stimulate the thoughts of readers.

Key words: *Indian English Literature, Growth of Novel.*

Novel has a very wide following, the privilege, perhaps, no other genre enjoys in the world literature today. This is mainly because novels bear witness to the curiosity of mankind about itself, they show us how writers see men and women in their societies, and they often demonstrate men and women coming to terms with society in the process of growing up, of learning, of making crucial judgments, of taking decisions, either carrying out actions themselves or reacting to the thoughts, the emotions, and the behaviour of others. In this creation which reaches into realism of the infinities of imagination, or mingles these extremes there is, almost inevitably, the human desire to tell a story, a story about people. Henry James notes in *The Art of the Novel*, "...the novel remains still, under the right persuasion, the most independent, most elastic, most prodigious of literacy forms" (186). One of the most rewarding ways of reading a novel is to see it as belonging to that long tradition of fixation that includes *Don Quixote* and *Tristram Shandy* on the one hand and *Travels with My Aunt* and *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* on the other: fiction, that is, that examines its symbiotic relationship with fact and explores the role of imagination in creating and evoking reality, which, in the artist's sense is always something created: it does not exist priori.

Novelists continually add to the richness of our human experience; they bring before us new topics, new characters, and new attitudes. The story of the Indian English novel is a one-and-a-half centuries of fascinating history. It reveals the dialectics of imperialism in its journey from the periphery to the centre and echoes a deep core of neo-colonialism based on power politics. Again, the Indian English novel as the "Third World Novel" refers to representations of colonialism, nationhood, postcoloniality, the typology of rulers, their powers, and their corruptions. Though engaged in postcolonial consciousness, the novel also attempts to universalize humanistic gesture, for human nature and social relationships are as important as the interplay of power and national relationships. The first English novel in English is Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's *Rajmohan's Wife*. The Indian English novelist seems to have begun as an exile in his own land. Creative displacement appears to be the norm of success: Mulk Raj Anand writing in England, Raja Rao in France; Anita Desai in wartime England; Rushdie, Vikram Seth, and Amitav Ghosh also in countries other than their own. V.S. Naipaul can be described as a writer without a country. R.K. Narayan did not leave the shores of India until he was fifty but he had moved, early in life, from Madras now Chennai to Mysore, and spent his formative years there and was domiciled there.

Perhaps the confident prose of Narayan's award winning novel *The Guide* owes something further to the novelist's sojourn in the U.S.A. where he was actually paid to write his book. Exile appears to do good even to writers in Indian languages, Anantha Murthy wrote his Kannada novel *Samskara* in England.

This “exile” shaped the Indian sensibility by setting in motion a complex evolutionary process in different circumstances. This cross-cultural shift results in the writer's loss of mother tongue as a potential literary medium. This loss, perhaps, works to the advantage of the artist's natural affinity for an alien tongue. English opens up literatures of the world. The foster-tongue becomes, at a critical point, the writer's creative medium. R.K. Narayan admits that he never wrote in Tamil. Vikram Seth admits he hardly knows Punjabi. So the Indian English novelist can be said to be the product of two environments: the native ethos with regional culture and the assimilated language milieu. Getting these two to collaborate is the crux of the matter.

In the nineteenth century, in the southern part of India there was a vigorous and fervent social criticism against the economic exploitation, the rigidity of caste system, and the miserable condition of young widows in society. Novelists like Rajam Aiyar, Madhavaiah, and K.S. Venkataramani published in English after Bankim.

However, these novelists were bilingual and even if they wrote in English, the address was to the regional audiences. This is apparent by the large number of Indianisms in their work. Also they were didactic: the nation was shaping and the Indian English novelist played his patriotic part in it.

In the early 1930s the Indian English novel underwent a great change it went abroad and became international. Anand, Raja Rao, and R.K. Narayan wrote on authentic Indian themes and wrote like Indians and for their compatriots, but they also achieved a double audience. Anand and Narayan had to wage an epic struggle to establish themselves. It was Graham Greene who came to the rescue of Narayan and saved him from a crippling despair. It was their self-faith that made novelists of the 1930s to stand the test of time.

K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar observes, “What makes Indo-Anglican literature an Indian literature and not just a ramshackle outhouse of English literature is the quality of its 'Indianness' in the choice of its subjects, in the texture of thought, and play of sentiment, in the organization of materials and in the creative use of language” (8). In spite of its diverse culture, races and religions, Indian Writing in English has successfully recaptured and reflected multi-cultural and multi-lingual society. As a result it has aroused a good deal of interest at home and abroad also. V.K. Gokak also remarks in this contest, “The Indianness of Indian writing consists in the writer's intense awareness of his entire culture” (24). The distinctive differences between Indian and alien cultures resulted in a quest for cultural identity among Indians. This is where the Indian English writing focussed its attention. It also served as a medium for Indians with different mother tongues to find a common thread in India's rich and kaleidoscopic yet pluralistic culture. Meenakshi Mukharjee quotes the American critic, Marius Bewley's observation, “The American novel had to find a new experience and discover how to put that experience into art. And the process by which it has been done was one of progressive self-discovery for the nation”(24) and also says, “By and large, this finding of a distinctly national experience and its legitimate expression in art is what distinguishes the literature of one nation from that of another” (24). She also thinks that “whatever be the language in which it is written, a novel by an Indian writer demands direct involvement in values and experiences which are valid in the Indian context” (24).

When it comes to choosing the language for the novel, English seems to be very appropriate as it is understood by most of the readers, whatever be their mother tongue. Also, English can no more be considered a foreign language. It has now become part and parcel of our cultural spectrum. The Indian English writer is in an advantageous position being able to draw from the perennial sources of Indian literatures. Kamala Das, in the context of choosing the language pleads:

I am Indian, very brown, born in Malabar,
I speak three languages, write in
Two, dream in one.
Don't write in English, they said, English is
Not your mother-tongue. Why not leave

Me alone, critics, friends, visiting cousins,
 Every one of you? Why not let me speak in
 Any language I like? The language I speak,
 Becomes mine, its distortions, its queernesses
 All mine, mine alone.
 It is half English, half Indian, funny perhaps, but it is honest,
 It is as human as I am human, don't
 You see? (32)

Thus the novel in English has become part and parcel of Indian literature. The “Big three” Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, and R.K. Narayan were followed by other distinguished writers like Manohar Malgonkar, Kushwant Singh, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Balachandra Rajan, etc. Thus the aims of the 1930s were consolidated in the fruitful decades that followed. Especially, novelists like Manohar Malgonkar brought professionalism to the literary form. The post-1930s period produced some classics.

Women writers were able to establish a position of importance only much later, though they attempted to write novels in as early as in 1879. *Nectar in a Sieve* of Kamala Markandaya brought immense glory to the woman novelist. Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Nayantara Sehgal and Anita Desai established themselves as distinguished women novelists. Kamala Markandaya was familiar with the east-west encounter in different contexts and her novels reflect the resultant identity crisis of this encounter. Nayantara Sehgal's novels present an authentic picture of India after independence. Anita Desai carved a niche for herself by her delineation of the inner lives of hypersensitive women. These women writers added a new dimension to Indian English fiction with their exquisite perception of feminism.

The 1930s were the Age of Faith, followed by decades of professionalization, and the 1980s were the Age of Confidence. The 1980s were marked by infusion of new blood into the genre; several new novelists many of them young published their first novels.

As elsewhere, majority or novels in India have been written in response to historical movement or events such as the Gandhian movement, Imperial Rule, partition of the country, and the emergence of new India. The heroic effort to throw away the foreign yoke was an epic struggle covering the first half of the twentieth century. The nation was in ferment; a massive movement for liberation from the foreign rule was raging in the country. The British, who were exploiting India utmost, were in no mood to withdraw. The struggle was long and grueling.

The freedom struggle caught the imagination of the entire nation, no less the Indian English writers. No significant writer could escape the impact of the mighty movement sweeping the country. The novels written in 1930's and 1940's reflect the vitality of a people elevated to a cause. This is amply reflected in the novels of the period Raja Rao's *Kanthapura*, Anand's *Coolie*, D.F. Karke's *We Never Die*, and C.N. Zutshi's *Motherland*.

The novels dealing with the freedom struggle give vivid pictures of the exploitation and the arrogance of the foreign rulers, as also the portrayal of an awakened people struggling for their birthright. The growth of the historical novel coincided with the intensification of the struggle for Indian freedom, especially after the First World War. Novels written previously had confined to religious aestheticism now the focus shifted to contemporary socio-political concern.

The Indian English novelists have been most responsive to the call of equality, freedom, and human rights: for literary artists have an intrinsic quality and ability to look beyond their time. It is they who hold before the common man a lens, as it were, through which he can see what threatens him socially, culturally or politically, and which makes him aware of the precipice that lies ahead. A number of novels were written during the period that portrayed the unjustness of the British rule and the grim fight the people were determined to give to get rid of it. Politics became synonymous with nationalism.

No doubt, the most important historical event of our age, as is evident from the writings of Indian

English novelists, was the partition of the subcontinent. The Indian English novelists, like their counterparts in Indian languages, responded to these happenings with a sense of horror. A number of novels were written on the theme of partition, the destruction it brought and the plight of the refugees. They faithfully record the reign of violence that characterized the period and provide a sad, telling commentary on the breakdown of human values. A strain of despair and disillusionment is predominant in these novels. Kushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*, Chaman Nahal's *Azadi*, and Shiv K. Kumar's *River with Three Banks* are some of the novels that depict the horrors, trauma, and suffering of people. K.S. Srinivasa Iyengar views, "The 'leaders' had sowed the wind of communal suspicion, and Partition was the result; like a whirlwind, the mad act of Partition was uprooting masses of humanity, mangling them, and throwing them across the border in heap after heap." (498) Balachandra Rajan's *The Dark Dancer* also deals with the theme of partition. *Azadi* by Chaman Nahal can be considered a comprehensive account of the holocaust in its vividness with many moving episodes. K.A. Abbas's *Inquilab* depicts the periods of Rowlett Bill, Jallianwalla Bagh tragedy, Salt Satyagraha, and Gandhi-Irwin pact of 1931. Our freedom movement is the greatest historical fact of contemporary India. Whatever we may regard to interpret it, no one had conceived, not even the shrewd British, the dimension this movement would acquire in a matter of a few decades. E.M. Forster, publishing his *Passage to India* in 1924, is also completely silent about this movement.

Some of the contemporary novelists Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Arundhati Roy, and Vikram Chandra made their mark in the contemporary fiction writing. Amitav Ghosh belongs to this group. These novelists give convincing evidence of wholesome body contact with reality: their range of engagement is wide and full, from comic hilarity to philosophic serenity. These novelists are also sensitive to nature; one of the attractions of Seth's novel is the steady flow of the seasons in California. The new breed of novelists shows their appreciation of music and painting; bird-watching is a characteristic pastime in Ghosh's *The Circle of Reason* and Gopal Gandhi's *Refuge*. Again, these novelists demand much from their readers more often than not, they are voluminous but the reader keeps company with them because of their magnetic powers they realize with competence: action, dialogue, scene, and all the staples of fictional art.

The Stephen's factor is also important. Irwin Allan Sealy, Amitav Ghosh, Shashi Tharoor, Gopal Gandhi, all have graduated from St. Stephen's, Delhi. The significance of the Stephen's factor points in a social direction; most of the 1980s brigade share a metropolitan, even a cosmopolitan background. The novelists of the 1930s were born in a rural or semi-rural milieu or were brought up there and spent their most impressionable years there. In the 1980s, there was in the Indian English novel a sub continental shift. This national literature has come a long way since the 1930s; the centre of gravity has moved to the urban end. Over the decades even R.K.Narayan and Raja Rao revealed a growing intercontinental awareness. The nation itself has moved from the village centrism of the Gandhian era to the city centrism of the post-Nehru period. So, these novelists reflect, confirm, or even dramatize this movement from the rural to the urban, to the cosmopolitan. In Ghosh's *The Circle of Reason*, his first novel, the hero Alu progresses from rural Bengal through the subcontinent to the Middle-east and on hopefully to Europe. The action of the novel is a representation of the direction the national psyche has tended since Independence. Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy* was the high watermark of Indian literary scene of the early nineties. Salman Rushdie shot into fame with his famous *Midnight's children*, which fetched him Booker Prize in 1981, Booker of Bookers in 1992, and Best of Bookers in 2008. His language hybrid peppered with Indian terms conveys the theme representing the vast canvas of India. He mostly makes use of magic realism popularized by Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Vikram Seth fan of Jane Austin uses pure English, and realistic themes. Attentive to story in its details and twists, Seth is also a good poet, though neglected. Shashi Tharoor in his *The Great Indian Novel* (1989) employs the technique of storytelling.

Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* has drawn a great range of opinions, though some of them could be reactionary responses to the hype. This Booker Prize winning novel seems to have survived

a flurry of critical darts flung at it. It is predominantly a novel by a woman, about a woman seen through the eyes of a woman. *The God of Small Things* breathes the spirit of youth. It is a protest novel radical and subversive. In its ability, its keenness to view things as they are, the book is young. The story is about authentic India, but the sensibility is urban, westernized, and modern. Political conditions of the 1970s and emergency made the novelists turn to history for a new theme. Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* is a classic example of basing the theme on history and politics. When Rushdie evokes history of India since the coming of the Moghuls, through British colonization, and brings it up to date with the imposition of the emergency and its consequences, the objective is not to raise public consciousness or to inspire apathy. It is, rather, a kind of assault on the state for its brutal use of power and authority on its own citizens. Other novels of worth consideration with different themes of the period are Rushdie's *Shame*, Amitav Ghosh's *The Circle of Reason* and *The Shadow Lines*, Nayanatara Sehgal's *A Mistaken Identity*, and Vikram Seth's *The Golden Gate*. Other writers of worth consideration are Rohinton Mistry, Farrukh Dhondy, Firdaus Kanga, and Bapsi Sidhwa. Mistry's *Such a Long Journey* is based on real facts pertaining to the conspiracy case of Nagarwala, employee of the Parliament Street Branch of SBI. The title of the novel is taken from T.S. Eliot's *The Journey of the Magi*. Writers like Salman Rushdie, Upamanyu Chatterjee, Rohinton Mistry, and Vikram Seth write with individualistic tone, no more imitative of British model or apologetic about writing in English. These writers use English with much more degree of confidence than the earlier writers. The credit for liberating Indian English from the colonial yoke goes to writers like Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Upamanyu Chatterjee, and Amitav Ghosh. So these novelists need not have to defend their choice of using English for creative writing. Many of them are free from the British way of using English. There is no restriction of spelling, sentence structures, grammar, etc. This displays a careless intimacy with English, which enables them to play with it.

Among the new young writers, Chetan Bhagat's *One Night @ the Call Center*, *Five Point Someone*, *2 States*, *The 3 Mistakes of My Life*, and *Revolution 2020: Love, Corruption, Ambition* greatly influenced the Indian English novel. Another contemporary writer who has gained immense popularity in recent times is Amish Tripathi. With his novel *The Immortals of Meluha*, based on the origin of Lord Shiva, Amish Tripathi has made his mark in contemporary fiction. His second novel, *The Secret of the Nagas*, deals with the origin of Nagas and their encounter with Lord Shiva.

Meenakshi Mukharjee termed the Indian English novel the “twice born fiction” because of its dual parentage. She says, “By designating Indo-Anglican novel as 'twice born' I have not tried to promote it to a super caste. I find it the product of two parent traditions, and suggest that recognition of this fact is the first step towards granting the Indo-Anglican novel its proper place in modern Indian literature.”(6)

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16

NGUGI WA THIONG'O'S *HOMECOMING* AS A CRITIQUE OF THE WEST

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Ngugi wa Thiong'o is one of the best postcolonial writers. He is a Kenyan writer. He is a novelist, playwright and postcolonial critic. He is the most prolific. He is heard all over the postcolonial countries when the issues of migration, foreign domination, language, literature and culture issues crop up. Two of his important critical works are *Homecoming* and *Decolonizing the Mind*.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o's early book of criticism *Homecoming* has three parts: On Culture, Writers in Africa and Writers from the Caribbea. Ngugi wa Thiong'o is a social critic, no doubt. He looks at the world from African perspective. He sees no future in African democracy. In his introduction to *Homecoming* John Clarke observes:

His Marxism stems from his enlightened African nationalism, and his observation of the system of exploitation that has been transferred from European hands to Africans without the Europeans losing control of it. No matter whose hands manipulate this system, he still sees it as being bad for Africa. (Clarke intro *Homecoming* vii).

The title of Ngugi's book *Homecoming* suggests what Ngugi and his book are about. It could have easily been called "awakening". Ngugi speaks of 'Pan-African' and a 'Pan third-world'. The Part One has four essays Towards a National Culture, Kenya: the Two Rifts, Mau Mau: Violence, and Culture and Church, Culture and Politics. In the first essay, "Towards a National Culture" Ngugi feels that Africa is not a dark continent. He defines culture thus, "Culture, in its broadest sense, is a way of life fashioned by a people in their collective endeavour to live and come to terms with their total environment. It is the sum of their art, their science and all their social institutions, including their system of beliefs and rituals" (*Homecoming* 4).

Critics and readers see Africa's cultural history in three broad phases: Africa before white conquest, Africa under colonial domination, and today's Africa striving to find its true self-image. Ngugi talks of how African culture is ancient, diverse and yet it is African. He uses Shakespeare's Prospero (the *Tempest*) as the example. He writes:

But what was of far-reaching effect was the fact that, again like Prospero, the European took away the material base, and systematically dismantled the political and economic institutions on which the African had built his way of life (*Homecoming* 9).

Well then the Kenyan colonial struggle is centred round the demand for the lost lands. Suddenly, in the course of demanding this, while some died and others refused to give up, the Kenyan peasantry seemed to find a new power. They rejected the missionary colonial institutions. In the second essay "Kenya: The Two Rifts" Ngugi thinks Kenya has developed racial conflicts with the arrival of Asians and Europeans. The tensions have found expression at the political level. The African has always fought for a better political and economic position in his own country. The Asian has always struggled to achieve political parity with the European. And the European has all the time tried to preserve and perpetuate his dominant political and economic position at the top of the pyramid. However, in Kenya, there is really no concept of a nation. One is always a Kikuyu, a Luo, a Nandi, an Asian or a European. Ngugi provides the following socialist package as a salvage for this:

There is no clear-cut solution to the problem of these rifts. Any solution must lie with the different individuals that make up Kenya society. The traditional African concept of *the*

community should not be forgotten in our rush for western culture and political institutions, which some regard as the ready-made solution to our problems. In the African way, the community serves the individual. (*Homecoming* 25).

The next essay “Mau Mau, Violence and Culture” speaks of Kenya's freedom struggle. The conflicts in the land of Kenya, at their most marked in the relationship between the African and the European, have operated on three planes: political, economic, and cultural.

The last essay of Part One “Church, Culture and Politics”, speaks of Ngugi's views about Christianity, Africa and Culture. The Europeans colonized Africa, and the missionaries Christianized the people, both forces destroying the native African life style. This acceptance of the Christian Church meant the outright rejection of all the African customs. Even the Africans came to see the Church and the settler community as one. The Gikuyu saying 'Gutiri Muthungu na Mubia' (i.e., there is no difference between the European and the missionary priest) is a good example of this identification of the missionary with the settler. Part Two “Writers in Africa” has five essays. “The Writer and His Past”, “The Writer in a Changing Society”, “Chinua Achebe: A Man of the People”, “Wole Soyinka, T.M. Aluko and the Satiric Voice”, and Okot P'Bitek and “Writing in East Africa”. The first essay “The Writer and His Past” projects the writer as if a bard. The writer is a sort of chronicle, and critique. He is to be a counselor to society. He is to be a custodian of morals. The second essay “The Writer in a Changing Society” speaks of how a writer should act for changes in society:

A writer responds, with his total personality, to a social environment which changes all the time. Being a kind of sensitive needle, he registers, with varying degrees of accuracy and success, the conflicts and tensions in his changing society. Thus the same writer will produce different types of work, sometimes contradictory in mood, sentiment, degree of optimism and even world-view. For the writer himself lives in, and is shaped by, history (*Homecoming* 47).

The essay ends with this peroration:

I believe that African intellectuals must align themselves with the struggle of the African masses for a meaningful national ideal. For we must strive for a form of social organization that will free the manacled spirit and energy of our people so we can build a new country, and sing a new song. Perhaps, in a small way, the African writer can help in articulating the feelings behind this struggle (*Homecoming* 50).

The third essay is about a fellow writer Chinua Achebe as 'a Man of the People!' Ngugi records a path-breaking event in Achebe's own life in the 1960s:

In 1964 Mr. Chinua Achebe told a conference on Commonwealth Literature at Leeds that part of his business as a novelist was to teach, to reeducate his society out of their acceptance of racial inferiority.

'Here, then,' he said, 'is an adequate revolution for me to espouse - to help my society regain its belief in itself and put away the complexes of the years of denigration and self-denigration' (*Homecoming* 51).

The next essay “Wole Soyinka, T.M. Aluko and the Satiric Voice” is equally a critical appreciation of Soyinka and Aluko and their satirical mode of social criticism as reflected in their works. Like Ngugi Soyinka is a fine playwright and novelist and he too has got Noble Prize for literature. The last essay of Part Two is about Okot p'Biket and creative writing in East Africa. In 1964 Taban Lo Liyong wrote to *Transition* and later to the *East African Journal* bitterly lamenting East Africa's literary barrenness: in classes and in discussion groups at his school in Iowa, USA, the names of Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe, J. P. Clark, Arnos Tutuola, Christopher Okigbo, Lewis Nkosi, Alex la Guma, Ezekiel Mphahlele and others, were on everybody's lips. But not a name from East Africa. But Okot p'Bitek is from East Africa. He is known for his translated works like *Song of Lawino*.

This part has four essays: “A Kind of Homecoming”, “What is my Color, What is my Race?” “George Lamming's *In the Castles of My Skin*” and “George Lamming and the Colonial Situation”. Critics feel the irony is that it was the experience of social and economic relations in Britain, more than in Kenya, that actually settled Ngugi's socialist conviction. Leeds provided an ideological framework for opinions that he already vaguely held. Two books which became major influences were Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*, that classic analysis of the psychology of colonialism; and Robert Tressell's *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, one of the most moving stories ever told of the plight of the working class in Britain. Echoes of Fanon are to be heard in some of these essays and Ngugi's plays and novel (*Homecoming* 81).

The next essay “What is my Color and What is my Race” is about the concept of the black, as a color and as a race. The great Afro-American writer W. E. B. DuBois once voiced the prophetic words that the problem of the 20th century was the problem of the colour line, 'the question as to how far the differences of race - which show themselves chiefly in the colour of the skin and the texture of the hair - will hereafter be made the basis of denying to over half the world the right of sharing to their utmost ability the opportunities and privileges of modern civilization.

The book *Homecoming* ends with Ngugi's appendix “On the Abolition of the English Department”, which in itself is a revolutionary thing as Mahatma Gandhi's concept of 'swaraj' for India's independence in terms of society, polity, economy, religion and art. It should be clear that Ngugi's conception of society, is of a complex in which politics, economics and culture are inextricably tied up, and nowhere on that spectrum can he see capitalism offering any hope of progress and social justice that can be said to be accessible to all.

Angus Calder's review of *Homecoming* in the *New Statesman*, London is as follows:

Firstly, when he (Ngugi) says that 'the writer . . . lives in, and is shaped by, history, he offers not dogma, but his own experience. He is, secondly, a subtle and resolute Marxist humanist. He builds on the achievements of older men - Fanon, Richard Wright, Nyerere and many more - who suffered in the vanguard of black literature and politics. (Calder ix).

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FORGING AN ABORIGINAL IDENTITY: A RE- PRESENTATION OF HISTORY IN KIM SCOTT'S 'BENANG'

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Abstract:

The main aim of this paper was to illustrate how Kim Scott's 'Benang' re-construct an Aboriginal Identity which was dismantled by the superior White race. Many Aborigines in Australia are separated from their families, culture, tradition, myths because of colonization and they are uncertain towards their own culture. One thing which differentiates 'Benang' from other historical novels is its 'Dual narrative' because it portrays the perspectives of both Aborigines and Whites without any bias in re-presenting history. The narrative discusses many Individual stories which are centre in re-presenting history. The hidden pains, sufferings, longing for homeland, nostalgia, loss of identity are expressed more deeply in individual history rather than factual history. 'Benang' not only includes individual stories but also official documents, newspaper articles, letters and reports. 'Benang' portrays the individual ways of coping with political and social pressure and how some Aborigines are hiding their aboriginal identity in order to be accepted by the superior White society. On the other hand it also portrays how an aboriginal man who has brought up in a white way of culture embraces Aboriginal culture. 'Benang' gives answers for the questions such as Who are Aborigines? What is Aboriginality from individual perspective? Why Aborigines have to hide their culture for mere survival? Why Aboriginal men are inferior towards themselves? Why the land is called as the land of wilderness? Why the Whites want to breed out the colour and change the Indigenous race into White race? Why identity becomes a question for stolen generation? Why reconstructing identity is important in present scenario? Australian Aborigines have given freedom officially in 2008 and Prime Minister Kevin Rudd has apologized for the sufferings and loss of the stolen generation. Even though they have embraced their freedom they are uncertain about their identity because they have no connection with the ancestral past. 'Benang' is not only a narrative of heartland but also a guide to retrieve one's aboriginal past and promotes positive approach to re-construct one's dismantled identity in the present scenario.

Key Words: *Nyoongar, colonization, colour, assimilation, archives.*

Benang is a historical novel which portrays one particular group of community called Nyoongar and its disconnections with its past and land. It is difficult to re-trace the dismantled community with minimum fragments of existing evidence. On the other hand, 'Benang' proved that it is possible to trace one's historical past through individual research of existing evidence in fragments. The protagonist Harley is an absorbing narrator who is tracing back his family history through absorbing Photographs, reports, letters and other evidences. All the incidents, issues and struggles faced by Aborigines are depicted in the novel through his eyes and it gives a positive hope to re-construct their identity.

The term 'Aborigine' and 'Aboriginality' is portrayed through many individual interpretations in *Benang*. 'Aborigine' refers to a native inhabitant of Australia and 'Aboriginality' refers to the spiritual bonds between the Aboriginal people and their place of heritage. This very definition clearly says the connection between the individual and the land. Here, this connectivity is presented through individual perspective and it varies from person to person. Ernest Solomon Scat, the grandfather of Harley wants to protect his grandchild away from the Aboriginal culture. According to him, Aborigines are uncivilized and the White way of living is considered as civilized. He always speaks about timetable, goal setting, and

importance of White heritage to Harley because he wants to wipe away the aboriginal way of thought in the child's mind. In this way, Ernest tried to disconnect Harley and his Aboriginal past. He says,

Language is a f-f-f-fence that keeps you out. Daniel Coolman will speak some Nyoongar. It was all curses, mind, a black tongue. That's the sort of the language it is. And now there's no one left to tell you what you want. You can never know. (39)

According to Mr. James Segel, Aborigines are filthy people with bad smell in their skin and fools to be used for free labour. He always scans his eyes on them to classify them according to their colour as half-blood, full blood like that. According to Mr. A.O.Neville, Aborigines are merely specimens and they are experimented in the process of breeding. According to Jack Chatalong, being an aborigine is like living within a sphere and it's a restriction to enjoy the privileges of Whites in the society.

Benang portrays the individual ways of coping with political and social pressure and how some Aborigines are hiding their aboriginal identity in order to be accepted by the superior White society. William Coolman belongs to Nyoongar ancestry as well as white ancestry. He will roam around with whites because of his white skin colour. Nobody will identify him as an aborigine very easily. To avoid the danger of being brought under the Aborigines Act of white government, he keeps himself away from his own community people including his mother Harriette. He marries a white woman from Germany and doesn't tell his children about his aboriginal ancestry and community. SandyOne Mason is another aboriginal man who tried very hard to adapt himself in white society. While A.O.Neville is writing a report on him, he refers to Sandy's colour, his character and his connections with his aboriginal family. After investigation, he has written that he has no connection with his family. Sandy has arranged marriages for his daughter in white man's way. According to him, this might be the only way to do things to survive in white society. Both William Coolman and SandyOne Mason decided to repress their Aboriginal ancestry because they thought that it would be the only way to lead a decent life in society. Jack Chatalong is sending an application to an officer to issue the exemption certificate. His application is rejected because of insufficient evidences to prove his disconnection between him and Aborigines. Jack attempts to come out of that aboriginal sphere merely to enjoy the privileges of Whites in the society but he failed. Kathleen tries to live like a White woman by wearing shoes, clean dress, soap and fresh water smells from her. After she married a White man, she faced many circumstances to disconnect her relationship with her family in order to live a comfortable white way of life. In this way, *Benang* portrays the effect of colonization and native people's uncertainty towards their own culture through individual history.

The most important aspect of the novel is its attempt of re-constructing history through Harley's research from the archives and his attempts to write and trace his family history. One of the important evidences is Photographs and its citations. He came to see the photographs of Aboriginal families in groups and classified according to their colours, with captions like "As I found them" (27), "Identical with above child"(27,28), "full blood, half- caste (first cross), quadroon, octoroon"(28). He has seen his own image among the photographs and he sees his father's photograph with the caption "Octoroon grandson (mother quarter caste (No.2), father Scottish). Freckles on the face are the only trace of colour apparent"(28). From these photographs Harley is able to analyze how his ancestors are diluted by whites to get more proportion of white blood among them and to wipe away the existence of black blood. This is the essential visual evidence for him to see the images of his ancestors who are the victims of lost identity and they have mixed identity based on their colours. He goes through papers and reads,

Breeding up. In the third or fourth generation no sign of native origin is apparent. The repetition of the boarding school process and careful breeding.... After two or three generations the advance should be so great that families should be living like the rest of the community. (28)

Through the paper he realizes that Aborigines are used as specimens in breeding experiment to

change the entire Aboriginal blood into White blood. Scott has written a narrative which not only talks about the paper texts and photos collected by Whites but also talks about the memories, the hidden voices and individual stories of the Nyoongar ancestors apart from the boundaries of lines.

The next important archive is the reports written by the Whites about Aborigines. Harley reads an extract from the file of Sandy Mason and sees the white way of describing an aborigine. The report has written by A.O. Neville where he describes Sandy on the basis of his colour and addressed him in the report as an half-caste but has a lighter skin. He inquires a local neighbour Mustle about Sandy's connections with his Aboriginal family. He investigates in the Repatriation department about Sandy's lung problem. After he realizes that Sandy has no connection with his family, he writes a report positively and sends to the official that he may have a possibility of getting a job. He has stored all the information merely for the social and biological absorption of the "Native Race" (46).

Harley sees some papers have evidences of laws implemented in the Aboriginal land by the Whites. The Aboriginal Protection Act is passed by the White government to take care of the Aborigines. This law deals with genealogies, personal histories, court cases, requests for marriage, employment and all the issues related to the Aborigines which is handled by Mr. A.O.Neville, the chief protector of Aborigines. These departments are merely established by the Whites to absorb the experiment of breeding and making the black community to adapt white way of living. Daniel and Harriette registered their marriage according to the law. After Daniel's death, his properties belong to Harriette. The next important archive is letters written by the individuals throughout the novel. The following letter is written by Jack Chatalong:

*Gebalup October 26, 1929
The Chief Protector of Aborigines*

Dear Sir,

In regards of the Aborigines Act has it I am a half-caste and I Don't mix up with the Blacks and I work Hard and Earn a living the same as a white man would my mother was a black woman and my father was a white man and I can Read and write But I have now Been barred from going Into a Pub and having a drink because I have got no permit so Could you do any thing in the way of granting me a certificate of exemption.

*Yours faithfully,
Jack Chatalong*

(64)

He has just applied for exemption certificate from the Chief Protector to enjoy the privileges of whites in the society but his application is rejected because of insufficient evidences to prove his disconnection with his Aboriginal community. To merely enjoy the privileges of White men, Jack has made attempts to come out from his community to lead a white way of superior life.

Through some papers Harley is able to know about the plight of stolen generation in residential schools. Many children are travelled by carriages and finally reached the settlement of Whites. He reads, "You were driven to the settlement like animals, really, but of course it was not for slaughtering. For training? Yes, perhaps. Certainly it was for breeding, according to the strict principles of animal husbandry"(94). He has observed clearly that many children are taken away from their aboriginal mother and brought up in settlements and residential schools. By separating the children from their parents, whites not only disconnected the children physically from the family but also from the land, culture, heritage and identity of oneself is completely decimated.

Harley has searched for his aboriginal past, culture and Nyoongar people. He has exiled from his

people and his aboriginal history has hidden by his parents. He has lost his connection with his Nyoongar community and he later comes back to his men. He overcomes the racist discourse, moves beyond racism and colonial power and finally joins with Nyoongar people. He has traced his family history through archives and finally reunites with his community. Harley's discovered aboriginality illustrates the importance of reconstructing identity in positive way apart from the negative consequences of colonization. *Benang* is a narrative of heartland because it talks about the native land of one community who lost it because of its various circumstances but at the same time, the narrative gives a positive hope of retracing one's lost identity. As in the words of Martin Renes, "*Benang* works with multiple shifts of perspective and polyphony, but adds fragmentary and nonlinear story telling techniques as narrative devices as well, equally breaking away from realist formulations of the autobiography and novel."

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**AESTHETIC PORTRAYAL OF POLITICAL DYNAMICS IN
RUSHDIE AND NAIPAUL'S WORKS**

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Salman Rushdie in his works *Midnight's Children* (1981) and *Shame* (1983) and V.S. Naipaul in *India: A Wounded Civilization* (1977) and *India: A Million Mutinies Now* (1990), focus on the dynamics of politics governing all aspects of life; regional and national, personal and social, individual and communal, fictional and historical, past and present, etc. Without locating self on the binary logic that tends to look for ways of reversing the order, these writers instead are interested in portraying simultaneously opposing, contradictory elements and treating them with a liberal dose of parody in order to force a rethinking of ways one perceives identity and history. While Rushdie spins fantastic tales constantly having a mix of the fictional and the historical, Naipaul's recording of 'facts' as conveyed through multiple, often opposing views also hovers on the boundaries between the authentic and the invented. Since both Rushdie and Naipaul focus on India in the pre as well as post-independence times, collectively they provide a wholesome multi-dimensional image of the prevalent dynamics of politics. Instead of having a mimetic mirroring of the social and the political systems, their focus is on an exploration of the way in which narratives and images structure the constructions of self, in the present and the past. Moreover their location in external zones lets them gaze at the native land with 'western' eyes, thus further politicizing the subject. In this paper an attempt has been made to unravel the multi-level dynamics of politics as portrayed in their works.

A study of dynamics of politics would anyway mean engaging in lively and endlessly debated discussions around concepts such as liberty, identity, oppression, resistance, identity, sedition, rights, justice, representation, etc. In today's postmodern world there has been an increasing awareness of the political context of all literary production. Traditionally expected to maintain 'fictional' and 'apolitical' stance, deliberately separate from mass culture of everyday life, literary writers of recent times instead, have been actively involved in writing stories aimed at exploring the prevailing value systems and dominant ideologies of the world around. There is close link between aesthetics and politics. Both Rushdie and Naipaul have given representation to the voice of people through characters drawn from the real life. The writers who choose the political themes for their works of art portray the political problems arising due to political ideologies. A political writer chooses "politics as a legitimate subject matter for his artistic imagination. Politics thus gets incorporated into the artistic fabric of a political novel" (Kaushik, 6). The writer making an analysis and scrutinizing political institutions and the political arrangement find abundant material for their writings. There is a "remarkable mix of situations, incongruent and facile, of human weakness and determination, of affluence and poverty, splendour and squalor, commitment and frivolous patience, ideals and hypocrisy" (Kaushik, 88). The Political and social environment thus provides sufficient matter for the telling of stories. The fictional or non-fictional works having politics as a basic theme illustrate the contemporary proceedings from the political arena. These works however are far from what may be termed as propaganda or mere journalistic commentaries. The credit goes to artistic capabilities and vision of the writers who incorporate story-telling with the existing political practices to narrativise a postmodern discourse.

Political dynamics are dictated and controlled by political men for their political targets. The forces

governing the activities are individuals as also the political parties. Political dynamics thus relate to the formulation and employment of strategies by the leaders of political parties as also those of resistance by the common people or small time minority figures. As both Rushdie and Naipaul project, the employment of political strategies depends on class structure, cultural norms and traditions of the society. As such Ideology, identity, traditions, culture, religion, and economy play significant role in the dynamics of politics. The economic, social and political problems concerning the inhabitants of a particular area and their reaction to those issues becomes the focus of Rushdie's and Naipaul's works.

In addition, the use of religion, region, caste, language, family and the coercive role played by capitalistic forces in politics also gets portrayed in the works of Rushdie and Naipaul. Both the writers Rushdie highlight the harmful impact of politics of the rulers. Instead of having a progressive approach, the post-independence leaders get involved in petty issues. Both the writers have highlighted major issues such as unemployment, poverty, corruption, child labour, lawlessness, and unprincipled political practices, etc., in their works. They have also analyzed the issues related to partition of the two countries and its consequences, dictatorship versus democracy in Pakistan, despotism by way of declaration of Emergency in India by Mrs. Indira Gandhi, and various conflicts due to region, religion and class, etc.

Rushdie and Naipaul, because of their familiarity of the West and the East, attempt to judge the political systems of both sides. Their double vision, they believe enables them to find flaws in the political system of the country of their origin. They find that the political practice of parties and leaders governing India and Pakistan do not have welfare of the people as their aim. As a result, the problems such as poverty, unemployment, oppression of the weaker sections, child labour, etc. remain unsolved though years have passed since the two countries got liberated from the colonial rule. It is noteworthy that both Rushdie and Naipaul have faced criticism and resentment for depicting their countries of origin as inferior and backward with flaws in the political system. Nevertheless it must be acknowledged that both have contributed richly towards a questioning and rethinking of the image of these nations in the western discourse as well as that 'imagined' by the natives themselves.

As Rushdie and Naipaul demonstrate, political manipulation and exploitation has continued in the postcolonial India. Both writers observe that the Indian leaders follow the legacy of the British. The British termed their rule as a 'civilizing mission' meant for making the Indian society better. The modern day rulers also claim that their politics aims at the welfare of the masses. The colonizers exploited the country economically; but the post-colonial politics of the rulers is no different. The self-centred politicians in the post-independence era have further added to the woes and sufferings of the masses. The tall election promises of eradication of poverty, unemployment, corruption, etc. remain mere empty slogans on the pages of the party manifestos. It is manifest that politics affects the community life and fiscal status of the people. In the post-modern world, politics has become the profiteering task of the elite, a complex game, and a tool for self-promotion.

Both Rushdie and Naipaul aim at exposing the self-centred politics of the Indian and Pakistani rulers who use community, religion, and the issues of language and region as their political tools. The writings depict the use of undemocratic and unethical means to grab power. The use of force to silence the oppositional voices is a common practice. The leaders spend their time and energy on trivial issues. The parties and the leaders ignore the real issues concerned with the nation and the people. As compared to the progressive approach of the rulers of the western countries, the rulers of the third world countries are yet to come out of the shackles of petty politics which dampens the progress of the countries. Rushdie and Naipaul thus have brought centre stage the operative politics before and after the independence of the nation.

Rushdie, perhaps the most influential as well as controversial writer of contemporary times, writes out of his personal experiences of life in three nations, i.e. India, England and Pakistan. He considers himself as a displaced citizen, a recluse to all the three countries, yet, this enables him to evaluate the

political and social systems of these countries. Often accused of being Eurocentric, an 'informer' of the West, Rushdie nevertheless has been celebrated for writing immensely provocative works about contemporary history mixed with fantasy and fiction.

Rushdie's fictional works are centred on the themes of politics and political practices, corruption, injustices, despotism, fundamentalism, terrorism, oppression, fragmentation, regionalism, emigration/migration, nationalism, multiculturalism, etc. The use of magic realism makes his work outstanding. Masterfully blending in his narrative, the fantastic characters and events with the historical ones, Rushdie successfully portrays the intricacies of politics. He uses the technique of parody in his narrative of the dynamics of politics. Rushdie's drawing of parallels of history with the fictional accounts makes for a grippingly unique narrative. The fictional characters are linked with the actual political and social figures of both the colonial as well as the postcolonial times. Rushdie's satirical portrayal of the leading political figures arouses interest among readers both from the East and the West. The art of story-telling displays Rushdie's command over the genre, craft, creativity and originality. Rushdie's use of language and parables makes him a much read author.

Rushdie's both works *Midnight's Children* and *Shame* though seemingly a satire on Pakistan and India, point out the ugliness lurking beneath the prevalent self-centred politics. Rushdie in his texts, unveils the strategies, tools, violence, manipulative practices, corruption, moves and counter-moves and political vendetta to remain powerful, etc. For the readers already familiar with the land and the prevalent political discourse, the act of reading becomes a double activity, involving a reading of the written word as well as its evaluation on the basis of knowledge already available with oneself from multiple resources. For readers not versed with the details however, the works are sufficiently enticing and educational. The focus on the traumatic experience of partition and the controversial declaration of emergency leads to narrating of parallel history, bringing into discourse what official history ignores or silences. It may be concluded that Rushdie with his powerful works forces a discussion on political happenings affecting national as well as personal histories in the contemporary lives.

Rushdie considers the partition of the country as disastrous for the masses of both India and Pakistan. Saleem narrates the events before the partition of India through Amina Sinai's nightmare in which she saw bloodshed in certain areas of Punjab. Saleem shows how Vanita who had "unproductive labour for eight hours" and then the "first pangs hit her just as, hundreds of miles away M.A Jinnah announced the midnight birth of a Muslim nation . . ." (111 *Midnight's Children*,) Rushdie portrays how the communal riots badly hit the masses especially in the bordering state of Punjab.

Rushdie successfully makes visible the gap existing between theory and practice as he portrays political rulers functioning as per personal ambition instead of thinking in terms of welfare of the common masses. They are always on the look out to derive ways and means to remain in power. The note of disenchantment and drabness in Rushdie's novels depicts the degeneration of politics in modern India. He rightly points out in his narratives that the political practices, strategies and policies of post-independence leaders are in no way different from those of the colonizers. The colonial politics aimed at maintaining political hegemony over Indian masses. The politics of the leaders of post-independence India aim to create divisions among the different sections/communities. Rushdie's works reflect the conflict between the religious communities. The politicians pretend to be secular but they are always using the communal card in their actual politics. They aim to win over the majority community as that would be indispensable to sustain power. Rushdie also demonstrates how the political leaders and parties make a mockery of democracy. He describes how Iskander uses force to win elections. Even after the win he is not satisfied as he wanted the opponents squashed "like cockroaches under his boot" (193, *Shame*). The politics of manipulative practices has become the order of the day. The use of money and muscle power makes a mockery of democracy. While there is no uniform civil law, the administrative agencies such as police or judiciary, etc. sometimes operate under arbitrary politics. Rushdie also highlights how gender prevalent in

politics as per social norms is patriarchal. Rushdie shows that in the game of politics, there is no place for individualism, principles and moral values. The allegiances of the men yearning for political supremacy are only transitory. Rushdie's texts emerge as a documentation of the present-day political scenario of India and Pakistan.

Like Rushdie, Naipaul also writes works which explore the dynamics of politics. Unlike Rushdie who mixes the fictional with the historical, Naipaul writes about political and social events as seen through the eyes of multiple narrators/witnesses. Naipaul also writes about the land of his forefathers, i.e. India to portray the predicament of the people in a nation on the threshold of a new history. Being an outsider, he often is impatient about and intolerant of the religious, regional, caste-based and linguistic divisions present in the Indian society. Naipaul's works portray the implications of the established dynamics of politics that have 'wounded' the nation. He has highlighted the political issues and problems of Indian democracy. But he also highlights the fact that real problem lies elsewhere:

The crisis of India is not only political or economic. The larger crisis is of wounded civilization that has at last become aware of its inadequacies and is without the intellectual means to move ahead. (18, *India: A Wounded Civilization*)

Visiting India, all he can focus initially is on poverty, conflicts, and clashes due to religion, caste, region and corruption. The disintegration of Indian society according to Naipaul is due to the turmoil and disturbances caused due to ethnicity, language and regional differences which has become a great hurdle in homogenizing the Indians. Indian political, social and economic crisis can be attributed to the above mentioned differences. It may be argued that interactions with a few persons or sections of society as done by Naipaul, cannot be considered as representative of the Indian society or culture. Naipaul's condemnation of his own cultural ancestry displays lack of emotional bond yet the fact that he chooses to write about India indicates his attachment. His earlier travelogues portray a gloomy picture of India, however his mood changes while writing *India: A Million Mutinies Now*.

Naipaul's overall attitude however is that of looking down at India as an inferior country. He finds that the divisive politics of Indian leaders has led to the creation of boundaries among people belonging to different communities/castes, regions and speaking different languages. Naipaul is not very hopeful of Indians being able to forge unity as a nation. Naipaul describes how the religious and political conflicts leads to violence. Naipaul gets the knowledge from Anwar who describes about the clashes between Muslim and Hindu communities:

...clashes between children which turn into blood feuds with adults, and I feel helpless to do anything about it. Fights take place between neighbours all the time. When they are Hindus and Muslims - Hindus are in a minority here - it turns into a communal riot. It gets very bad during cricket matches. (32, *India: A Million Mutinies Now*)

It's true that India has suffered a lot due to the internal conflicts. Instead of working for the Nation's development Indians indulge in infightings on the name of religion and community. Naipaul's adverse judgments on India and her public have led to his facing sharp criticism from critics who feel that a visitor like Naipaul cannot be said to possess an Indian sensibility. As such he is perceived to be portraying a dogmatic view of Indian politics and society. Due to his double identity, Naipaul has double ideology leading to cultural and ideological conflicts. It may be argued that Naipaul's portrayal of India is based on his interviews/interactions with a few individuals and groups. It is difficult to pass judgment on the basis of opinions formed from a select group of people. Naipaul's condemnation of cultural ancestry makes it clear that he is not emotionally tied to the land of ancestors. His narratives depict a Eurocentric viewpoint about India. Naipaul as a diasporic writer is seen as a man showing his 'superiority' by portraying the negativity in the Indian political and social system. Naipaul however is attached to the land of his forefathers as he also points towards the negative influence of colonial domination on Indian culture. Naipaul thus presents a view which may be taken as that of an outsider. His sensitive understanding of multiple issues regarding

India could not have been possible without his having the ability to be one with the people. He has his gaze at India even if mostly it is judgmental often without sympathy but insightful and eventually optimistic. Naipaul in the final analysis may be writing for the west only even though at the same time he expects the reader to possess a familiarity with the subject.

Naipaul's disillusionment with India is quite evident from his writings. He may be seen as a man who is not emotionally tied to India. But Naipaul's judgment about India cannot be ruled out simply on the basis of his being an outsider. Having experience of two nations and two cultures, Naipaul is in a position to judge the Indian society, its political and social problems and the areas in which the nation needs to work upon for further progress. He comes out with startling truths about Indian society and politics of the rulers. Naipaul's writing in English about India is a political act. Writing in the language of the other, he may be seen as serving the interests of the former colonizer or else indulging in a financially viable activity. Moreover his self-assumed role of an evaluator of the prevalent dynamics of politics, though full of insight, nevertheless reflects an underlying political overtone also.

Both Rushdie and Naipaul point out towards the menace of corruption that has posed the biggest threat in India. The leaders before independence considered politics as a noble activity. They were simple and straightforward and were ready to sacrifice for the cause of the nation. The leaders of independence era are no more considered honest. They are seen as shrewd tacticians indulging in all sorts of corrupt practices. They retort to manipulative practices to remain in power while the masses serve as their tools. The Indian politics according to Naipaul and Rushdie is no longer based on principles and issues as it has become a personality driven game. Economic problems of the people lead to the problem of unemployment. Naxalite and militant movements are resultant of the unrest among the unemployed youth. The writers also make an analysis of the contentious issues concerned with the minority communities.

Rushdie and Naipaul thus have created a multi-dimensional, complex body of work that explores the dynamics of politics in the contemporary times. They deploy different styles to their writings; however both have been successful in pointing towards India as a rich source of subject material suitable for art. By assuming subject position for themselves, they have thus been able to turn the tables on the colonizer. No doubt their explorations reveal multiple gaps, faults and problems prevalent in the society, yet the treatment also indicates a maturity of perception as they are quite at home taking an unsparing look at themselves. There is a fair analysis of the deficiencies and shortcomings which by itself acknowledges scope for improvement. Ultimately pointing towards the dangers in the way politics is practiced, is also to assert an abiding faith in democracy. Though writing as outsiders, at the same time, Rushdie and Naipaul may be seen as writing from within the narrative of the nation, questioning, parodying and revising the prevalent dynamics of politics, thus richly contributing to the contemporary literary discourse.

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19
**FUTILITY OF CONJUGAL RELATIONSHIP IN
 MANJU KAPUR'S *THE IMMIGRANT***

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Abstract:

*This research paper attempts to evaluate the significance of marital relationships in an alien location with reference to Manju Kapur's *The Immigrant*. The protagonists namely Ananda and Nina find it difficult to balance their Canadian experience and Indian essences amidst a sexually insipid marriage. However, being married in Canada is a double whammy for Nina as she distances from her native land, people and endures her loneliness in a land where she knows no one. She also feels displeased about her husband's sexual 'performance' which makes her despondent. This novel showcases their hypocritical relationship and effortlessness of cementing marriage resulting in bearing the brunt of their misdeeds.*

The focus of this research mainly stays on the sexual aspect of their relationship which is also one of the main themes of this novel. Traditions and social mores push physical aspect of marriage to the background, while upholding that sanctity of marriage go beyond carnal pleasure of married couple. However Canadian culture gives complete freedom to a couple to walk out of marriage if one is dissatisfied in it. Here, Nina embraces the Canadian attitude towards marriage and refuses to compromise with Ananda over physical and emotional issues. She studies, works and aims at financial, emotional and moral independence which put her marriage at stake.

Keywords: *Marriage, Immigrant, Sexuality, Patriarchy, Alienation.*

Introduction

Indian women writers have gloriously made their mark in the international literary scenario through their portrayal of independent and deep thinking woman. Contemporary writers such as Jhumpa Lahiri, Arundhati Roy, Anita Nair, Bharati Mukherjee, Gita Hariharan have played a pivotal role in giving a voice to their women characters by lending them a voice or an opinion which talks about their side of the story. We see in their characters having shed stereotypical image of woman: silent victim within patriarchal rules who endures pain inflicted by society. This new 'breed' of Indian women in fiction speaks against social mores, asserts her individuality with an awakened sensibility towards the world around her. It is interesting to note this strand in the following words, "Apart from love, sex and contemporary reality, Indian English novelists have written feminist novels. Women novelists assert the rights of women to live their life in their own way" (Das, 57).

Manju Kapur is one of the eminent Indian English writers who portrays the transformation of Indian women from being submissive nonchalant to liberated and empathically aware about their individuality. Her works represent the issues faced by the contemporary women - their will to seek self-identity, fulfillment and liberation from the shackles tradition and social mores. She writes about the desperate efforts of a middle class Indian woman seeking a life outside the cobweb of responsibility within traditionally oriented family. Her works are woven within the conflict between the tradition and modernity.

'*The Immigrant*' set in India and Canada in the mid-seventies revolves around the marital relationship of Ananda and Nina. This novel talk about the tribulations and struggles of an immigrant Nina, who forsakes her career, country, independence and her whole social life only to fit into a patriarchal institution called marriage. Like all the other novels of Kapur, this novel too deals with the theme of survival of a woman against all odds that are pitted against her.

A major part of this novel deals with the theme of marriage and its implications on a young couple Ananda and Nina where Nina travels to Canada to live with her husband. Sexual dysfunction forms the major theme of the book which results in the subsequent problems in their relationship.

The Reality of Marriage

The protagonist of this novel is Nina, a thirty year old lecturer in English at Delhi University who gets married to a Canadian dentist Ananda Sharma and relocates to Halifax, Nova Scotia and experiences her new life in a new set-up. The author often talks about the immigrant experience felt by Indian diaspora outside their country through the novel. However, the theme of the novel is about the complexities of having an arranged marriage and its ramifications in a place where this institution is not sacred anymore and therefore is free of societal expectations. The marriage ceases to be a lifelong affair and dies slowly along with the Indian-ness of the newly migrated bride. The initial fervor of this marriage is retained by the physical needs of the couple, who are unable to find sexual gratification in their respective lives. Gradually they get to know the unpleasant realities of marital life. Anupama Chowdhury writes-

“Socio-political problems of contemporary life portrayed in terms of individual quest for identity and freedom along with a sensitive handling of issues like gender, sexuality and diaspora make *The Immigrant* a novel with a difference” (41)

The story of this novel takes place in India and Canada. However the central theme of the novel, like every other novel of Manju Kapur remains the same. Nina is a rebel, who fights to find her identity and independence throughout the novel. She is keen to get married but only to make her mother happy and relieved of her responsibility to get her daughter married to a good household. It is the societal expectation which would not let Nina work, make a career and look after her widowed mother but would force her to leave everything and stay with her husband with or without a career.

“The major topic of conversation in the last eight years had been Nina's marriage- who, when, where, how? The hopes each conversation generated gradually lost their lustre as the years went by and nothing changed. From where could fresh possibilities be unearthed on the eve of her thirtieth birthday? The lack of these, reflected in her mother's dull and mournful eyes, was what she was going home to.” (Kapur, 3)

Her mother's desperation to get Nina married sets the background of her struggles to fit into her eventual marriage to an NRI Ananda Sharma, which is arranged by the girl's mother and boy's sister. However it is not more than a physical fascination for the couple who are initially very happy about the marriage. Nina gives up her teaching career and leaves her mother in order to be with her husband in Canada. At the onset, everything looks perfect and dreamy. Nina and Ananda are very happy in their small world which is made more beautiful by their grocery shopping in the evening, dining out at the Indian restaurant and being happy in the company of each other. One thing which leaves Nina pleasantly surprised is Ananda's self-sufficiency and independence in doing the household chores. It is quite the contrary for Nina who is brought up with the beliefs that a wife has to take care of the daily needs of her husband. Since Nina doesn't work there, it becomes natural for her to do daily chores for her husband. Ananda however has been accustomed in doing his work all by himself and doesn't ask Nina to do it for him.

The lack of dependency often makes a couple less attached to each other. It is the Canadian way of life where husband and wife share each other's work. It is very different from the way Indian marriage works. Being from India and adapting the western way of living could be quite confusing for any first

generation immigrant. However, Ananda and Nina have one thing in common loneliness in absence of their families. Ananda has his dental practice and a small circle of friends there. But Nina is all alone and without a job which makes her feel depressed. So she passes her time reading, sleeping, and shops for junk food during her solitary outings at local food store.

Ananda, on the other hand is fighting his own battles in Canada .He suffers from premature ejaculation which has resulted in insignificant sexual activity in his life. This again becomes one of the reasons of marrying an Indian girl who would probably overlook his sexual activity and remain content in the given circumstance. Ruth Scurr notes-

“Ananda has been professionally successful, and has made a small number of trusted friends beyond the circle of his relatives, but he brings to his marriage a more profound kind of loneliness centred on his sense of sexual inadequacy. He has tried and failed to have relations with Western women. He suffers from premature ejaculation: a condition he thinks an understanding and loyal Indian bride will cure.”

Nina has experienced sex with her ex-boyfriend Rahul, her commitment phobic teacher fifteen years older than her, who like a serial lover, enjoys a physical relationship with her and moves on with his life. This becomes a reason for her to be physically dissatisfied with Ananda whom she considers a perfect husband. She immediately begins to compare Ananda and Rahul, which makes her feel emptier than before.

“Nina had imagined a very different consummation. As she lay in bed she tried to transform reality into scenario that would not confuse or upset her. Togetherness was the important thing. To be critical of how it was achieved was against the spirit of marriage.

Involuntary comparisons arose. Rahul, with his obsessive talk of sex, endlessly curious about what she felt in what position, this technique versus that. So much so that at times she felt objectified. At his desire to penetrate from behind she had been outraged, what did he think she was? His little virgin he replied, who needed to be educated so they could feel as much pleasure as possible. That was what love was all about.

Later she giggled, and you call me a virgin.

You still have vestiges, I have to be very careful to remove them all.

Virginal or not, what she had felt with Rahul was alive” (Kapur 91)

Nina is very keen to become a mother soon. However when she discovers her husband's sexual inadequacy and his awkwardness in accepting it and getting it treated rather than spraying anesthesia on his reproductive organ to elongate the climax, she feels disheartened and gives up the idea.

“Dispassionately, Nina observed that Ananda got offensive when he felt attacked. This was not a nice trait, but she ignored it for the moment, wondering whether she was wrong in thinking that her appetite for sex was greater than her husband's. It was true though, he did need to be rested, his hands needed to be absolutely steady and he often complained of pain in his lower back. She wondered whether she needed to be more empathic, but the state of permanent sexual frustration she was in made it difficult. It grieved her that Ananda had no notion of how she felt. Her idea of matrimony was a husband who was a little more alert to the discreet clues she let drop.” (Kapur 181)

“Though married, the last time was nowhere in sight. After dinner, when she tried to get cosy with Ananda he would often say later, I am tired. And Nina would feel humiliated at what seemed a reversal of gender roles; she was the monstrous cornucopia of appetite.” (Kapur 181)

Nevertheless, Ananda too suffers from an inferiority complex and being a male, he would never disclose his feelings to his wife. It is one of the reasons which prevent him to meet the gynecologist Dr. Abbot as he fears about the revelation of his condition. He has already been unlucky in relationships with

western girls owing to their outspoken nature in their dissatisfaction with his sexual performance. This is one of the main reasons for him to find an Indian wife who would respect him in every way and would never contest his sexuality. He is therefore taken aback when Nina openly tells him that there is a scope for some improvement in their physical relationship.

“That night it was Ananda who lay awake instead of Nina. Why was he like this? If his wife felt there was something wrong, despite fooling him initially, what hope was there? In the porn he read men could go on forever, ejaculate, then back to it for a few more hours. Was this pleasure never to be his?” (Kapur 184)

“The tragedy was that he was only exploring the possibility of sexual therapy now, when marriage restricted his choices. For a brief moment he looked at Nina's sleeping form with hatred” (Kapur 185)

He secretly goes to California for two weeks sexual therapy. There, he also learns tricks to control his climax from a surrogate partner to cure himself. Nina feels betrayed when she learns about the treatment from him. Her consternation is short-lived when she notices improvement in Ananda's performance in the bed. This happiness is not able to last longer when her husband fails to satisfy her. Nina wonders if she is fitting into role of an ideal Indian wife who keeps silent about these situations and would never consider it as a hindrance in a happy married life.

“Distance grew between them. Nina felt imprisoned by the stress, and assured him that there were other things beside sex in marriage. Relationships had to develop, feelings had to be shared, surely he understood that? It was only her tension about a child and her age that drove her to find solution. Otherwise she knew things took time, of course she did” (Kapur 185)

These problems in her marital life make Nina miserable and frustrated, so she works part-time in the Halifax memorial library and joins a women support group who address the problems of the members and counsel each other. This group is made on the strengthening the beliefs of women on the ideologies of feminism. This makes Nina less guilty about her desires and inspires her to find her feet in Canada. She also wants to divert her attention from her husband and fight her loneliness since she knows she cannot have a child soon. “I miss home-I miss a job- I miss doing things. I feel like a shadow. What am I but your wife?” (Kapur 237). Frustrated and dissatisfied, Nina enrolls herself for a degree in library science which guarantees her employment and independence in the foreign country.

Ananda with his newly found confidence regarding his sexual performance after his visit to San Francisco begins an extramarital affair with Mandy, his young receptionist. It makes him avoid his wife and so he doesn't mind her going to work. In fact, he is the one who creates distance between him and Nina in order to spend his time and money on his white girlfriend, who has left him awestruck and given him physical satisfaction. His relationship with his wife has always been formal and he has always been under a pressure to maintain a clean and professional reputation with his wife.

“Mandy encouraged him to be wild, free, uninhibited, playful. With Nina, he was his mother's son, his sister's brother, the good husband, playing out a role he had been trained for since childhood. Nine years in Canada had not dimmed the need for this person. No wonder he had not been able to succeed with white women before. He needed to stabilize this part of his life. There were many unseen pressures that had spoken through his body.” (Kapur 242)

He likes to explore his wild side with Mandy with whom he feels young and playful. His adultery reaches its peak when he sends his wife's to India for a vacation. Ananda becomes more experimental and enjoys one night stand with random women by passing off as an Egyptian like Omar Sharif. Clearly, there is no room left for reconciliation with his Indian avatar and his western experience.

Nina befriends his classmate Anton who is a Russian staying in America. Their friendship turns

into a steamy affair and Nina discovers sexual gratification with Anton which she has failed to find with her husband. She goes on with her relationship with her 'friend with benefits' while being a good wife to Ananda. At this juncture, their relationship turns hypocritical and both began to cheat on each other. Surprisingly, the spark of physicality which has been absent in their relationship finds its way into their respective affairs leaving both happy and satisfied but guilty at the same time.

Soon Nina realizes that Anton is no better than Rahul and is only interested in sex than anything else. When the truth dawns upon her, she feels exploited, used and abstains from having a relationship with Anton. However, worse happens when Anton rapes her in Ottawa while they are out on a study tour. To compound her sorrows, she comes to know about her mother's death in India.

When she comes back from India after her mother's last rites, she feels broken and despondent. This is when she comes to know about Ananda's secret affair when she discovers a golden hair on her pillow. This revelation breaks her from inside and she realizes the futility of Indian values in the absence of Indian surroundings and people who sanction the sacred bond of marriage.

Thus, she breaks all her ties and goes to New Brunswick hoping for a job and independence from all Ananda and her Indian roots which have begun to haunt her.

“The things that might have made separation in Indian difficult for Nina were hers to command in Canada. Financial self-sufficiency, rental ease, social acceptability. She looked down the path on which there would be no husband and saw the difficulties, the pain and the solitude. Nevertheless treading it was not unimaginable.” (Kapur 333)

Neelam sums up the whole novel beautifully in these lines-

“Nina accepts the bitter truth of her jarred relationship; if she asks questions, she has to confess her own crime also. Nina never finds an answer why they betrayed each other.” (138)

Ashok Kumar makes an apt observation which brings out the naked truth behind the real faces of protagonists of this novel.

“Compatibility between husband and wife is indispensable. But in the present novel sex overtakes other factors needed for compatibility between husband and wife. Nina and Ananda both want of join the bandwagon of liberal sex. Nina gets a white male partner Anton and Ananda gets a white female body of Mandy. Both deceive each other. Social, psychological, and ideological factors remain on the fringe while sexual factors remain at the centre.” (65)

Conclusion

This novel is an attempt to understand the complexities of an Indian arranged marriage of Nina and Ananda. To compound the matters further, sexual dissatisfaction becomes a reason for the unhappy and phony relationship of Ananda and Nina where there are deliberate attempts to conceal the topic of sexuality behind the veil of Indian culture. And then, the exposure to Canadian culture gives them a chance to cheat on each other. They both indulge in extra marital relationships and discover physical intimacy and sexuality outside their marriage. This makes their marriage, love, trust and relationship crumble and results in their ultimate separation.

Kapur doesn't give any rules and regulations for a successful marriage in this novel. She paints a brutally honest picture of an arranged marriage which could easily run into troubled waters in absence of social norms and patriarchal ideologies. However, she makes it clear that a happy marriage requires a certain level of transparency and honesty between two people. Without these traits, a relationship would not last long. This is how Nina and Ananda break each other's trust and ultimately jeopardize their relationship without any hope for reconciliation.

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EXISTENTIAL ELEMENT IN SALMAN RUSHDIE'S *MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN*

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Abstract:

*Salman Rushdie's **Midnight's Children** is a remarkable success in its mixture of history, myth and autobiography. Steeped in fantasy, the novel pictures the cryptic and multi-layered reality of life in India. Rusdie, undoubtedly, finds his voice in the novel. It is a literary response to a series of a real life-situation masterfully fictionalized through illusions, direct and indirect. It alludes to the political trouble and turmoil of the country in the last quarter of the 20th century. It covers about six decades in the history of Indian sub-continent.*

The present paper makes an attempt to explore the existential problem of Saleem Senai the protagonist of the novel. The problem of existentialism has been made the subject of a number of creative writings and it has been discussed at length from various perspectives. The 'recurring themes' that comes under existentialism in one way or the other are impotency, existence before essence, alienation or estrangement; fear, dread and anxiety; encounter with nothingness; freedom, choice, and responsibility; finitude and temporality, emotional life of man; authentic failure of communication and death etc. But one should keep it in mind that all these characteristics of existentialism cannot be found in one particular writer. A piece of literature, therefore, dealing with the problem of man's essential misery and suffering, frustration and loneliness failure and sorrow, alienation and ennui is known as the part of existentialist literature.

Existentialism comes with the philosophers of nineteenth century as Soren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche and others. It was known in continental philosophy and literary personalities like Samuel Beckett, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Franz Kafka, and Eugene Ionesco with the contribution of their works. In the years of 1940s and 1950s, French existentialists as Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus and Simone de Beauvoir wrote fictions which popularized the themes of alienation, absurdity, dread, boredom, nothingness, commitment and freedom. But it achieved its greatest popularity in the following years of II World War with the literary works of Jean Paul Sartre.

Saleem Senai, the protagonist of the novel makes the reader believe that his parents are Ahmed and Amina Senai, a wealthy Indian couple. In the middle of the novel it becomes clear, though, that after the delivery, the nurse Mary Pereira swapped two babies, so Saleem is actually not the midnight's child Saleem Senai, but he is swapped for Shiva. Saleem is the child of a poor man Wee Willie Winkie and his wife Vanita. Nine months before the delivery, Vanita had sexual intercourse with the English man William Methwold, so that Saleem turns out to be of Anglo-Indian decent. This is something he constantly denies and rather chooses to believe that Ahmad and Amina are still his parents.

Saleem, right from the beginning comes to the grips of existential problems. He is born at the midnight of 15th of August 1947. He is forced to accept that his destiny is bound with the country. Being a midnight child he is born with divide-self witting or unwitting, he has to play a vital role because he believes he is tied to the history of a vast nation. Here the nurse, Mary Pereira who thinks that she is doing something good, hurls Saleem into a life of continual guilt and loss of identity by changing his name tags with another midnight child Shiva. Observing all of the things, it can be that Saleem Senai is not really what his name is but a product of unlawful relation between a leaving colonial Methwold and Vanita a poor

Indian woman. Here, too, his identity is not pure but a strange mixture of British and French blood. Thus, Saleem Senai remains in difficulty on the horns of dilemma right from the very beginning he is on the earth. Further, the act of Mary Pereira creates problem in his life. He is given into the hands Ahmina and Ahmad Senai, a Muslim parents and their own child is into the care of a Hindu family.

One of the problems of Saleem's fragmented identity is that he thinks himself unholy. Thinking that he is not exactly a real member of the Senai family and does not share blood ties with it, he carries his proposal of love to his sister Jamila forgetting all about the relation of many years with her. Saleem cannot distinguish between just and unjust, real and unreal. As he himself remarks,

“Reality is a question of perspective; the further you get from the past, the more concrete and plausible it seems - but as you approach the present, it inevitably seems more and more incredible.”(p.165)

However, Saleem's failures provide an aspect of reality which brings forth several confrontations-centre vs. ex-centric, real facts vs. imaginary facts etc. The readers come to realize what actually happened is an impossibility and unnecessary effort for Saleem's endless self-consciousness, revealing more truth than attempted one. The only truth is:

“It was- or am I wrong? I must rush on; things are slipping from me all the time a day of horrors. It was then- unless it was another day.”(p.413)

Both the action and the character emphasize the theme of identity in many ways in the novel. This identity is shown as confused, fractured, merged and superimposed. Sometimes, Saleem is also brought down to the level of an animal. As Saleem grows up, he comes across a number of existentialist problems. Saleem's father, Ahmad keeps him a powerful blow on his face which makes him permanent deaf with his left ear. He finds his own body disfigured. The face of Saleem is round quite unattractive and has a big nose like cucumber and disease afflicted body. During the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965, he is hit by the silver spittoon and loses his memory, even his own name. He has been kept as dog in the form of a man for several years and a member of canine for intelligence works, in a type of 'Cutia' unit. At this his body got fully numb. During the emergency, the fragmented identity comes full circle. He is made a sub human which remains him impotent for the rest of his life.

Saleem has another problem of his parentage. He is to have many mothers and fathers. Vanita, the poor woman is his biological mother but Amina is the mother that rears him up. Mary Pereira becomes another one who brings him to the house by changing the surname etc. It is the lady with whom he passes the rest of the days of his life. Pia Aunt is his foster mother. In the sequence of fatherhood, Methwold is his father by blood. But Ahmed Senai who brings him up is also his father. The German snake doctor who confers Saleem a new life by curing him is another father to him. Zulfikar in Pakistan prefers him as his son and Picture Singh, the snake charmer who rescues him from Bangladesh and brings him back to India is the last one whom Saleem considers his fathers.

The fluttering psyche of Saleem can be felt when working in a pickle factory, at the age of thirty one, he preserves his history in pickle jars. He desires what he calls meaning by writing himself. He feels the significance that his adult life has taken away from him. According to Michael Gorra, Saleem “sees himself suffering from a peculiarly, Indian disease... [an] urge to encapsulate the whole of reality”

The thought of his physical weaknesses frustrates him when Saleem finds his hair losing, one joint of his finger, even he loses his sinuses and is castrated, and as a result, he disintegrates into 630 million fragments which is the same number as the number of inhabitants of India when the novel ends in 1978. Severally, he says that to understand him one has to swallow a world and he tries to understand his own fragmented identity. Thus, 'his sense of self is often conflicted and contradictory'.

A quarrel about the class-room door takes place at the time of his school dance and when it closes,

the middle finger of Saleem cuts off:

“I look my hand out of pure curiosity. My finger has become a fountain: red liquid spurts out to the rhythm of my heartbeat”(p.235)

He is, then, taken to the hospital where his mother meets him. The doctor asked about his blood group but Amina does not know and she tells the doctor that she is an A and her husband O. They are both rhesus positive. After the result of blood-test, Saleem is neither A nor O and rhesus negative. At this, Saleem father, Ahmad Senai suspects that Saleem is not his son. Saleem deeply thinks on this as:

“Opposition of inside and outside! Because a human being, inside himself, is anything but a whole, anything but homogeneous; all kinds of everywhichthing are jumbled up inside him, and he is one person one minute and another next. The body, on the other hand, is homogeneous as anything. Invisible, a one piece suit, a sacred temple ,if you will. It is important to preserve this wholeness. But the loss of my finger (which was conceivably foretold by the pointing digit of Raleigh's fisherman), not to mention the removal of certain hair from my head, has undone all that. Thus we enter into a state of affairs which is nothing short of revolutionary; and its effect on history is bound to be pretty damn startling. Uncork the body, and God knows what you permit to come tumbling out. Suddenly you are forever other than you were; and the world becomes such that parents can cease to be parents, and love can turn to hate. And these, mark you, are only the effects on private life. The consequences for the sphere of public action, as will be shown, are- were- will be no less profound.”(p.236-7)

The reader, therefore, comes to feel that Saleem is emotionally shattered, for he does not feel worthy for his parents' love and affection. And he is lost in the world of depression and isolation contemplating of his real identity and existence.

Thus, with his fragmented self, Saleem finds his existence surrounded with a number of puzzling questions that torment his soul. His life passing through different phases witnesses such rapid changes as overwhelm his psyche. In a series of fleeting relationship Saleem is unable to associate himself with a single one and keeps on faltering trying to grasp the elusive threads which despite his best effort are beyond his reach.

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**MUTED SOULS: THE POLITICS OF LIVING IN SELECTED
 STORIES OF YIYUN LI**

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Abstract:

*The subtraction of the self at the hands of political ideologies is not an unconventional trope in modern narratives. Twentieth century, particularly, witnessed the roping in of literature as an ideological tool to disseminate political propaganda much to the chagrin of creative artists in China. The sweeping revolutions of the past century effected an entire generation of people whose very lives were defined by the political ideology of the state. Modern Chinese writers have tried to distance themselves from the diktats of the government by exploring themes and techniques hitherto prohibited. However, one cannot wish away the continuing influence the power structures have on literature; its production, reception, and appreciation. Yiyun Li is a Chinese- American writer who has contributed to the growing popularity of Chinese Literature worldwide. Five of her short stories have been chosen for analysis in this paper as it attempts to explore the prismatic experience of living in modern China vis-à-vis the inherent political structures; an experience which will be familiar to everyone, everywhere. The stories selected for the study are “Kindness”, “A Man Like Him”, “House Fire”, “Sweeping Past” from *Gold Boy, Emerald Girl* and “A Thousand Years of Good Prayers” from the collection of the same name.*

Keywords: *Politics, Authority, Chinese Culture, Yiyun Li, Short stories.*

The subtraction of the self at the hands of political ideologies is not an unconventional trope in modern narratives. Yiyun Li's fiction is a testament to the understated yet lingering presence of the political in the personal space. A promising Chinese émigré, Yiyun Li's short story collection *A Thousand Years of Good Prayers* (2005) was a runaway success prompting a film adaptation of the same name. Her debut novel *The Vagrants* (2009), with the Cultural Revolution as its background, sparked many reflections on Chinese political history. Her second collection of short stories *Gold Boy, Emerald Girl* (2010) is a collection of nine stories where history, politics and folklore enmesh the human condition. Her recent works include *Kinder Than Solitude* (2013), *The Story of Gilgamesh* (2014), and the autobiographical *Dear Friend, from My Life I Write to You in Your Life* (2017). In her muted yet articulate writing, Yiyun Li creates a portrait of a time and place that is simultaneously haunting and melancholic. This paper attempts to explore the prismatic experience of living in modern China vis-à-vis the inherent political structures; an experience which will be familiar to everyone, everywhere. The stories selected for the study are “Kindness”, “A Man Like Him”, “House Fire”, “Sweeping Past” from *Gold Boy, Emerald Girl* and “A Thousand Years of Good Prayers” from the collection of the same name.

The political resonance that pervades all levels of Chinese society colour the stories a monochromic gray. The characters constantly find themselves facing situations which have more to do with the authority of the dominant political ideology than their own inconsequential fortunes. The protagonist of “Kindness”, Moyan, is a 41 year old unmarried and orphaned women living in a dingy apartment in Beijing. Her extreme passivity and withdrawal from the world are her self-imposed mechanisms for survival. Having never been close to her indifferent parents, Moyan rejects all overtures of closeness, be it from her teacher Professor Shan or from her superior Lieutenant Wei. Moyan remembers

the Professor who had tried to befriend her and had introduced her to the works of Dickens and Hardy. However, her love for English Literature is viewed with suspicion and she is drafted as a young recruit of the People's Liberation Army during the Cultural Revolution. Her tenure in the Army leaves a lasting impression on Moyan whose present is intricately influenced by her past. She remembers a young fellow recruit's plaintive rendering of a classic "The Last Rose" and how it was received by the young girls in deafening silence. All emotional upsurges were drowned in the silence that followed the song. Trained to keep her emotions and feelings under the wraps, Moyan defends her lifelong unwillingness to form connections and lasting relationships. Moyan's immediate concern is the invasion of private realtors in the space starved Beijing. As her only kinship is with her apartment, she is extremely wary about its future.

"A Man Like Him" encapsulates the paranoia of an age which was dominated by suspicion of one's neighbours, colleagues and family. "My mother used to say that people in this country were very good at inventing crimes, but, better still, we were good at inventing punishments to go with them" are the words of the protagonist of this story. Teacher Fei, a drawing teacher is branded a pedophile after a student complains against him for gazing at another girl student. His career is ruined as his file has a black mark. The sole reason he is retained at his job is that he could paint Chairman Mao's face beautifully; his other accomplishments like his expertise in Mural paintings sidelined. It is the case of history repeating itself as his own father was demoted from his post as a University Professor to a toilet cleaner for being a capitalist roader. His father kills himself after being re-instated at the University. Fei, a lifelong bachelor, lives with his ancient mother whose favorite phrase is "I have nothing to say about this world". She had cleaned toilets with her husband and had gone through the ignominy of her son's indiscretion. Her reticence helps her lead a rationed life with her now retired and alone son. Teacher Fei finds kinship with a man who is being wrongly accused of extra marital relationship by his own daughter in the very public cyberspace. In a culture steeped in filial piety, the daughter's open condemnation of the father is viewed askance by Teacher Fei. He ritualistically reads the young woman's blog titled 'A Declaration of War on Unfaithful Husbands' and is aghast at the support she has garnered. He tracks the aggrieved father, meets him and offers his emotional support. It's nothing much but Teacher Fei feels the need to converse with and console the father, a man like him and like his father. The story throws open discussions on questions of morality with its references to extra marital relationships, adultery and chat-room love, etc.

Morality takes the centre stage in "House Fire" a story of six retired women who run a detective agency specializing in extra marital affairs. Their clients are usually desperate housewives trying to avenge their husbands for their infidelity. Getting a divorce was easy as the old belief, "Breaking up a marriage was more sinful than destroying seven temples" held no locus stand anymore. The women worked on the principle of cleansing society and fighting against deteriorating morals and called themselves "saviours of burning houses". The six are flummoxed by their first male client, a young man who suspects his father of sleeping with his wife. To add to his misery, he suspects his son to be his half-brother. Confronted by the strange tale, the women are painfully reminded of the imperfections in their own families. Mrs. Lu is plagued by the memory of the girl whom she had reported to the authorities for having been with a boy in her hostel room. The girl was promptly expelled but managed to sneak into her hostel only to jump off the building. "The thud, ten years later, still made Mrs Lu shiver at night". Mrs. Mo, whose husband had purportedly died in an accident, is confronted with the truth of the matter. She remembers how the road accident was in fact a cover for a planned suicide. It was her discovery of his affair of two decades with another man that pushed him to his death. Mrs Mo buries the secret deep inside her to protect her daughter and her husband's name. Homosexuality was a criminal offense in China and viewed as a mental aberration. The political strictures in place do not tolerate or even acknowledge homosexuality and punishments can be severe if reported.

"Sweeping Past" is a lyrical, finely etched narrative with a strong emotional impact. It is the story of Ailin, an ageing grandmother, narrating the history of a photograph to her 14 year old granddaughter

Ying It was a picture of Ailin and her two “sworn sisters” taken almost fifty years ago. The three young girls, Ailin, Lan and Mei, had challenged the authority's denouncement of acts of bonding as a “noxious feudal legacy” and entered a sisterhood pact pledging that they “sworn sisters from now on, would stick through thick and thin till the day they were to leave the earthly world together”. They decide to seal and celebrate this pact by taking a photograph together. The only photographer in town was happy for the excited girls and adds a line from an ancient poem alluding to their sisterhood in the final print of the photograph. Ailin narrates with nonchalance how the photographer was brutally beaten to death by the Red Guards for possessing German made cameras; a tell-tale sign of being a capitalist spy. The remarkable stoicism of the characters is informed by the violence they have grown with. Ailin had to live through the trauma of breaking up with her closest friends. When Lan and Mei had their babies, it was Ailin who had suggested that they should get the children married to each other. Lan's young daughter is raped and murdered by Mei's son and the friendship turns bitter. Ailin is blamed by both parties for the tragedy that befell them and the three of them part ways never to meet again. It is the photograph that brings back the painful memories of the past to Ailin. However, Ying is more appreciative of the aesthetic value of the photograph. She gets a poster sized photo- shopped print to take it back with her. She sees the cultural value of the picture of three young Chinese girls adorning her parent's restaurant in Lisbon. Ailin, on the other hand, is “saddened by the fact that her granddaughter had less space and time to dream than Ailin herself had had at this age”. She is one among the many characters that populate Yiyun Li's stories who is lonely and forgotten. The story reveals worlds strange and familiar, cultures both traditional and modern to create a mesmerizing and vibrant landscape of life.

One needs a thousand years of good prayers to be a father and a daughter- such goes a Chinese adage on the importance of relationships. “A Thousand Years of Good Prayers” explores the delicate relationship between an ageing father and his divorced daughter. A retired rocket scientist is on a visit to an American Mid-western town where his daughter works as a librarian. He imagines his daughter to be emotionally distraught after the divorce and forces her to let him visit her in America. However, he discovers that the daughter has grown increasingly taciturn and doesn't communicate much with him. He makes an acquaintance with an Iranian lady in the park and they begin to talk to each other despite the language problem. She is the only person he can speak with as his daughter becomes aloof by the day. Mr. Shi wants to tell 'Madam', the Iranian lady, how much he misses “the days when his daughter was small and life was hopeful”. He confronts his daughter and demands that she talk to him more and include him in her life. She retaliates that he had never been a good talker himself as he and his wife never talked much. He is shocked when she reveals that it was her adulterous relationship with a Romanian that had wrecked her marriage. Mr. Shi is also taken aback when the daughter reveals that she and her long- dead mother had known that he wasn't a rocket-scientist any more. Mr. Shi confesses to Madam that he isn't really a rocket scientist and goes on to narrate his experience. He had trained to become a rocket scientist and had been one for the first three years of his thirty-eight year career. His association with his card puncher, Yilan, was the reason he was demoted. They started talking to one another about their lives, never about their respective jobs during the office lunch breaks. They were never in love and even their fingers hadn't touched. Talking was an addiction for them, it was like riding with an “unreined horse”. However, talking between a married man and an unmarried woman was not accepted by the authorities and this alliance was immediately reported. In spite of his repeated pleas of innocence, the card puncher was sent down to a provincial town and he was given the option to publicly confess and gave a self-criticism. He refused to do so and had to accept the lowest position at the Institute. He goes back to his family as the silent preoccupied rocket-scientist never revealing the truth. The calculated cruelties of an authoritarian regime have dire repercussions on the lives of many. The casualness by which many careers are ruined subverts dreams of a happy existence.

Yiyun Li's has tenderly depicted the broken lives of her protagonists. The economy of words and

their lyrical quality give a melancholic subtlety to the narratives. Her stunning honesty lends wry humour to the characters desperately attempting to reorient themselves to life. It is the ambiguity of situations and characters that render power to her prose.

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HOUSING THE BLACK BODY: A STUDY OF RACE AND GENDER OPPRESSION IN GWENDOLYN BROOK'S *MAUD MARTHA*

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Abstract:

The unjust social structure of race and gender plummeted many African American women to denigrating stereotypes which not only stripped them of their identity but also thrashed them into the narrow corridors of cultural invisibility. Reconstructing a positive identity by subverting these images of the subaltern has been the primary issues in the writings of these African American women writers. Maud Martha surfaces as a pioneering instance of their resistance against the oppressive forces of racism and sexism prevalent in the American society

*We are things of dry hours and the involuntary plan,
Grayed in, and gray. "Dream" makes a giddy sound, not strong
Like "rent," "feeding a wife," satisfying a man."
But could a dream send up through onion fumes
Its white and violet, fight with fried potatoes
And yesterday's garbage ripening in the hall,
Flutter, or sing an aria down these rooms. (Brooks 11)*

The unjust social structure of race and gender plummeted many African American women to denigrating stereotypes which not only stripped them of their identities but also thrashed them into the narrow corridors of cultural invisibility. Reconstructing a positive identity by subverting these images of the subaltern has been the primary issues in the writings of these African American women writers. Maud Martha surfaces as a pioneering instance of their resistance against the oppressive forces of racism and sexism prevalent in the American society. Hence Maud Martha rethinks and reshapes the conventional portrayal of an African American woman named Martha who not only resists and subverts the so called "roles" coined by the patriarchal society but also boldly attempts to reconstruct her own castle by "transforming externals through her thoughts and imaginings". (Christian 244).

Gwendolyn Brook's emphasis on the 'ordinariness' of her female protagonist 'Martha' and her community is commendable as it inevitably challenges the conventional white and black male writings where in the 'woman in black' has always been portrayed either as a blessed or as a cursed portrait without any complexity of her identity. Christian applauds the publication of Maud Martha (1953) as a stupendous feat in African American women's writing as it marks the beginning of a black female author who delineates an identical 'black' character churned out of the same 'black' community and living an ordinary life as Christian elaborates, "what Brooks emphasizes in the novel is Maud Martha's awareness that she is seen as common, and that there is no much more in her 'little life' will allow her to be". (Christian 238)

Martha's metamorphosis from girlhood to womanhood is proficiently structured upon the thirty four vignettes that the novel sets out with. Her journey of struggle is later paved by the strong ideological roots of racism and sexism within the 20th century America. The novel beautifully transgresses from depicting Martha as a reticent ordinary black woman who defies the white supremacist ideologies. Brook further deconstructs the culturally composed caricatures of these African American women and plucks them from invisibility eventually tagging her as the predecessor of black feminists of 1970s and 80s who

wrangled their way out from the dingy black social hierarchies.

Her feelings of complex generate right from the childhood when her sister Helen, blessed with light skin tone and blonde hair enjoys the edge over her by receiving the pampering showered upon her by her brother and her father whereas her needs on the other hand were left unnoticed and ignored. Martha's pain burdened with the feelings of dejection are evident when she says, "Helen was still the ranking queen, not only with the Emmanuel's of the world, but even with their father-their mother-their brother". (Brooks 1611). The same feeling of despondency erupts when her husband neglects her in the ball at Foxy Cats Club and prefers dancing with a fair skinned girl. These experiences of desolation overpower her naïve psyche resulting into internal conflicts and self-hatred. She gets trapped into the "whiteness" and the so called "white" yardstick of beauty showcased by the society. She realizes that her "black" complexion will always stand tall like the wall between the two and Paul, her husband, would find it too difficult to climb up the wall and appreciate Martha's inner beauty and grace. Paul succumbs to the overriding desire to intimate a white woman. Brooks characterizes Paul as a representative of those African American men "who are yet to come to terms with the profoundest impulses concerning African American women and their Africanity". (Spillers 140)

The noteworthy part about Maud Martha's personality is that she never lets the incidents of gender prejudices demoralize or bog her spirits down as rightly put forward by Spillers, "Maud possesses highly developed powers to play well within the framework of the possibilities to which she has access". (Maud Martha 137). She understands the essence of life and without shedding a single tear she marches ahead donning the conventional role of a wife, "...she was going to keep herself to herself". (Brooks 106). On the contrary, she indulges into cooking- an art and a job assigned to women by social norms and employs this domestic work to her own advantage. In the chapter entitled "Maud Martha spares a mouse", she deliberately releases a mouse out of the trap evidently signifying and symbolizing her won "release" from the subjugation and dejection leading to the assertion of her feminine growth.

In yet another vignette entitled "millinery" she bluntly refuses to buy millinery offered at a discounted price to the "blacks" consciously declining the social value system that privileges the "whites" and trashes the "blacks". What one observes throughout the reading of Martha is the inability of using a verbal resistance to her injustice and humiliation. But we feel her vocal presence when she roared her tone to the Santa Claus who ignores her daughter Paulette under the garb of "darkness". "Mister", she says "my little daughter is talking to you". Here we witness a rather "rebellious" Martha who verbally resists all forms of oppression for her child. During her labour, she orders her husband Paul, "DON'T YOU GO OUT AND LEAVE ME ALONE" indirectly signifying the power of motherhood that pumps her with pride. This power to create life empowers her and gives her the voice to articulate her defiance, her hopes and aspirations.

Hence Maud Martha surfaces as a transformed woman who has proved her identity in society and has voiced her anger and resentment against the oppression of race and gender. She represents a new age "Negro Woman" who is aggressive and assertive in her consciousness of being a "black" woman with self-respect and individuality. Maud Martha's perceptions and ambitions herald a sea change in attitudes and values leading to the reconstruction of a social fabric- the fabric of freedom promoting equality for all-irrespective of one's race and gender.

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PATRIARCHY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: A FEMINIST READING OF *THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS*

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Abstract:

The present paper is an attempt to study Arundhati Roy's novel, The God of Small Things, as a feminist text in which women characters are forced to internalize the reigning patriarchal ideology. They are continuously subjected to intense humiliation and domestic violence by their male counterparts. The female characters are most often inferiorised by male chauvinism and frequently subordinated by the phallographic social discourse. They are resorted to live in their 'massive silence' with limited communication and exposure to the outside world. The problems experienced by the female characters are really political problems created by a patriarchal system which is essentially hard on women. The pernicious masculine discourse thrust upon women is symptomatic of a social system which corresponds to a phallographic order arguing for men's natural superiority. The female characters find different routes to subvert their conventional image in the society but in doing so they mostly become easy prey for the 'man masked predators'. They are prohibited to cross conventionally defined boundaries and are sometimes even locked in the confined apartments. The sterile narcissism of male scholarship coupled with monolithic male narratives pose a serious identity threat to these characters over the period of four generations. So the focus of the paper will be to highlight these cultural, economic and educational disabilities within a patriarchal Indian society, dominated by men that have hindered or prevented women from realizing their productive and creative possibilities.

Key Words: *chauvinism feminism, patriarchy women characters.*

Introduction:

The Indian society is pervasively patriarchal ruled mostly by the 'father'. This male centered discourse is organized in such a way as to subordinate women to men in all cultural domains: familial, religious, political, economic, social, legal and artistic. As M. H. Abrams observes that "From the Hebrew Bible and Greek philosophic writings to the present, the female tends to be defined by negative reference to the male as the human norm, hence as an 'other'. Women themselves are taught, in the process of being socialized, to internalize the reigning patriarchal ideology (a conscious or unconscious presuppositions about male superiority), and so are conditioned to derogate their own sex and to cooperate in their own subordination. The feminist criticism takes its roots from ancient Greece, in the works of Sappho and Aristophanes and slowly evolved to the present era mostly through European and English lands. The long deprivation of women and the resultant counter-resistance has laid down the strong foundation stone for feminist literary studies. Peter Barry notes, "As a distinctive and concerted approach to literature, feminist criticism was not inaugurated until late 1960s. It was not, of course the start of feminism. Rather it was renewal of an old tradition of thought and action already possessing its classic books which had diagnosed the problem of women's inequality in society. These books include Mary Wollstonecraft's A vindication of the Rights of Women (1792), Olive Schreiner's Women and Labour (1911); Virginia Woolf's A Room of one's Own (1929); Simone de Beauvoir's The Second Sex (1949) and so on".

While explaining feminist criticism M.A.R. Habib writes:

“In most of the long history women were not only deprived of education and financial independence, they also had to struggle against a male ideology condemning them to virtual silence and obedience, as well as a male literary establishment that poured scorn on their literary endeavors. Indeed, the depiction of women in male literature- as angels, goddesses, whores, obedient wives, and mother figures was an integral means of perpetuating these ideologies of gender. It was only with the women's struggles in the twentieth century for political rights that feminist criticism arose in any systematic way. Since the early twentieth century feminist criticism has grown to encompass a vast series of concerns: a rewriting of literary history so as to include the contribution of women; the tracing of a female literary tradition; theories of sexuality and sexual differences.”

Therefore, the feminist literary criticism of today is the direct product of the 'women's movement' of the 1960s. This movement was, in important ways, literary from the start, in the sense that it realized the significance of the images of the women promulgated by literature, and saw it vital to combat them and question their authority and their coherence. Contemporary feminist debates and disagreements are now centered on three particular areas, these being: the role of theory; the nature of language and the value or otherwise of psychoanalysis.

Discussion:

The choice for the women within the novel, within fiction, are either to survive by making the hysterics ambiguous choice into a femininity or to go for oneness and unity by suffering death.(Juliet Mitchell). The God of Small Things showcases the actual picture of the plight of Indian Women. Their profound anguish, cares and anxieties, their humble surrender harassment and undeserved humiliation in a patriarchal society. The novel shows women's continuous struggle to break the monolithic social borders in order to experience love and other human bonds through their own autonomous and conscious self. Whenever in the novel, a female character tries to challenge the man centric notions of authority like 'man is the son of god' and 'woman is the daughter of man', they no longer remain the darlings of the men or the society. When any female character somehow gathers the strength to challenge and averse, man- made power systems, they eventually become the soft victims in the hands of those they choose their lifelong partners. Arundhati Roy's women characters do not belong to the amoral world, but they live in a world where at every yard social classification and conventions are markedly visible. Anybody who tries to cross over these boundaries is found struggling within the social limitations. Roy, with her keen insight, pictures the real agony and longing of the Indian women trapped in the family and marriage boundaries. Her fictional world offers an intensive analysis of the historical, social, economic and religious background of the characters so as to enable an honest interpretation. She packs her characters with vivid pictures and intricate details that in a way compel the reader to participate in the process of creation.

The novel records the story of four generations. The novelist does not say about the women in the first generation. Aleyootty Ammachi is Pappachi's mother. She continued to live in an oil portrait and also in her husband Rev. Ipe's painting. While Ipe smiled Aleyootty Ammachi looked more timid.

The phallogocentric ideology becomes more apparent when we move towards second generation women characters-Mammachi and Baby kochamma

Mammachi is the wife of Pappachi, an Anglophile self centered entomologist. She is one of the principal characters who face a series of un-deserved humiliation and cruelty from time to time. She silently endures the harsh treatment of her husband without complaining about her place in a patriarchal family. She is condemned to live an unhappy life sacrificing her personal desires in order to be accommodated in a household which legally does not belong to her. Her character resembles to the traditional Indian women who have to go extra miles than men to prove themselves equivalent to men. Her husband, Pappachi is a symbol of male dominating society. He is never happy with his wife even though she works very hard to support the family. He has a very poor opinion about her. He is even jealous of her youthful charm on her face. He treated her as his personal property and in the evenings used to beat her with

a base flower vase (47). In the very beginning of the novel, Roy presents a pathetic picture of Mammachi's life. Roy observes, "Mammachi was almost blind and wore dark glasses when she went out of the house. Her tears tickled down from behind them, trembled down from behind them and tremble along her jaw like raindrops on the edge of a roof" (5). Mammachi had started making pickles commercially soon after Pappachi retired from government service from Delhi. Although she was half blind yet Pappachi would not help her with pickle making. He greatly resented the attention her wife was suddenly getting. It was Pappachi who did not allow her to continue the lessons on the violin in Vienna. These are the restriction men usually impose on the women. In turn, at Pappachi's funeral, Mammachi cried and her contact lenses slid around in her eyes. Ammu told the twins that Mammachi was crying more because she was used to him than she loved him (50). She was first under the control of her husband and later her son Chacko supervised her. Initially Mammachi's factory had no name. Everybody just referred to her pickles and jams as Sosh's tender mango, or Sosh's banana jam because Mammachi's name was Soshama. But when Chacko returned from America, things changed. Mammachi just run the factory like a large kitchen. Chacko always referred to it as my factory, my pineapples and my pickles (57). This is true of the Indian society where women are legally denied the inheritance rights of the property. In her conservative outlook, acquired through male narratives, she loved Chacko and almost neglected Ammu. She even suggested Ammu that she should visit Rahel as seldom as possible, while as for her son, she had built a separate entrance for his room, so that the objects of his needs wouldn't have to go to traipsing through the house (169). She joyfully welcomed him and placed fresh flowers in his room every day (248). Mammachi showed unsympathetic attitude towards Margaret Kochamma. She shows female envy for woman whom her son had loved and married. She never met Margaret but looked down upon her. She is unkind towards the workers of the factory paradise pickles and preservers. But she is meek with Chacko. Mammachi is not crafty as baby kochamma but her mind is hardly less pervert than that of baby kochamma. She promises to the logic and ethics of the male bigotry in toto. Her conservative thinking turns her brutal, nasty and brutish.

Baby Kochamma is drawn as a spiteful, destructive and materialistic character. Rahel once described her as living her life backwards. In her younger days she rejected materialism to win the heart of Father Malligan and in later years she embraced it. She is quick to insult Ammu and her children, mostly for the reason of being a divorced mother with fatherless children. She strongly believed in the social customs that a divorced mother with an inter-caste love marriage has no place in the world. She misrepresented the relationship between Ammu and Velutha not for Ammu's sake but to contain the scandal and salvage (259). She acts as the agent of patriarchy, who even being a woman, assists Pappachi and Chacko to further the degree of domination. However, her efforts to seduce Father Malligan failed miserably. Her conversion to Roman Catholics also did not work. She has been left with only two choices either to revert and marry or to embrace her new unique life. She resented Ammu, because she saw her quarrelling with a fate she, Baby Kochamma has graciously accepted. The fate of the wretched man-less woman (45). She decided to live a life upon her own impulses without knowing that her identity is determined by somewhere else. In fact, her character is so versatile and complicated that even in her apparent snobby nature readers find multilayered realities. Roy, as an excellent observer of the human behavior leaves some of the portions for the reader to explore the meaning. Baby Kochamma's character reveals some of the realistic but unbearable agony of the Indian woman. She had initially searched a male partner who could decide her ultimate social position and exclusively determine her happiness and fulfillments of life or lack of these. When she was not successful in these attempts, she lived a life of social exclusion. She neither reverted to her earlier religion nor bothered cleaning her filthy room. She instead watched her favourite television shows and mostly lived a life like a hallow woman.

The third generations of women characters are Ammu and Chacko's alien wife Margaret Kochamma.

Ammu is the mother of twins Rahel and Estha. She is an independent woman who is both a loving mother

and has an “unsafe edge”. She is the most intimately drawn character who all through her life in a patriarchal Indian family searches for her own space. She finished her schooling the same year that her father retired from his job. Her father, Pappachi insisted that a college education was an unnecessary expense for a girl (38). Therefore, there was very little for a young girl to do in Ayemenem other than to wait for marriage proposals while she helped her mother with the house work. Ammu's character reveals the hardships Indian women encounter in the course of their life. They always dwindle between family and traditional customs without getting the chance to realize their dreams. At the marriageable age, no proposals came to Ammu. Pappachi did not have the enough money to raise a suitable dowry as a result her birthdays came and went unnoticed. (38). As a grown up girl, she was very desperate. She dreamed of escaping from Ayemenem and the clutches of her ill-tempered father and bitter long suffering mother. She hatched several wretched little plans. Eventually, her one plan worked, Pappachi agreed to let her spend the summer with a distant aunt living in Delhi. There she met her future husband who proposed to her five days after they meet. Ammu did not pretend to be in love with him. She just weighed the odds and accepted. She thought that anything, anyone at all would be better than returning to Ayemenem. Ammu's world is so shrunk by male history that she oscillates between strict family norms and biased social customs. In order to find her future and do away with patriarchal lineage, she marries a handsome stranger. Her married life also did not provide her an opportunity to escape from the social bondages. Her marital ties carry no significance than to permit herself “to be so painstakingly decorated before being led to the gallows” (44). This realistically shows the agony of the contemporary Indian women who are first held in the strict family customs and then trapped in marital restrictions. In both cases they have been on receiving end and become passive receivers of heinous crimes on daily basis. The Indian women have to act against triangular forces- family, new home and society. These socio-cultural borders always suppress their voice and their fate lingers between hope and despair. They cannot think independently because their destiny is no longer believed to be theirs. Ammu passed through all these forces. She was first ill-treated by her parents. When Pappachi once caught her, he didn't say a word. He flogged her with his ivory-handled riding crop. Ammu didn't cry. When he finished beating her, he made her bring him Mammachi's pinking shears from her sewing cupboard. (181). When she trusted a strange man and made him a model to realize her own shattered dreams. He turned out to be not only an alcoholic person but also bargainer of her honour to satisfy his boss. When Ammu rejected her husband's invitation to a wicked and deceitful plan that Mr. Hollick suggested that Ammu be sent to his bungalow to be 'looked after', he grew uncomfortable and then infuriated by her silence, he grabbed her hair, punched her and then passed out from the effort. (42) When his bouts of violence began to include the children, she left her husband and returned, unwelcomed, to her parents in Ayemenem. Again when Ammu died even the church has no place for her proper burial. She was a heathen, a sinner whose only fault in a patriarchal set up was that, she tried to see the world through her own eyes. The church refused to bury Ammu. On several counts. So Chacko hired a van to transport the body to the electric crematorium. (162).

So, from the day one, Ammu is cornered by many social-marital and religious forces. She was supposed to accept her fate within the set boundaries. Her transgression of these limits is directly or indirectly responsible for her rejection by the society. She wandered place to place like an exile with Rahel and Estha as milestones around her neck (85). She used the same boat to love by night the man her children loved by day, the boat that Estha sat and Rahel found (202). She became delicate bait even to Velutha. Similarly, her brother first locked her into her bedroom and then kicked out her from the very house they were brought up as brother and sister. She learned to live with this cold, calculating cruelty. With the passage of time, she developed a lofty sense of injustice and the mulish, reckless streak that develops in someone small who has been bullied all their lives by someone big. She did exactly nothing to avoid quarrels and confrontations. (182). finally, when she grew tired of their propriety and handling of her. She wanted her body back. She shrugged her children off the way a bitch shrugs off her pups. Then she swung

her legs off the bed, walked to the window and drew back the curtains (222). She gathered up her heavy hair, wrapped it around her face and peered down the road to age and death through its parted strands. She was not the kind of woman who wanted her future told. She dreaded it too much. So if she were granted one small wish perhaps it would only have been not to know. Not to know where she might be, next month, next year. Ten years on. (224)

Margaret Kochamma is Chacko's British ex-wife and Sophie Mol's mother. She also becomes a victim of feminine jealousy. Mammachi did not even spare her from her in-built bias and anger. Margaret, after a married life was initially very happy. Being with Chacko made her feel as though her soul had escaped from the narrow confines of her island country into the vast, extravagant spaces of her husband's promising world. Chacko made her feel as though the world belonged to them. What Chacko loved most about her was her self-sufficiency (245). He loved the fact that Margaret Kochamma didn't cling to him. He was grateful to her for not wanting to look after him. He grew to depend on Margaret Kochamma for not depending on him. He adored her for not adoring him (246). A year into the marriage, and the charm of Chacko's suddenly sloth wore off for Margaret Kochamma. It no longer amused her that while she went to work, the flat remained in the same filthy mess that she had left it in. Chacko didn't apologize for the cigarette burns in the new sofa. She had just discovered that she was pregnant when she met Joe. Despite her marital troubles she had that air of secret elation and affection for her own body that pregnant women often have (247). She had passionate desire to be good and gentle lady with enough money. So she had to face with the real world. One day when Chacko came to cafe, she all of a sudden drew towards him like how Ammu drew towards Baba. Margaret and Chacko had an affair and they both married without their family consent. But this untraditional rebellious marriage as a bad luck did not prosper in a fertile way. To crowd the effect, Margaret's parents refused to see her. Her father disliked Indians as he thought Indians as sly, dishonest people. He could not believe that his daughter marrying such a man. Moreover Margaret was also fed up with the living of Chacko and she separated from Chacko and married Joe.

The fourth generation women characters are- Rahel and Sophie. Sophie Mol is a minor but very important character in the novel. Sophie's character is mostly revealed through the lenses of Estha and Rahel. She is the half-English, half-Indian daughter of Chacko and Margaret Kochamma. She is the one who feels left out from the jovial company of twins. She wants the company of both Estha and Rahel and to allure them, she gathers up presents and gives them. She unlike the adults is unbiased and insults Chacko and baby Kochamma for their hypocrisy towards the twins. She chases twins when they decide to run away. This was her first and last decision. Her fate had something else stored for her. She drowned from the boat and died at the tender age of nine.

Ammu's daughter Rahel deserves much of our attention. The story deals with her life only up to the age of thirty-one and most of the events present details of her childhood. She was isolated by father, separated from mother, victimized by her maternal uncle, grandmother and grand aunt. The neglect has accidentally resulted in a 'release of the spirit'. From her childhood pains, she has grown up as a resilient and independent, daring and capable of keen observation. Rahel is the protagonist and partial narrator and eye witness of most of the story. As a child, she exists in a kind of harmony with Estha, her twin brother who is eighteen minutes her senior. She has an incredibly active imagination. She continues to wander until she was divorced and returned to Ayemenem at the age of thirty-one. She studied architecture not because she had particular interest in it, but more because she just falls into it (17). She married Larry MacCaslin and lived years in the United States. After they were divorced, she worked various jobs all over United States few months as a waitress and several years as a night clerk in a bullet-proof cabin at a gas station outside Washington before returning to Ayemenem (20). As a child, when her memory had just begun, Rahel thought of themselves together as me, and separately, individually, as we or us (2). She was imaginative, wide awake, fiercely vigilant and brittle with exhaustion from her battle against real life (5). Rahel grew up without a brief. Without anybody to arrange a marriage for her. Without anybody who would pay her a

dowry and therefore without an obligatory husband looming on her horizon. (17). So, as long as she wasn't noisy about her aspirations, she remained free to make her own enquires into life and how it ought to be lived. (17). In a way, Rahel is what the circumstances have made her. The patriarchal family set up, dislocation, parental neglect and above all her brother's separation and mother's untimely death has forced her to live her life in several guises. Although torn apart by the society yet she bravely embraced her individual identity defying every norm that brought tragedy to their household.

Conclusion:

The novel as a feminist text deeply explores the complex issues, primarily opposing the notions of “masculine” subject as active, adventurous and creative while as “feminine” as passive, timid and conventional. It explores what might be called the mechanisms of patriarchy, an orderly cultivated cultural 'mind-set' in men and women that perpetuates sexual inequality. The novelist raises various intricate questions on the cultural arrangements which regard men as the emblem of social power and the advantages which go with it. The female characters constantly oppose these notions of power and authority. They in the course of the novel either fall prey or become transgressors in a limited traditional sense. Within the novel, female characters try to overcome their assumed negative self by vehemently challenging their male counterparts. The characters, both male and female cross over the conventionally prohibited territories but in doing so women pay much higher price for this crossing over. Roy very aptly brings home the adverse effects of social classification in her society as:

“Looking back now, to Rahel it seemed as though this difficulty that their family had with classification ran much deeper than the jam-jelly question. Perhaps Ammu, Estha and she were the worst transgressors. But it wasn't just them. It was the others too. They all broke the rules. They all crossed into forbidden territory. They all tempered with the laws that lay down who should be loved and how. And how much. The laws that make grandmothers grandmothers, uncles uncles, mothers mothers, cousins cousins, jam jam, and jelly jelly” (31)

The *God of Small Things* realistically portrays the unjust patriarchal system in which women, on the whole, are subjected to intense physical and psychological tortures from time to time. Roy penetrates to the depths of our contemporary social milieu and exposes the issues of domestic violence, male chauvinism and gender bias with an extraordinary vision, wisdom and scholarship.

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DECOLONIZATION IN NGUGI WA THIONG'O'S PLAYS

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Theatre plays an important role in society as it has been both audio and visual. Theatre is more important in societies where literacy is lacking. Colonial societies preferred drama and theatre, because it helped them awaken the people for freedom. What is true of freedom movement once in the western societies is also true of its significance in eastern societies.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o of Kenya found it true. He wrote novels, but of course, plays. He found out that theatre was the most powerful medium of art-expression. Aristotle too has stressed this. More important than this was his writing of plays in his native language Gikayu, though it brought him face to face with the censors. Thus when he performed his play *Ngaahika Ndcenda* in 1977 Ngugi was imprisoned in Kimati Maximum Security Prison where the Mau Mau fighters were imprisoned once. Ngugi's second play *Maitu Njugira* forced him into exile in 1982. In *Barrel of a Pen* Ngugi states:

Today questioning the presence of foreign military bases and personnel (British, Israeli and U.S.) on Kenyan soil is disloyalty. Questioning colonialism is sedition. Teaching the history of the Kenyan people's resistance to colonialism is sedition. Theatrical exposure of colonial culture is sedition. Questioning the exploitation and oppression of peasants and workers is Marxism and hence treason. Questioning corruption in high places is sedition (Ngugi *Barrel* 165).

Ngugi's first book *The Time Tomorrow* (1970) collected many short sketches of his plays. *The Rebels* represented Northcote Hall in the Makerere University College Interhall English Competition and was broadcast on 6 April 1962 by the Uganda Broadcasting Service. The plot is a precursor to that of the later play *The Black Hermit* and focuses on the responsibilities of the native intellectual as well as on the problem of forging a nation after independence. The plays speak of the intellectuals' dilemma in facing the conflict between tradition and modernity.

The Wound in the Heart, which invokes the topic of Mau Mau so important to Ngugi, won the drama section of the 1962 Makerere Interhall English Competition but was rejected by the censors of the Uganda Drama Festival because apparently the censors did not want to have a play which suggested that white men could rape black women. The former Mau Mau fighter and protagonist Ruhui learns of his wife's rape and the resulting child when he returns home after several years in detention and dies of grief after his wife has committed suicide (another example of the recurring motive of the dead woman prevalent in Ngugi's early plays). The child lives as if a mark of reconciliation between the *desi* and *videsi* and between the past and present. *This Time Tomorrow* is a protest against the Kenyan petit bourgeoisie society and demands true liberation.

The Stranger, an emblematic figure, who is a former Mau Mau fighter and futilely tries to convince the slum dwellers to fight against the City Council, summarizes the situation thus: "We fought for Uhuru, because we were told it would mean decent houses, and decent jobs! But where are the jobs? Where are the houses?" (*This Time* 47). *The Black Hermit*, Ngugi's first full-length play, was first performed by the Makerere College Students Dramatic Society on 16 November 1962 at the Uganda National Theatre in Kampala to mark Uganda's independence celebrations. *The Black Hermit* can be considered to be a rewriting of the earlier sketch *The Rebel* and also features an educated young man, Remi, who is supposed to come home after finishing his education paid for by the village community. The agenda of the play is to "expose and root out the cantankerous effects of tribalism, racialism and religious factions" (*Black Hermit*

viii) which Ngugi, as he somewhat apologetically explains in the 1968 preface, considered to be the biggest problems in the newly independent countries in East Africa at the time of writing the play.

Remi has a white girlfriend for marriage against his dead brother's wife Thoni where his people tell he should marry. But he pretends to be a hermit. Still he is a nationalist. Anke Bartels writes:

He defies the elders and the pastor by presenting his version of what the new nation is supposed to be: "We must all turn to the soil. We must help ourselves; build more schools; turn our hearts and minds to create a nation, then will tribe and race disappear. And man shall be free (Bartels 169).

Remi's failure means Janes leaves him and Thoni commits suicide. A brief look at the main women characters in *The Black Hermit* reveals them to be confined to represent allegorical figures. Their place in the new nation seems to be that of 'Mother Africa' who takes part in the nation as biological reproducer of members of ethnic collectivities as well as participating centrally in the ideological reproduction of the collectivity and as transmitter of its culture.

This is firmly established in the first act of *The Black Hermit* which opens with a depiction of village life showing Remi's mother Nyobi and his wife Thoni involved in typical household chores. For them, nothing much has changed since independence was achieved.

In all his early plays, Ngugi seems to place his trust in male individual leaders who are to head the masses because they are the ones capable of providing a thorough analysis of the situation Kenya finds itself in after Uhuru. Despite the fact that they seem to fail to varying degrees in all the plays discussed so far, the general outlook remains still idealist and hopeful.

Ngugi wrote *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* with his friend and writer Micere Githae Mugo and the play was produced in 1976 at the Kenyan National Theatre in Nairobi. *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* is inspired by Ngugi's and Mugo's continuing fight against neo-colonialism and represents part of a Kenyan counter history which attempts to reclaim national heroes - and ground them firmly in the national consciousness. By providing a challenge to the authority of the dominant discourse, they establish a counter-narrative which "disturbs those ideological manoeuvres through which imagined communities are given essentialist identities" (Bhabha 149). The historiography encouraged by the current Kenyan regime made various attempts at the ideological burial of Mau Mau as a credible anti-imperialist national movement. This tendency is countered with *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* as a point of intervention for the marginalized with a clear focus on exploring ways to continue a community-based struggle. Dedan Kimathi was the leader of the Kenyan Land and Freedom Army (Mau Mau) in the most militant phase of its struggle for independence and with him being captured in 1956 the end of Mau Mau was signaled. He was tried and, after his appeals had failed, hanged in 1957. But his legend was such that people refused to believe that he was dead. While most colonial literature does not depict him favorably, Ngugi and Mugo were looking for a different picture.

Anke Bartels thinks *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*, a combination of Brechtian theatre and indigenous orature, comprises an opening scene and three movements which flow into each other in order to break the barrier between formal and infinite time while the boundaries of some of the characters are also fluid which is symbolized by cross-casting. To further emphasize the complexity and interrelatedness of historical and present events, two plots are intertwined. One is the story of Dedan Kimathi, which is set in the present of the court hearing but also uses flashbacks to recount his life in the forest, while the second plot centres around Woman, Boy and Girl, three figures emblematic of the country who are scheming to free Kimathi from jail and combine the past with the present and the future.

Ngugi wa Thiongo's wrote *NgaahikaNdeenda* (I will marry when I want) with Ngugi wa Mirii in Gikayu, their native language. Ngugi wa Thiong'o writes why:

I believe that my writing in Gikuyu language, a Kenyan language, an African language, is part and parcel of the anti-imperialist struggles of Kenyan and African peoples. In schools and universities our Kenyan languages were associated with negative qualities of backwardness,

underdevelopment, humiliation and punishment. I do not want to see Kenyan children growing up in that imperialist-imposed tradition of contempt for the tools of communication developed by their communities and their history. I want them to transcend colonial alienation. (Ngugi 451).

Ngugi and the participants of the centre decided that they would take on a historical topic to avoid the dangers and repression unleashed by *Ngaahika Ndeenda*. Thus, work on the musical *Maitu Njugira* (which was translated into English by Ngugi as *Mother, Sing for Me*) began. The musical is polylingual and contains eighty songs in five Kenyan languages (Gikuyu, Kamba, Luo, Luhya and Giriama) as well as a Gikuyu text.

According to Bjorkman's summary the play *Maitu Njugira* is set in the 1920s and 30s on a plantation and focuses on the kipande laws, a passbook and registration system which was met with fierce resistance. The ending conveys a sense of optimism with a song of unity being sung by the whole cast while a woman lifts the bundle, aims it as though it were a rifle. While in the original draft, the roles of women were confined to symbolic functions, the village women revised the ending to stress the importance of women as active agents of nation building which underscores the issue of sisterhood in a combined feminist/ national struggle.

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UNDERCURRENTS OF BOLD SOCIAL CRITICISM AND PROTEST IN *SELECT STORIES BY JYOTIRMOYEE DEVI*

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Abstract:

This paper is going to confer on the hefty undercurrent of social criticism from gender-specific viewpoint manifest in three thematically and structurally connected short stories of eminent Bengali writer Jyotirmoyee Devi (1894-1988). Jyotirmoyee Devi grew up in Jaypur, Rajasthan and composed most of her literary works while living in Patna, Bihar and later in Kolkata. The three stories Annakali, Pinjrapole and Martyer Apsara, published separately in the beginning-the first two between 1937-1948 and the last one after 1980, have been anthologised in a single book under the title Martyer Apsara (1987). These stories together can be treated as an exquisite documentation of the saga of deprivation, oppression, and anguish of a clan whose existence, though weaved into the mainstream of our social life, have been that of an isolation and agony. The stories expand spaces to present the deplorable conditions of women, particularly of Bengali Hindu widows thrust to live a life of an ascetic under rigid customs of Hindu widowhood while being deprived of the basic human needs. Along with the precarious position of widows in joint Brahmin families, the 2nd story in the anthology is a bold and powerful commentary on the plights of widow clan residing in Kashi. The value of such literary documentation of social evils in the three stories lies both in their true depiction of the then societal conditions as well as in their relevance in today's world where gender discrimination and various forms of atrocities against women are rampant. This paper is an attempt to explore the aforesaid stories as valuable social document engraving courageous criticism against the tormenting, gender-biased social customs and practices.

Key words: *widow clan, gender-bias, discrimination, feminist undercurrent, social criticism, social document.*

Jyotirmoyee Devi (1894-1988), one of the eminent Bengali women writers of the previous century, stands out conspicuously for her considerably large bulk of literary works inspired both by creative urge and reformative zeal. Her literary works include novels like -*Chayapath, Epar Ganga Opar Ganga*; short story collections like- *Rajjotak, Arraballir Arale, Sonarupa Noy, and Martyer Apsara* ; travelogue- *Somay o Sukriti*; collection of essays- *Nari Katha, Chirantan Nari Jignasha: Sekaliner Smriti* and autobiographical sketch -*Smriti-Bismritir Taranga*, besides other genres of nonfiction. She also wrote a good number of poems. The scattered works, originally published in various newspapers, magazines etc. were compiled and published mainly under the sincere initiatives from her children and relatives. The series *Jyotirmoyee Devir Rachana Samkalan 1, 2, and 3* from Dey's Publishing House anthologize most of her works.

It is interesting to know that Jyotirmoyee Devi was born in the Princely State of Jaipur where her grandfather and father served in the royal court as ministers. At the age of about 10 she was married to a lawyer, Kiran Chandra Sen and went to live with him in Patna. She lost her husband in 1918 when she was barely 25. With six small children she returned to her parents' house. From 1959 to until her death in 1988 she resided in the Shyambazar area in Kolkata. However, she kept on travelling different states of India as it was her passion to watch and observe people and places. Besides a brooding onlooker on the flux of happening around her, Jyotirmoyee Devi was an avid reader. While observing the long-established rites

and rituals of a Hindu widow she remains stoic to strike a chord of disagreement with the unfair imposition of such religious and social restrictions on the weaker sections, particularly on women. While courageously fighting with the misfortunes of her individual life, she became aware of the conventional social strictures that were distressful for women in general. Soon writing became the obvious space for communicating her understanding of the social predicaments.

Set in Rajasthan, Varanasi or Bengal, Jyotirmoyee Devi's fictions talk about marginalized and oppressed women as well about the dalits or harijans. With the consciousness of a social reformer she kept on exposing and interrogating the monstrous nature of exploitation of the weak and the marginal in the name of religious and social codes. The worlds she creates in her writings are invariably prone to include the weaker sections of the society, particularly women in precarious conditions. Her attempt of addressing women's issues that of a commune was evident in her articles and fictional writings. To elucidate this gender-conscious depiction of social world *Martyer Apsara*, an anthology of Jyotirmoyee Devi's stories is being referred to in the following discussion.

"*Martyer Apsara*", the sixth collection of stories of Jyotirmoyee Devi, was published in 1987. The three stories -*Annakali*, *Pinjrapole* and *Mortyer Apsara*, published separately in the beginning-the first two between 1937-1948 and the last one after 1980, have been anthologised in a single book under the title *Mortyer Apsara*. The earlier five collections of Jyotirmoyee Devi were *Rajjotak*, *Araballir Arale*, *Band Masterer Ma*, *Araballir Kahini*, and *Sonarupa Noy*. The varied thematic dimensions of her stories range from shades of human relationship to diasporic experience, from women's distressful conditions to everyday phenomena and predicaments of the society. However, one distinguished feature that characterises her stories is the authorial outlook of critical observation on the flow of events. A sharp and accurate deductive attitude in her helped her to expand her views from particular to general. The three stories *Annakali*, *Pinjrapole* and *Mortyer Apsara* best illustrate this.

The three stories *Annakali*, *Pinjrapole* and *Mortyer Apsara* by Jotirmoyee Devi are thematically and structurally connected as they chronicle the saga of endless miseries afflicted upon women, particularly the Hindu widows. The time span of the stories expands over three generations of women invariably being marginalised and oppressed under the functioning of a gender-biased and ruthless mechanism of patriarchal society.

In the stories anthologised in *Martyer Apsara* Jyotirmoyee Devi delineates upon the social customs that put women into different forms of subjugation in various situations which the patriarchal society often tend to naturalise. The title of the first story 'Annakali' refers to the pivotal character in story. But at the same time it reflects the unwelcome arrival of a girl-child in a family that feels already overburdened with girls. The birth of the fifth daughter set the middle class family into panic and frustration out of which they named her 'Annakali', a colloquial for "Aar na Kali" that means an appeal to goddess Kali for no more girl child in the family. So from the very first day the ignominy of being a girl had to be borne by Annakali. Her status was further aggravated by the fact that she was not as fair as desired of a would-be bride. So as if by default such a girl was fated to grow up without much affection and attention of the elders. Marginalisation of the likes of Annakali here embeds double layer. The kin and kith of such a girl were fettered by social customs and tradition. So no sympathy could be extracted from them regarding the existential predicaments of Annakali. Soon she was given in marriage to a widowed man, much older than her.

The second phase of Annakali's life seems to be a better one than the first. She was apparently rescued from the aphorised humiliation embedded in her maiden name. The new name 'Annapurna', given by her husband, showcases her elevated status. However, this also proved an illusory one as gradually Annapurna came to face the intricate and oppressing patriarchal manoeuvre operating both at the surface and the subtle levels. In course of time she imbibed the very dominant customs and social practices that once tormented her as a girl child and started to overlook the discriminations meted out to her own daughters whom she had promised to save from such humiliation and deprivation. Two incidents- the

eldest daughter Uma's early widowhood with two children and her husband Shibeswar's death forced Annapurna to resume her mute and passive role in the household. Even she could not cope with her youngest daughter Atasi's choice of an independent life. The perpetual and pervasive nature of women's subjugated position crushed her spirit of protest and sense of justice and turned it into mere hopelessness. The author observes that women's marginal condition of living even numbs their sense of self-respect.

The oppressive nature of prevailing gender norms of the early part of twentieth century blatantly privileged the male members while denying the basic rights of their female counterparts. This many-layered mechanism of subjugation of women is realistically depicted in Jyotirmoyee Devi's 'Annakali'. The story encompasses the diverse but contextually correlated conventions and rituals which are socially and habitually imposed upon women. These include negligence of girl child, denial of right to education and right to paternal property of girls, child marriage, dowry system, rigorous and inhuman rituals for widows, and wretched condition of widows disowned by the in-law's family. The same thematic contexts are carried forward to the second story '*Pinjrapole*'. The structural connectivity is also established as the second story relates to the lives of Annakali's daughters Uma and Atasi, along with other new characters.

Jyotirmoyee Devi, whose personal life itself is an interesting subject of study, had direct experience and close observation of the working of patriarchal machinery through religious and cultural practices. Many of her compositions, both fiction and nonfiction, narrate how the brutal social, cultural and religious customs swayed the then collective mind set and operated pervasively against the interest of women. Fettered to the chain of conventions and religious customs over a long period of time, women's existential conditions came to a stake. For widows in orthodox Hindu Bengali families the predicaments of existence were multiple as were their levels of marginalization. While living in the cocoon of widowhood herself, Jyotirmoyee Devi captures the precarious position of chiefly widow women in the second story '*Pinjrapole*'.

As continuation of the account of women's affliction the narrative '*Pinjrapole*' intensely focuses on plights of Bengali Hindu widows at home as well as in Kashi, Varanasi which can be called a place of exile and seclusion for this clan of women. The word 'pinjrapole' (Gujrati) literally stands for enclosures where the sick, old, strayed, and abandoned animals are kept. Like the previous story, this title also carries immense connotative implications. The narrative is a palpably gender-conscious literary documentation of the social evils that work in the form of orthodox notion of rites and rituals enforced particularly upon widows whose space and voice are both negotiated by doctrines that invariably favour men.

The narration of '*Pinjrapole*' begins with a third person voice rendering a graphic description of a group of Hindu widows huddled in a house in Kashi. The condition of most of these widows living in penury can be visualised in Deepa Mehta's critically acclaimed 2005 film *Water*. In the story Jyotirmoyee Devi provides us with poignant anecdotes of the lives of widows like Biraj, Tarini Thakurani, Surabala, Manorama, Kusum and others whose social identity transforms drastically as soon as they lose their husbands. The erstwhile conjugal status of being someone's wife somehow ensured a hold over the kitchen, pantry and observation of or participation in religious and social occasions. But with the accession to widowhood these women are found to be outcasts as they lose all rights of socialisation. The stringent restriction on choice of food, attire and participation in social ceremonies and events transform them to a condition of non-entity. The bare provisions for livelihood and observance of stern, self-disciplining sacraments render most of them sickly emaciated in body and gloomy in temperament. The degree of alienation from normative familial life increases the highest when the households are no more willing to have the widows living among them. Here too the lure of earning 'punya' or 'moksh' is used to goad the widows leave their home and throng in holy places like Prayag, Kashi etc.

In course of the story this clan of widows emerges as a class being the prey of multi-level marginalisation. In the texture of her narrative Jyotirmoyee Devi dexterously merges her authorial voice with that of the collective consciousness of this deprived and exiled class. A few widows and two

independent, educated girls Atasi and Haima, contemplate over the collective experience of this state of social, physical and mental segregation from the mainstream life. The imposed tag of abstinence crushes the individual dreams and desires and snatches every possibility of a new beginning.

The title 'Pinjrapole' resonates the deplorable condition of dingy ghettos in which the widows crowd together in abandonment. With minimum or no monetary provisions from their own families, the widows in Kashi are flung into beggary conditions. They have to work as housemaid, cook, and cleaner at temples or plunge into utter beggary. Some of them even step into shadowy lanes of prostitution. The period which Jyotirmoyee Devi depicts here was a crucial one in respect of advent of Indian Renaissance. While the intellectual sphere was being set to change many of the old and stagnant practices, the concern over women's miserable conditions, particularly of the widows in Hindu orthodox families was a relevant one. The strong and integrated address to this issue by a widow writer herself adds an unparalleled authenticity and precision to it. Jyotirmoyee Devi took a gallant stride in this respect in spite of the risk of displeasure and anger of the then social norms.

In the story '*Martyer Apsara*' Jyotirmoyee Devi has peeped into another wound inflicted on female entity. Here she delineates upon the deserted and lonely path which women who are forced to trade in their own flesh tread upon. These women of ill-repute who live by prostitution are 100 times more marginalised than any of her sex in social sphere. The voiceless and lone journey of life of these women receives a sensitive treatment in the author's hand. She does not hesitate to rip open her society's disgraceful practice of encouraging and even legitimising the licentious male desires at the cost of social expulsion and humiliation of a section of women. The darkness of misery that engulfs these women is formidable and at the same time bluntly points to the brutality of patriarchal conventions woven into the social texture. Jyotirmoyee Devi stops to paint woman as object of desire. She talks as woman and allows her fictional women to question the injustices conventionally imposed upon them. Defying the banishment and prohibitions imposed by the society, these women bond together to arrange for a ritualistic cremation of one of their deceased companions. When the daily male visitors of the brothel vehemently decline to assist, the women rise collectively to perform the funeral rites. This can be seen as a gesture of protest and resistance to social discriminations they are subjected to.

From the authorial/third person commentary that connects the narrative passages in all the three stories mentioned above it appears that the author deliberately took this project of addressing the grave questions of women's oppressed conditions from different dimensions. Particularly "*Pinjrapole*" grabs our attention more as in it Jyotirmoyee Devi brought forward a distinct tone of disagreement with the prevailing gender-based customs and rituals which were further cemented by religious dictum. The ideas and criticisms on injustice, patriarchy, and oppression by way of religion, that come to one's mind while reading this story are undoubtedly what the authorial voice, aimed to evoke amongst the audience. The author remains a success in provoking deeper brooding on several gender-specific crises without any melodramatic treatment of the themes like negligence of girl child, child marriage, widowhood, prostitution and so on.

From the thematic analysis of the three stories it is evident that in Jyotirmoyee Devi's literary compositions feminism reaches, by disregarding the might of the conventional society and thoughts coupled to it, new heights and dimension. To understand the implication of such gendered delineation of fictional contexts, we may refer to some relevant observations of scholars and critics. In her book *Fiction of Authority* Susan S. Lanser, a leading figure in studies of women's narratives, speaks of a need for identifying three narrative modes in women's writings, namely 'authorial, personal and communal voice' (1992). According to Lanser 'authorial voice' can be identified in "narrative situations that are heterodiegetic, public, and potentially self-referential" (9). On the other hand 'personal voice' is the voice of those "narrators who are self-consciously telling their own stories" (18). And by 'communal voice' Lanser refers to the "a practice in which narrative authority is invested in a definable community and

textually inscribed either through multiple, mutually authorizing voices or through the voice of a single individual who is manifestly authorized by a community ” (21). Among these Lanser holds that the 'authorial' and 'personal' voices serve as the most strategic modes for women writers. The complex working of these two modes, though often within the gross framework of traditional narrative forms, transforms the narrative world to a site for interplay of 'powers, dangers, prohibitions, and possibilities' (FOA 15).

Jyotirmoyee Devi's selected stories illumine the subjective representation of the social realities in detail. On the other hand the reflections, judgements, generalisations about the events beyond the story-world, comments on the social trends and biases by the narrator may be related to the Jyotirmoyee Devi's discursive status or 'public' voice that speaks for a class who, at that time, was denied a voice. She does not simply predicate the words and action of fictional characters, rather becomes one of them to endorse a collective nuance to the saga that overlaps boundaries of time and geography.

So the stories of Jyotirmoyee Devi are pregnant with rebellious possibilities. She presents a multidimensional world dotted by sharp and accurate observations on social evils generated from conventional patriarchal framework. Women in different phases of their life, as well in different roles, are dominated and oppressed by conventional practices that demonstrate gender bias while in operation. The multi-layered representation of women's marginalisation in Jyotirmoyee Devi's writing emits a strong note of dissent against such oppression. Time has marched ahead since she documented her experience and observation in those stories. But the relevance of the questions she raised has not yet lost. The questions of liberty from the fetters of self-repressing customs and prejudices, of freedom of exercising self-determination and of right to education and economic self-sufficiency for women still pose as great concerns for us. While living through a more disadvantageous milieu, Jyotirmoyee Devi, both by in her life and works, blew the siren for revision and in some cases rejection of some profit-driven unfair practices concerning women and womanhood as a whole.

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A STUDY OF PRIVATE PUBLIC DIVIDE IN ELLEN GLASGOW'S *THE WOMAN WITHIN*

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Abstract:

Writing an autobiography, for a woman, is sometimes risky, because a woman's autobiography has always been rejected by the male traditional autobiographical theorists as insignificant. She has to confront many issues to represent her life in the written medium. This article proposes to do a detailed study of Ellen Glasgow's autobiography. The inspiration behind her prodigious literary output can be traced to her fiercely guarded personal life. This article then is an attempt to pry opens the secrets behind her literary success.

Key Words: *Women, Autobiography, private-public, physical struggle, an literary success.*

Representing one's life is a difficult task for a writer because nobody can reveal every detail of one's life. The self may differ from one man to another in many respects. According to Edith Wharton, the 'self' is "a house full of great rooms". Representing the life is not always possible in the case of women writers. But being a woman writer, representing the self, sometimes being risky. As Susan Sidonie Smith points out in *A Poetics of Women's Autobiography*, women who place themselves in public view by recording their lives may run particular risks of which they are on some level aware.

Attuned to the ways women have been dressed up for the public exposure, attuned also to the price women pay for the public self-disclosure, the autobiographer reveals in her speaking posture and narrative structure her understanding of the possible readings she will receive from a public that has the power of her reputation in its hands (49).

The Woman Within is an autobiography written by Ellen Glasgow between the years of 1934 and 1945. It was posthumously published in 1954, nine years after her death. It was sealed in Glasgow's safe-deposit box in Richmond, preceded by a note "To My Literary Executors" that read, in part: "This rough draft is the original and only copy of my autobiography. It was written in great suffering of mind and body, and the work is as true to actual experience as I have been able to make the written word... I was writing for my own release of mind and heart; and I have tried to make a completely honest portrayal of an interior world, and of that one world alone." (vii)

Ellen was born as the ninth child for a Calvinistic father and for an aristocratic Virginian lady. Being a ninth child, she was so weak and fragile from her birth. In "The Child and the World," she represents herself as a child who is afraid of anything and everything she sees. Throughout her childhood, she represented herself as a fragile girl who feels so threatened by the crowd. She often suffered from mental aches and nervous breakdowns. She recorded that she saw an illusion when she was one year old, a face without a body hanging on the top windowpanes. Throughout her life, she wondered what could have caused such illusion at her early age, when she cannot even recognize anything. She represented herself as a child who did not clearly know her birth date also. This confusion was arisen because her mother told that she was born on April 22nd 1874, but through some Bible record her father asserted that she was born not on 1874 but in 1873. Hence, Ellen concluded that she was born in 1873 and she said she has never used this date of birth except for important events. She always sought loneliness, though there were many members

in her family. She only loved the company of her Mammy Lizzie Jones, with whom she traveled to various places and enjoyed her childhood days. A sense of exile was entered into Ellen, when she was seven, when her Mammy left her home. "This was first sorrow of my life. It was the beginning of that sense of loss, of exile in solitude, which I was to bear with me to the end." (30) The secrecy in her life started when her first verses were read aloud to her sister's guests by her sister with a kind of ridicule and amusement. "My skin felt naked and scorched, as if a flame had blown over it." (37) This was a great shock for Ellen and after this bitter incident, she started living two lives- one for her external world and the other one was her internal writing world which nobody knew, except her mother, until her first book was published. This resembles Edith Wharton's *A Backward Glance* in which the autobiographer expresses the same view as Ellen Glasgow. Both the writers were ridiculed for their first attempt of writing and after this humiliation, both were writing in dim corners without other people's knowledge.

Some fear and some dark identity had entered into Ellen. Her first day experience at school makes her health worse. She tells:

I remember this, and I have not forgotten that while I sat there I felt a chill crawling up my spine, like a beetle. Sickness, black and chill, attacked the pit of my stomach, and all the stamping feet and treble voices coming closer were stabbing down into my ears, into my throbbing head. It was the beginning of one of my nervous headaches, and a cold sweat broke out while I struggled not to disgrace myself by throwing up my natural enemies, strange children, on my first day at school. If the children had been cannibals, and I a missionary prepared for the feast, my doom could not have seemed more dreadful to me, or more inevitable. (47)

She was mocked by her elder students, which brought her nervous breakdowns and mental aches. The doctor Dr. Coleman advised her parents not to force her to go to school. Then she turned herself on various books such as European and British literary history from her Father's library. For Ellen "To teach one's self is to be forced to learn twice." (41) Even at her very early age, she was capable of reciting all the plots of the Waverley novels.

From her childhood, she found herself as the supporter of the weak and she wanted to be a voice for them which she could not fulfill in her childhood. But in her later life she became the voice of the weak through her literary works. She did not forget Uncle Henry, who was once beaten up by some people in the almshouse. She also remembered that she enjoyed while he was beaten up. For, she could not realize the pain behind it in that age. But later, when she realized, though she wanted to help him, she was helpless.

Ellen's Mother "was the center of her childhood's world, the sun in her universe." (13) She made all things bright and she was a mixture of both joy and sorrow. Her nature was interwoven with sympathy. From her childhood, she was born in a rich aristocratic family. Her health became deteriorated as she gave birth to ten children. On the contrary, her father was a man of Calvinistic faith and he gave everything to his children and wife except love which they needed most. However, he was a man of unselfishness. He, in his life, never spent money except for books. He worked as a Manager in Tredegar Iron Works. Ellen told that she had inherited nothing from him except the color of her eyes and share in a trust-fund. Her whole nature resembled her Mother's nature.

From her childhood, she sought an adventurous life which their parents always denied her due to her ill-health and this made her to seek the company of her Mammy Lizzie Jones, with whom she travelled to various places and encountered many adventures. "My little legs must have grown very tired on our rambles. But, like my Mammy, I was spurred on by an inborn love of adventure, a vital curiosity to know what was hidden round the next corner." (20) She created an imaginary little character named Lillie Willie and with him she encountered various deep jungles. Her Mammy, whom she loved most next to her Mother, was a woman of extraordinary skills. If she would have given a chance, she would have proved herself a better one. The association of Ellen Glasgow with her Mammy reminds of Edith Wharton's autobiography, in which the narrator was brought up by her surrogate mother nurse Dooley. Both the

authors felt relaxed while they were with their surrogate mothers.

Her mental aches and nervous breakdowns tortured her only when she was in midst of other people. But when she was in the farm, she was free from all the problems and she lived happily. At Jerdone Castle, she loved everything and there she developed a natural love for trees. Unlike her other sisters, she lived a happy life in the farm. She says “All the terrors of living were stripped away, like leaves from the trees.” (53) She could enjoy all these happiness only in summer, because during winter, she had to bury herself under the cold bed in the dark room.

With her mother's death, Ellen Glasgow felt that her life had come to an end, because she lived a detached life from her sisters. She described her pain as, “In those months of Mother's absence, I know that I broke forever with my childhood. For the first time I was standing alone, without the shelter and the comfort of her love and sympathy.” (71) When they had to leave the farm, her heart was broken, it was the place where she was healthy. Another significant reason was that it was only in the farm she had discovered her own interest in writing. She lived a natural life in that farm. “This was the only place where I found health, . . . where I had begun to write, and had discovered an object, if not a meaning, in the complicated pattern of my inner world.” (68) Thus, she presented herself as a fragile child who was afraid of hypocritical world, and felt threatened by strangers.

In the second part “Youth and the World”, she presented as a matured girl, who has evolved and free from the early fears. Between her ages of sixteen to twenty, she was so happy and she mentioned that those four years passed as if a single year. Several romances budded within her but she passed on. In those years, she turned herself completely to books and she was guided by her instructor Walter McCormack and she wanted to know the effect of poverty. Even at that early age, she wanted a revolution against humanity. She recorded that she liked human beings but did not love human nature. Her sensitiveness of her childhood vanished and she started to search her 'self'. Though she has not completely found her 'self', she developed a strong social consciousness.

Her lack of religious fervor met with stern disapproval by her father. Her father was fearful regarding her love of knowledge. But she was not intimidated by religious persecutions and she always kept reading books, especially banned books like Lecky's *History of Rationalism in Europe* and other philosophical books.

When she desired to become a novelist, some natural instinct warned her “This is not right! That word will not do!” (94) Ellen, unable to decide anything, did not obey it. She later realized the instinct, when she first intends to publish her book *The Descendant*. She realized the reality of the world when she sent the manuscript of 'Sharp Realities' to an unknown literary adviser, she found that the man was interested only in her and not in her manuscript. She somehow escaped from him and she burnt the manuscript and resolved not to write again. But her character Michael Akersham did not vanish from her mind and she again started writing after few months. This brought the idea of her first novel where the hero was an illegitimate child who, later on, became a radical journalist. Thus she resolved to write of the “harsher realities beneath manners.” Her first book *The Descendant* was originally completed in 1895 but was delayed due to a series of deaths of her Mother and Walter.

Throughout her youth, she posed herself as a unique girl in her family and in her friends circle and a unique writer in the literary circle. She felt that everybody in American literary scene had gone soft and nobody wished to be different. But she was unable to accept this view and wanted to be different. She told that “Blood and Irony” would be the best tools for Southern people to express themselves because “Our innocence may have been as real as our gentility; but our sentimentality was so close to the skin that it would drip if it were touched.” (104) Her first book *The Descendant* was published after many hurdles. But when the manuscript was sent to a man named Mr. Patton, who was so fascinated and moved by the book and resolved to open a new publishing house to publish the book. She felt that the real credit has come to her. Throughout her childhood, she had to struggle for everything which was later remarked by a friend as

“Your whole life has been simply the overcoming of one obstacle after another.” (113)

In the third part “On Not Taking Advice”, she focused on her literary achievements. Her 'self' in the literary environment was quite different from other Southerners. And in these years, she encountered another difficulty of 'deafness' which she described as “wolfish terror.” Like her childhood, she suffered due to nervous problems when she was in amidst of strangers while sailing to London. She represented herself as an ignorant one without knowing that she possessed some knowledge on that. When one man asks her mockingly whether like all Americans she has also come to put a rose on the tomb of Chaucer, she replied him that she has come to put the rose not on the tomb of Chaucer but on the tomb on Darwin without knowing that the man was the eldest son of Darwin. She wondered that she has confessed her ignorance of his identity.

She came to know that her *The Descendant* was published anonymously but received a good welcome from the readers. While she walked alone in London streets, she felt that she has found the happiness at last. But with the increase of her deafness, she could not move freely with anybody. It gradually made her to be dependent on somebody. Being a writer, then she was receiving more visitors but she could not receive them unless Cary or Rebe, her sisters, were with her. But she clearly knew that there was no way of escape from that 'wolfish terror.'

When she returned to America, she went and met the publisher Harper. He found that the book was of one Southern woman's product. Though she was not rewarded directly for her work, she left the firm of Harper with a dancing heart. However, she knew that publishing one novel never makes a novelist. She wanted to write better. She asserted:

I wanted not an inspiration (was't my mind bubbling with inspiration?); I wanted an art. I wanted a firm foundation. I wanted a steady control over my ideas and my material. What I understood more and more was, that I needed a philosophy of fiction, I needed a technique of working. Above all, I felt the supreme necessity of a prose style so pure and flexible that it could bend without breaking (123).

She was to be distinguished from other American fictionists in this desire that she needed a new prose style. But she did not know whom to follow. She read Henry James for her model, but unlike others she did not want to imitate anyone. She wanted to be herself and to be perfect. For model, she read various authors such as Maupassant, O' Henry, Tolstoy, and Chekhov and she gathered different ideas from everyone. She considered Maupassant's *Madame Bovary* as the flawless one and *Une Vie* as the most beautiful novel in all literature. And Tolstoy's *War and Peace* proved that “a great novel can stand on its merits as fiction without style” (126).

Her deafness really tortured her and she still had the problem of nervous depression while meeting strangers. Her sister Cary was always with her when Ellen received her visitors. She avoided strangers because she did not want others to know her disability. When one man found out and asked her what the real problem was, she avoided him for she did not want to expose her disability. When she got more income from her books, she consulted various aurists both in America and in Europe but in vain. As there was no treatment for that, she accepted stoically that she had to bear the pain. Later one of the aurists tells “You are only one of my patients who is not depressed by deafness.” (138)

Ellen wrote throughout her life only for the release of her mind. Writing became a part and parcel of her life. She came across various literary movements that blossomed in America but nothing lasted for long. She felt alienated because she could not associate herself with any of the literary movements and she wanted to write better.

In the years of great mental depression, her brother Arthur arranged a voyage to her sisters and for Ellen as he felt that a change of scene can be a cure for some burning memories. They moved from one place to another place such as Egypt, Cairo, and Yorkshire and to many places. After wandering many places, she finally realizes that a change of scene may be a diversion but not a complete cure for some

unforgettable memories. She felt that she was not acknowledged for her literary works as she was born in the southern part of America. She felt that if she had born in New England and in Middle America, she would have been recognized. And in South only classes were important and there literature was not considered much and there was a stereotype prevailing that the Southerners could not produce good literature. This was why even when the Southerners produced good literature, they were not recognized.

The author, then, described her first love. She fell in love with a man whom she called "Gerald B", who had already married and had two children, at first sight. This love proved to her, her charm and personality. Before she fell in love, she did not concentrate on her clothing, and wore only black dresses and this love changed her a lot and she preferred colourful apparels. "Love had proved to me that my personality, or my charm, could overcome, not only my deafness, but the morbid terror of that affliction, and, especially, of its effect upon others." (157) Thus, with her love, she found that she could overcome all the obstacles in her life. But her love was not successful, and was over with his death after seven years. She was shocked and described it as, "So that was finished, that was forever..." (167) She became emotionally alone and felt as if she had lost everything in her life. But she had will power to come out of it and she realized that one may select from realities, but one could not impose on realities. From the beginning, she dealt with a dubious nature that is, she was always in conflict. "Emotionally, I was a believer; intellectually, I was a skeptic" (168).

In part four "The Impenetrable Wall", Ellen represented herself as one who was in search of reality in her life. When her love was over, she turned herself to various philosophical books by authors such as Kant, Schopenhauer, and Spinoza. She looked for the reality of the soul. She felt that with her love, her best works were done. Though she enjoys companionship, it was momentary and did not last long. She needed a strong friendship. The author was twice engaged but had not married. Since from her childhood, she wished to be free from emotional ties. Meeting strangers was a great distress for her, which did not refer that she could not mingle with people. She can easily befriend with a person with a word. But her physical illness made her to avoid strangers except in the company of her sister.

As she asserted, she had a mask of joyous looks. "From my sad childhood, I had worn the protective coloring of gaiety, and this successful effort at dissimulation had consumed my small store of strength." (178) Her sister Cary's death had a great impact in the author's life. Ellen is had an idea to protest for women's suffrage. Cary was suddenly caught up by a mysterious disease and the doctors tried in vain. All that they could do was to conceal the truth from Cary. Ellen was heart-broken but for Cary, she concealed the truth from Cary and she wanted to make her happy till she lives. Cary had an important role in Ellen's life because after Mother she was the only person who encouraged Ellen to write and to whom Ellen read her story chapter by chapter. But Cary died before the best work of Ellen was done. The irony is that Cary dies before Ellen's best work is done. "A tragic irony in life is that we so often achieve success or financial independence after the chief reason for which we sought it passed away. Mother died before my first book was published, and had had she lived but a longer, I might have made her future life so much easier." (188) Cary's illness created an emotional battle within the author and when Cary died, the author questioned why she alone had to bear all bitterness throughout her life. She settled in New York for some time to escape from some unforgettable moments.

I did not want people; I did not want sympathy. I wanted only to lose myself in a strange place, where nothing would remind me of grief or of joy or of life I had known. The past has become my present enemy, and my flight, I felt without thinking must be toward the unseen future. (194)

In part five "The Years of the Locust", she discussed about her matured life. She mentioned about a man named "Harold S" with whom the author had a passionate affair. But when he left for the World War, he was going away from her life consciously or unconsciously. She tells "If falling in love could be a bliss, I discovered, presently, that falling out of love could be blissful tranquility." (244) She spent her final life in her old house in Richmond. In that big house, she lived alone with the ghosts of her Mother, Frank, Cary,

and Father.

In part six named "What Endures," Ellen described her visit to England and the final hours of her life. In England she stayed with her brother Arthur and her wife Caroline. She said that though she loves the Cathedrals most, she could not write of them. She could only write of almshouses. The final years of her life marked her maturity over the things and the philosophy. When her beautiful dog Jeremy died, she had dreams such as both were in search of another in a vast hollowness. Then she was admitted in a hospital in Hurrogate. She was one of those persons who met both the World Wars and the impact of them on people. She ironically commented that American fiction had become so worthless. She felt that everybody possesses philosophy without knowing the meaning of it. The age, the period of 1920s has become modern. Sensation alone matters, not the reason. Everybody wrote fiction without any great effort. These works were considered to be great. She feels that the value of the fiction has degraded. When she nears sixty, she felt that her imagination was more vital than her early age. Between 1920s and 1930s she has produced five novels in her career, and these five she considered her best of all her works, and in American fiction.

In the final years, she was so much involved in philosophy. She clearly knew that one cannot remember with the mind alone. "One remembers with the nerves, and the arteries, and the bloodstream long after the mind has defeated and banished visible images." (213) At sixty, she felt that she is young than when she was in twenty. Her only companion was her secretary Anne Virginia Bennet. She ironically says that everybody in Richmond focuses on of trivial things. She felt as if trapped as a small animal in life. The trap is not the literal prison. She is caged by memories.

Only at the age of sixty, she learnt the secret of living. According to her, youth is the season of tragedy. She thought that her sense of laughter and making new friends were her two gifts that God had given for her. She felt pity for the literary situation that prevailed there. She was not sure about future. Though she suffered from heart ache in the in the final years of her life, She had the passion for writing. Her final book *In This Our Life* was started and the doctor advised her not to write. But she wanted to finish it before she died

She feared pain; not death. Throughout her life, she wore a protective color of gaiety around her. One friend asks her "The people here think you are so gay and attractive that they wonder why you write such sad books." (296) This clearly explained her 'self'. Through her literary career, she wrote books that were to be the voice of the people. As a writer, she wanted to break the conventionalities of a Southern Woman. She created literary characters like that. She ironically commented on the prevailing situation of American literary scene. In the midst of others, she wanted to create a new prose style without breaking.

Throughout her autobiography, she used various kinds of narrative technique to emphasize her feelings. This was written in the "I" person narrative. Usually, the narrative and autobiography are inseparable because autobiography is merely recalling the past of one's life, it is appropriate to use the narrative techniques as possible. If it had been written on the basis of the psychology of the author, it would have been better to use argumentative technique to justify the author's psychology.

This autobiography, written by a literary personality, followed the traditional conventions of autobiography, and so it can be considered a literary product. It is a clear manifesto of the time period between 1890s and 1940s. It clearly presents the World Wars. It is in this sense historical as well as political for it draws a picture of the literary scene in America during that time.

Ellen Glasgow, after weathering the storms of life, stoically falls in love with life when she touches sixty. The external gaiety has been a camouflage for the various painful stages that has been going on in her soul. Her writings reflect the loneliness, the loss, the alienation and also the subsequent acceptance towards the end of her life. Though Ellen during her time may have been discouraged by the marginalization of Southern literary artists, today she occupies a coveted position in the enviable galaxy of Southern Fiction writings of America like Faulkner, Carson McCullers, Flannery O'Conner and the like.

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WOMEN AS A SPIRITUAL GUARDIAN OF LIFE IN LAURA RIDING'S *LIVES OF WIVES*

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Abstract:

This paper illustrates how women are the guardians of a spiritual reality that most men cannot find. Undoubtedly and unquestionably, women are the strangers in the country of men. Still the world is the "dominating subject". This paper will move through the forward and three sections of "Lives of Wives" to understand Laura Riding's view of women as the spiritual force in history. Moreover, this is a finest attempt to examine Lives of Wives from a Women's perspective.

Key words: *Feminism, Woman, Matriarchy, Patriarchy, Guardian Angel, Status Woman.*

Introduction

Literally, since time immemorial, women have been occupying a distinct position in society. Moreover there are two main pillars of human life- Man and Woman. Both share equal responsibility in the making of society and hence both are supplement to each other but there has been a question mark on the status of woman in our society. All talk their role and responsibility but non care for their position. Today, Feminism or the advocacy of Woman's rights on the ground of the equality of the sexes is a burning issue.

Men want a Woman, who is virtuous wife, a good mother, and can do all the housework like a maid. Outside the home, she should be attractive and cultivated, and be a credit to him. In bed, she must be a nymphomaniac.

Empowerment and emancipation through documented in the Government reports, is yet a dream for the majority of women. Her status is always lower than the male partner. She is underprivileged in getting education, food, health care and freedom of choice of partner, number of children and other essentials of life. When women work, it creates a unique multiplier effect. Women are more likely than men to hire other women, and to give them access to capital, mentorship and networks. Women are also more likely to reinvest their income back in their families and communities.

A Guardian Angel is an Angel that is assigned to protect and guide a person, group, kingdom or country. Belief in Guardian Angel can be traced throughout all antiquity. Belief is that Guardian Angels serve to protect which over person God assign them to, and present prayer to God on that persons behalf. Today woman is indispensable part of society and compete with the patriarchal society. Each time a woman stands up for herself... she stands for all the woman community

If we can make an analytical study, we can realize the fact that behind the success and achievement of a man, there is a source of inspiration of a woman; she may be a daughter, lover, wife or mother. In comparing *A Trojan Ending* (1937) and *Lives of Wives* (1939), her two works of fiction set in the distant past, for it has taken long, the retrospective Chelsea issue of her work in 1976, Laura(Riding) Jackson made reference to the different approach to history in the two works:

One must use, for this kind (*Lives of Wives*), a shorthand script that will, in its enlargement into plausible interpretations of its compressed content, make claim to a verisimilitude sufficient for the moment of sympathetic imaginative generosity toward the imagining. This kind of story is on the plane of miracle. The story of historical actuality has to be put together with visibly read pieces of occurrence. The other kind (*A Trojan Ending*) is all a

picturing of an imagined actuality as the invisible scene of revelation. Of course, one tries to do more, in non-historical story, than to raise a curtain on the scene, and let it fall before it ages into historical nothing. (147)

A reader looking in 1939 to Laura Riding's *Lives of Wives* as a kind of sequel to her historical novel of the Trojan War, *A Trojan Ending*, must surely have felt a sense of disorientation stemming from, its "compressed content." The Foreword to *A Trojan Ending* had stressed the author's commitment to telling the truth about the Trojan War, and the novel had used long, conversational scenes which correspond to a real time of several hours. The latter work is far more dedicated to narrating a series of swiftly moving events. In fact, *Lives of Wives* seems to want to stay so close to the historical record, scanty as it may be, that it deliberately avoids developing into a traditionally realized work of fiction.

There is no genre specification to tell us whether *Lives of Wives* is better read as a novel or as a series of three stories. The three sections, "A Persian Lady and Her Contemporaries," "Macedonian Times," and "New Ways in Jerusalem" do not appear to be closely connected by narrative threads. Instead, it is the approach to history which is the common link. This essay will move through the Foreword and three sections of *Lives of Wives* to understand Riding's view of women as the spiritual force in history. The brief Foreword presents us with the historical theme:

Modern history really begins with the founding of the Persian Empire. The first emphatic punctuation in history after this is the time of Alexander and Aristotle; and the next after that is the time of Herod the Great.

In the language of Daniel: ancient times were of gold and silver; the age of Cyrus the Persian was of brass; the age of Alexander, of iron, later mixed with clay. And then came the stone which broke into pieces this image of many metals: unhewn stone, like that of the altar of burnt-offerings at Jerusalem.

I have called my version of these three crucial ages preceding the Christian era 'Lives of Wives' because the principal male characters are here written of as husbands rather than as heroes. (5)

From the Foreword we learn that *Lives of Wives* is about historical decline, but we do not realize that it is through the figures of women that this trajectory is presented. Moral decline accelerates as we pass from Amytis to Olympias to Cleopatras. Violence replaces serenity as women gain more political power from one year to the next and as sexuality plays a greater and greater place in their moral degeneration, but she has to die for maintaining her integrity and serenity. Laura (Riding) Jackson has not subscribed to the version of female protest which centers itself on the political arena. For her, women are the guardians of a spiritual reality that most men cannot find. As she says in her article "The Bondage" (1972):

Thus in fighting for full social liberation as if it held the key for them to fullness of life and performance, women are sealing themselves off from that of which they have, by their woman-nature, pure, sure sensibility---sensibility unobstructed by self-interested appetencies.

They add their forcer, in newly fierce intensity of imitation of masculine exertion towards the creation of social substitutes for spiritual ends, to the removal of the spiritual reality of the human reality to distances of abstraction morally convenient seeming distances, by masculine moral optics. They confuse the satisfaction of a male-like vanity in self emphasizing social performance with the joy of a new sense of social usefulness. (31)

This passage clarifies what the reader probably cannot anticipate from the foreword to *Lives of Wives*. The depiction of these women's lives is meant neither to lament women's lack of power nor to reveal them as political counselors behind the throne, but rather to show how their spirituality or lack of it affected their husbands and thus the course of history.

In the first section, "A Persian Lady and Her Contemporaries," the chief characters are Cyrus the Great of Persia and his wife Amytis. Because of scanty historical material here Riding has the most freedom to create story. The major source of information about Cyrus the Great comes from the Greeks rather than from Persian written records. The first book of Herodotus's *Histories* is the most important source. In addition, there is the novel-length pedagogical work, the *Cyropedia* by Xenophon, which presents Cyrus as a model ruler and which offers us examples of the many edifying conversations he engaged in. The fragmentary remains of the works of Ctesias, a Greek physician in Persia, is a third source of information about this era. In addition, in the Old Testament, Cyrus is presented briefly as an august deliverer of the Hebrews from Babylonian captivity. Overall, Riding does not change the good impression of Cyrus that we have inherited.

The seven chapters on Cyrus and Amytis cover events from their meeting c.500 (at about the time Cyrus became emperor) to his death in 529 B.C.E. and her subsequent voluntary exile. Amytis was the daughter of the defeated Median emperor, Astyages. She had been married to the elderly Spitamas, a major figure at the Median court, but he treacherously cast Astyages in prison.

Amytis is not a character who changes over time. Her goodness is manifest early in her life. The scene in which Amytis meets Cyrus and they become betrothed (22-30) indicates that although the Medes would be happier to accept Cyrus as ruler if he were to marry the deposed ruler's daughter, the union is still a love-match of two equals. Amytis is noted for her serenity (30) and her "power of putting people in good-humour" (31). When she first meets Cyrus, they banter about women's role in society. Amytis begins:

And will not your wives in Persia be grieving over your absence? She asked.

The good countenance of one wife consoles a man for weeping countenances of those he has left behind.

And in your land have you the same virtues as we have in ours; to speak the truth and give hospitality to all who come fairly, and make no debts?

Rather we say in our land the most virtuous man is he who is beloved of others. My virtues are therefore yours to bestow. (28)

Amytis goes on to ask if there are women in Persia who work the plough along with men, like the Median women. Although Cyrus responds that there are no such women in Persia, he insists that he has not come to make the Medes give up their love of women. Riding shows that Cyrus's good administration owed much to the serenity of Amytis. The emperor and empress foster a court of urbane conversation in which ideas about the good life are shared and weighed. When Cyrus comes back from defeating the Lydian king Croesus (who later becomes a close friend of his niece Amytis), Cyrus tells stories he has heard about Thales and Solon. Cyrus believes that Solon must have had a wife whom he esteemed greatly since he told Thales that one might be a clever philosopher without a wife, but never a sensible one (35).

Although Thales, according to Cyrus, believed that even lifeless things have souls, he could not find it in himself to think of women as having them. In another brief exchange of conversation, the value of the good wife is again stressed. Croesus tells Amytis that Amasis, the king of Egypt, had been impotent with his wife Ladice, but with the help of Aphrodite, the situation had improved. Amytis is glad about this change of events, for if he had continued to have sexual problems he might have taken another wife ---one who might have led his kingdom to ruin rather than prosperity. The talk of Croesus and Amytis drifts to sphinxes, and Amytis remarks that there may be some justice in the legend that men kill themselves in frenzy of trying to remember what the creatures have told them in a dream, since men too easily forget what women tell them, and it is very annoying" (43).

From these conversations, the reader slowly becomes aware that Riding is presenting women as the spiritual guardians of life. So we are not too surprised when we learn that the Garden of Eden myth, according to Amytis, was made up by Persian women with their eunuchs. In fact, her mother might even have been the original storyteller in this case. Just as the Trojans of the epic period were seen by Riding as

being spiritually superior to the enemy Greeks, the Persians here again surpass the Greeks in their ability to live fully and in their understanding of women.

Moaning and complaining are not suitable for women, as a story told about Peisistratus tyrant of Athens, makes clear. He was once driven out of the city for refusing to let his wife have children, says Croesus. However, Amytis does not believe the story because, as she says, “a woman who really wants children can manage these things” (44) she means that a woman can persuade her husband rather than turn to a lover for children.

Amytis and Cyrus are impressed by petition of she Sheshbazzar (Ezra) on behalf of Hebrew repatriation. Although riding concedes that Cyrus's granting the request Jews to return to Palestine is part of a balance of power operation (54), she is also at pains to present a spiritual affinity between Persians and Jews beyond what is presented in Ezra 1: 1-14. Both peoples are trying to tell good from evil, and Sheshbazzar admits that sometime the Jews become too proud and rejoice at the power to know evil rather than lament that there should be evil” (55). Later Amytis sends to Ezra for Jewish musicians I Babylon, but since he does not have any to spare, she gets them from Babylon instead. However, their music is so sad that she is only half-pleased (61), for Amytis believes in facing all events with reasoned good cheer.

After Cyrus is killed in the campaign against the Massagetae, his evil son from his first marriage, Cambyses, becomes emperor, thus beginning a long period of Persian decline. Riding comments: “the times were sad ones: and should have been happy. Cyrus had made them a great and stirring people, yet without corrupting their innate virtues and graces” (70). Finally, amytis decides to go into exile to India rather than remain under Camybyeses's evil rule. Despite the pain of leaving, she remains optimistic and hopes that her new surroundings will be “entertaining”(73). The section on Persia closes with this authorial commentary:

This is how we now expect a lady of charm to behave under trouble---- it is no new thing. And it is part of her charm that we are unable to judge from appearances what she is privately feeling.

Cyrus had been as good a husband to Amytis as his position in the world allowed..... every wife share her husband with the world, which is his grave and for the immortal trifle that may be left to her should not be ungrateful, considering how much necessary waste there is in the life of any man.(73)

For riding, women are fortunate in that they are less subject to the public arena than man. The public world is always one of moral compromise, and women should not confront it without full recognition of this fact. The age of Alexander and Aristotle serves as the proverbial bad example to show men creating “social substitutes for spiritual ends” the age of Olympias replaces that of Amytis. A two-page opening chapter of Macedonian times entitled Persia in decline runs through the period from 539 to 356 B.C.E. Riding

Tells us that the Greeks cannot be said to have succeeded the Persians in imperial dignity (78). None of the men are monsters, but some of the women achieve the reality of seeming monsters, but some of the women achieve the reality of seeming monsters (98). Refusing to accept the tradition of judging Alexander by Aristotle, she suggests that we must “see how the age of Aristotle looks by the light of the age of Alexander”(78)

The women who seem to be monsters are not Aristotle's two wives Pythias and Herpillis but rather Olympias, wife of Philip II of Macedon and mother of Alexander the great; Roxana, wife of Alexander and mother of his posthumous heir Philip: and Eurydice, grandchild of Philip the great and wife of his son, the feeble-minded Philip (Alexander's half-brother).

Again an important moral of this historical story does not get presented until the closing lines of the section:

Had Olympias been woman of great virtue, as well as of great energy, what could she have done with her virtue in that age, in those circumstances, except hide it away? Something

she kept hidden away in herself, something that would not be still, that she tried over and over again to destroy: was it, perhaps, virtue? At any rate, there was a zeal in her for noble things.

Finding nothing on which to spend it, she turned it into a rage against herself and her time-- which were those not only of her son Alexander but of his tutor, Aristotle.

For ridding, the political power that some women were able to achieve in Macedonian times, beginning with Olympias, is not a victory at all, since spiritual power is lost simultaneously. Her aristocratic women of Macedonia and then of the Ptolemaic empire after Alexander had more personal freedom than the women of Athens during the classical period, as Sarah Pomeroy has shown, but for riding this does not constitute progress.

Olympias is one of the most fascination figures of the ancient world, and she is mentioned briefly in many sources. A detailed portrait of her is presented in Grace Hobart Maccurdy's *Macedonian Queens*, published seven years before *Lives of Wives* and still a valued work. Olympias has one major wrong on her side. She realizes that "Philip was disgusted in her love for him, as if there were something unclean in her thinking him a more noble character than he was or ever meant to be" (82). From this perspective riding somewhat downplays the idea that rivalry with Philip's many other wives and consorts caused her notorious wrath.

Although Olympias is presented as a devotee of orphic and Bacchic rites, riding passes up repeating some standard material that might put her in a bad light, such as the famous account from Plutarch that she turns off Philip's marital ardors by sleeping with her pet snakes. Nor does riding stress the claims that Olympias supposedly made that Alexander was her son with Zeus, not with Philip. Both of these repressed incidents might support a view of Olympias as mentally unbalanced.

In general, however, riding's sympathies seem to be more with Philip than with his wife, as she writes, that he left his other son at Olympias's mercy shows how unreal to Philip were her grounds of resentment toward him (97). She is full of suspicion and desire for revenge. There is no doubt in *Lives of Wives* that she is behind Pausanias's murder of Philip (101).

Riding adheres to the inherited view of Olympias as a woman of great ambition, and she writes that her "life grew darker than it had ever been in Philip's time not only because her part in great events could now be only a mother's but because they were still far from being those she had dreamed of" (103). For riding, there are no horrible stories of men from the past which can match the desolate tales of the frighteningly ungentle women of history such as Olympias (103).

If we are unable to understand Olympias's motivation, some of this problem comes from the probability that she never had clear goals in mind:

She had abandoned her interest in mystic cults and magical rites. Nothing burned in her mind now but a will working toward she did not care what end a heat that she could not make burst into flame. Indeed, she was dark within herself as she seemed to others; and had that mistrust of dark which prevents hot-tempered people from giving themselves up innocently to sleep. In Olympias's bedchamber the lamps were not extinguished until dawn. (104)

When Alexander goes off to conquer western Asia, Olympias finds her ambitions put on hold for over a dozen years, since Antipater, whom Alexander designated to govern in his absence, is an effective administrator and holds her in check. After his death, she again has a chance to act significantly in the political arena, but she is defeated. Riding moves from her unflattering portrait of Olympias to her equally negative evaluation of Aristotle in the chapter *Modernity at Athens*. Riding believes that we should not give Alexander high marks for being Aristotle's pupil. Rather Aristotle deserves demerits for being the teacher of such a person as Alexander. Several times Aristotle is presented as a person who creates an empty moral system which has no understanding of real virtue. The implication is that his golden-mean system of

ethics is tawdry, and this seems to be the cause for her disapproval even more than his famous comments dismissing the Intellectual capacity of women(113). Aristotle is presented as being a lover of luxury, a political opportunist, and a shallow thinker.

Plato is clearly a better philosopher than his famous pupil, and “philosophy made a hypocrite ”of Aristotle:

To Plato's perfect idea of the true answer {Aristotle} opposed the more comfortable notion of the reasonable answer; and as his self-confidence grew and his method swelled into a semblance of philosophic achievement, he became more and more content with commentary in place of thought.(107)

Aristotle lived in a time when Athens was characterized by a gloomy curiosity and knowledgeable despair (107) but his system of commentary did nothing to change the world for the better. Although he was cheerful, his optimism was of that inglorious kind which is a mere resolve of invulnerability: the noble optimists do not refuse pain”(107) one way Aristotle had of refusing pain was his always trying to endear himself to one section or other of the crowd (109). Not surprisingly, Philip of Macedon found him too clever for philosopher (127)

On the personal level Aristotle treats Xenocrates, his rival in his courtship of Pythias, badly, and he deserts the Atarneans (139) when they need him, he abandons his relative Callisthenes to Alexander's injustice (176) and to eventual death. He also emotionally deserts Pythias after she becomes his wife, and she bears a child to his ward Nicanor (143). The worst thing Aristotle does is give Alexander bad teachings. He tells him:

Greatness is absolute in no man... as truth is absolute in no mind. Power and wisdom lie in being somewhat stronger and somewhat shrewder than others. God is that which is somewhat above what men commonly are. And those men who stand a little above their fellow-men have the secret of divinity'.(145)

For riding such advice leads to making Aristotle's pupil a "proud oriental despot". Quite tellingly, Aristotle's notion of the divine is entirely severed from the feminine. Furthermore, unlike Plato, who saw the notion of the divine as moving from the higher to the lower, Aristotle believes that from lower to higher, not from higher to lower, is the flow of being”(160).

It is not surprising that Aristotle's royal student should eventually declare himself to be worthy of the honors of a god. Furthermore, Alexander suffers from having no good female influences in his life. He is several years into his Campaign before he marries Roxana and other women, and they have no real claim on him emotionally. Riding does not see much value in his attachment to men, which, apparently, she reads not as a valid choice or orientation but as a rejection of women(174) . whereas Mary Renault, in her biography of Alexander(1978) stresses the great capabilities of his favorite Hephaestion, for Riding Hephaestion was like an immature girl”(174). Aristotle fittingly outlives Alexander only by a year, having fled to Euboea in consequence of the changed political situation. When Aristotle commits suicide (in confused imitation of Socrates) after the death of Alexander, he leaves behind a very neat will, but riding lets us know that he subtly destroyed the life of his decent second wife Herpyllis.

In the following year Roxana, mother of Alexander's posthumous son; Olympias; and Eurydice, wife of Philip, Alexander's half-brother, are caught up in bloody dynastic fights. Olympias has one big regret-that she made Aristotle her son's tutor. Riding writes:

She spoke of him always with a vehemence that led people to regard her hate of him as insanity, and her insinuation that he had played a part in Alexander's death as a delusion. Rumours of his complicity spread, but as they were said to come from Olympias they were discounted. The accusation went into history as something creditable to Aristotle because the authority could be proved untrustworthy. (202)

When Cassander, son of Antipater, finally captures the elderly Olympiea, she takes a knife from her dress and slits her throat rather than be executed by her enemy's soldiers. Riding does not note that beginning with her powerful entry into history, the age of powerful queens begins. Instead, for her it is the end of the period of iron, later mixed with clay.

The third section, *New Ways in Jerusalem*, featuring the story of Herod and Mariamne, recounts the last days of the Asmonean dynasty and the period of Herod and his descendants the age of stone. The initial chapter, the ancestors of Mariamne, covers the period from Alexander's death to Caesar's campaign against Pompey in the eastern Mediterranean, she briefly presents the Asmonean descendants of Judas Maccabaeus, who rules the Holy Land from 168 B.C.E. riding bypasses the chance to do more than mention in passing Alexander, the only queen of this dynasty, who ruled from 78-69 B.C.E. Our knowledge of the Asmonean and Herodian dynasties comes principally from Josephus's two major works, the *Jewish War* (79 C.E.) and his later (and more verbose) *Jewish Antiquities* (93 C.E.), both in Greek. The story of Herod and Mariamne is told in more detail in the latter work, with some inconsistencies with respect to the earlier version. Mariamne was a great-granddaughter of queen Alexandra, grand daughter of Aristobulus II (ruled 69-63), and daughter of the second Alexandra. In marrying her in 37, Herod, the Idumenean king, cemented his claim to the throne of the Jewish kingdom. He had Mariamne executed in 29, and their sons (who had grown up in Rome) murdered in 6 B.C.E.

The picture that Josephus gives us of Mariamne is of a haughty woman who is insufficiently responsive to her doting husband, although Josephus does make it clear that the truly had cause for complaint. Riding accepts Josephus's unflattering portrayal of Mariamne's mother Alexandra and Herod's sister Salome. Alexandra is a ruthless, scheming woman who despises Herod and his family. Salome acts as an evil counselor to Herod, continually lying and suggesting to him bloody mischief against the Asmoneans. Remarkably, Herod never catches on to his sister's evil nature.

Riding attempts to explain the moral dimension to Mariamne's pride both through a series of short, invented scenes and through a contrast with Cleopatra. The approaches these women take to the evil around them provide one of the chief interests of this narrative.

The key passage in the third section of *Lives of Wives* is Mariamne's evaluation of her personal response to Cleopatra. After the battle of Actium and Cleopatra's death, Mariamne tells Herod:

Do I not still wear the bracelet [Cleopatra] gave me, though she behaved so badly to us when she was in Jerusalem: she saw that the world was evil and yet she craved for happiness in it, which she thought to get by being evil herself. And she had no more happiness than I have had--- who chose the other way. There was something that was the same in each of us: we were alike in that we hated the world, and yet saw that it could not have been otherwise. And we both tried to love in spite of this hate: perhaps she was more successful than. (301)

The respect with which riding treats Mariamne makes it clear that Cleopatra actually was not more successful at loving. Some readers may think that their actions are equally absurd, but more likely they will find Mariamne the sympathetic heroine of the story. Mariamne vaguely feels that their way of life has reached an end and that "it will be a long time before new things come to replace them" (301). She cannot realize that Christianity, introduced by the appearance of the magi at Herod's court a quarter century after her death, symbolizes that new order.

Although Cleopatra is presented in part as first the wife of Julius Caesar and then of Marc Antony, as queen her power is contrasted with Mariamne's political powerlessness. Unlike Cyrus's wife Amytis, Cleopatra is repulsed by the Jews. She hates them because, as she says, they knew only one kind of happiness and virtue, which was to cast out evil from their lives but take nothing in its stead lest that too be evil" (219). She associated the color gray with the Jewish faith and thinks of their god of clouds, frowning and solitary, hidden from the living and the dead alike (256) it is Mariamne's mother who sends the twelve

year-old daughter to Cleopatra in Egypt, an event which apparently riding creates in order to allow us to see Cleopatra as a woman who, in Mariamne's eyes, kills people and then makes a joke of it (221). Although Cleopatra is not the temptress presented by the Augustan propaganda that has colored her picture for centuries, she does not become the politically motivated champion of Egyptian independence that some historians have made of her. Rather riding's Cleopatra is the existential heroine who has chosen the wrong path, somewhat like the contemporaneous Caligula of Camus. Cleopatra finds that even the Jewish law is preferable to Aristotle's philosophic system:

Though I hate these people, I cannot help admiring them for their extremeness in reverencing what they call the law: I would do nothing myself except extremely. All the truly serious philosophers, such as Pythagoras and Plato, have borrowed from the Jews their idea of supreme truth in combating the looseness of Homer in whom there is neither thought nor mention of law. But this Aristotle has cut up truth into mean morsels, for the convenience of mere appetites. I have been very wicked in my life, but always with sincerity, and so am not to be deceived by those who make a learned hypocrisy of virtue. (270)

It is surprising to find this critique of Homer here, even from Cleopatra, since riding's foreword to a Trojan ending two years before does not ask us to see the world of Homeric epic as suffering from an inadequate concept of truth or law. It is only Mariamne who really lives up to the Jewish system of morality. She does not believe in allowing politics to overwhelm the moral sphere. In agreeing to her marriage, she tells her mother:

If my marriage to Herod will really save my grandfather's life, Mariamne answered, I shall be glad to marry him for that reason alone. Yet, when I become his wife, I will be a true one. I will love him for what is good in him, and try to help him to resist badness; and as he is cruel and bad, I will accordingly hate him. But I will not carry on any war against him except my own. (231)

Mariamne is even willing to have her marriage to Herod delayed so that she has time to learn to love him. Unfortunately, he is the one who fails her, despite his good intentions to live morally and to honor Judaism. Herod does not receive any praise from riding for trying hard to maintain Jewish independence from Rome in extremely difficult circumstances. She does not see him any more than she does Alexander as a relative internationalist at a time of debilitating nationalistic rivalries.

Riding, however, does acquit Herod of guilt in a famous murder. She presents Herod's sister Salome as the mastermind behind the drowning of Mariamne's younger brother Aristobulus, the newly installed high priest. Josephus, in the *Jewish Antiquities* A. 15, chapter 3, paragraph 3, is quite explicit here in naming Herod the guilty party, not an aggrieved bystander. When Herod has an interview with Antony's estranged wife Octavia, riding comments that both Octavia and Mariamne were virtuous and beautiful women. She asks, "was there an ill omen in this resemblance? Were such women given to men not for love but to be mirrors of their failings?" (279). Not surprisingly, Mariamne must die, not for what she has done, but because her virtue is a reproach to Herod's submission to evil. He can no longer have her in his sight.

When Mariamne learns from Herod's younger brother Joseph that Herod had left behind a secret order to have her killed to prevent her from falling into Antony's hands, riding interjects a claim she does not know how Mariamne felt at this point:

There are clues to many things in the past, and with the air that the people of other times once breathed, also, we can swell trifling relics of them into a near semblance of what was. But we cannot make the portrait or the story exact. Of those who are only recently dead, even, it is impossible to say: this is exactly what they were like, how they felt, and thought' ... if they could read what we write of them, they would probably be able to say no more than no, I do not think I could have done that : or yes, I might well have spoken in that

way.(283)

For riding, the shape of history is a haze, and we must be careful not to make the light too clear--- or the things we try to see by it will vanish like the Ancient murals discovered by the construction workers in Fellini's Roma. After reading a comment like this, it is not surprising to find that riding did not publish any ore historical fiction. Quite possibly the claims of history stood too strongly in the way of fashioning credible characterization.

When Salome has Mariamne falsely accused of attempting to poison Herod, Mariamne and her mother Alexander are put on a show trial. Although Alexandra speaks out hysterically, Mariamne remains silent. One wonders if here riding has combined a gesture of defiance toward the evil world on Mariamne's part with her own refusal to pry into the minds of historical characters. In describing the later events of Herod's reign, riding briefly introduces us to the arrival of Nicholas of Damascus at court. Although she does not mention that he was a historian as well as a philosopher, the informed reader will know of him as a major source for the credibility of her narrative.

In the last chapter of eight pages, "The New Era", Riding takes us from the arrival of the magi at Herod's court to the exile of Herod's grandson Herod Agrippa (son of Mariamne's son Aristobulus) about forty years later. In describing the coming of Christianity, Riding presents John the Baptist as suspicious of Jesus of Nazareth before their first encounter. John was stern minded, whereas Jesus was preaching "of a time of great bliss to come (321). After their encounter, Jesus adopts some of John's harsh rhetoric. He began to denounce the Pharisees, and also to stiffen his language against sinners though he spoke more often in his own beguiling manner than in the manner of John" (321). The conclusion of the novel is ambiguous, and some may find it disappointing, for riding refrains from commenting about the value of the coming of Christianity. She does not speculate on religion in the authorial voice in a way that would take us back to her statement on the ages of history in the foreword. Instead, we are left with the closing words of the exiled Herod Antipas to Herodias in Cadiz, let Agrippa {herod Agrippa} tease his head with such things, which we have put far behind us'(323). The altar of burnt offerings at Jerusalem"(5) will be gone by the end of the next generation with the Roman destruction of the temple. The Diaspora will have begun, and the apostles will be spreading Christianity.

Riding had already made a provocative statement comparing Judaism and Christianity in the first issue of epilogue in 1935 in answer to a questionnaire about "The Idea of God". She takes an objective view of the issue, avoiding polemics for either side from her own post-religious perspective:

Jesus, in aiming at universal salvation, knew that he was making an experiment. As a Jew he felt the formidableness of the law which he was trying to soften in so final sense. But he persuaded himself, in a manner suggesting Greek philosophical influence, that while an idea might as action be untenable, as thought it could have probability. He translated the Hebrew god, the critic of action, into a lenient god of thought, adding to the fixed Hebrew standard of immediate practicability philosophical connotations of futurity (20).

Whereas this substitution of thought for action is presented as having its positive and negative sides, riding shows less sympathy for Christianity when she connects it specifically with women's issues. According to riding, the virgin birth of Jesus represented complete disconnection from irksome dependence on the female patron of origination (20) with Jesus, we have an intensification of "the original spiritually restricted female source of personal existence- the humiliating sense of having been-child"(20).

The world into which Jesus is born hangs under the shadow of people such as Cleopatra, who chose to do evil in an evil world. Whereas Amytis represents goodness and serenity, and Olympias a hysteria that leads to evil, Cleopatra is wicked in a deep sense. She also has the most power of the three. Amytis wields political influence by being a moral force behind the throne, which is what Mariamne could also have been, had Herod understood her nature. Mariamne, unlike her mother, has no dynastic ambitions. The progressive degeneration marked in "Lives of Wives" is echoed by women's involvements in politics

beginning in the Macedonian era and continuing through the Ptolemaic. We should also note that in the earlier Trojan ending the women are without direct political power, and here they are closely associated with the moral force as the guardians in Troy of Cybele worship.

In a striking statement in the fifth part of *The World and Ourselves*, edited by Riding in 1938, she writes of the way in which women have sustained the religion of men:

Men have been, in general, the sponsors of religions. This was appropriate in that men have been more preoccupied than women with the impermanent elements of life: they needed religion as a counterpoise to their activities of change. The division of spiritual labour between men and women was, in history, on the basis of women's instinctive suspicion of change and men's instinctive love of it. Women have thus practiced allegiance to the existing permanences, however few they happened to be; men have practiced religious cancellation of the impermanences they created in their experiments with change. It might be said that in Women was lodged the sense of what was right; in men the sense of what was wrong. Women nevertheless sustained the religions of man... (424)

In *Lives of Wives* the brief appearances of John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth are indications of this tendency for men to be the religious reformers. Indeed, Herod has the new temple constructed, whereas Mariamne has no new religious vision. Riding in 1938 felt that we had passed out of the age of religion and that there was nothing bad about this change in itself.

Religion embodied the faith of people that life, purified of its falsities, its bad means must consist ultimately of permanences. Religion was people's way of being intelligent about the future. Intelligence no longer take that form because we are the future to which they were loyal. We have in us the power to make life consist of permanences: it is by the permanences that we should now be living. (422)

It will take an internal discipline to consolidate this new age in which religion has been superseded. A conspicuous part of this discipline means that people must maintain an invariable good temper (426). We must approach evil not in the immoral good temper of tolerance, but a serene consciousness of the permanences on which we can rely, however few they may be (427). Amytis and Mariamne are foremothers here because of their serenity, and we can say the same for Cressida in a Trojan ending.

Because Riding connects sexual experience with religion, it is also important to note that as we move through time, sex unfortunately becomes more important in some of the relationships. In a Trojan ending the presumably happy married life of Cressida and Diomedes lies in exile beyond the pages of the novel. In *Lives of Wives* Amytis has children with Cyrus, but the wife and husband are presented very much like good friends. Sexual discontent plays a large part in the unsuccessful marriage of Olympias and Philip of Macedon. In the cases of Antony and Cleopatra and Herod and Mariamne sexual passion comes to have an even larger role in the emotional lives of the men. This is not a good sign for Riding, who writes in *The Idea of God*.

Women, I have said, constitutes for man complete experience. She is the material of both subjective and objective feeling: in her he may both understand and see. But civilized man has used her only as an Instrument of his subjectivity: as such she is what he loves. Identifies with himself. The rest of the experience which she constitutes for him he evades sexually. In sex he makes his subjective experience of her the complete in her subjective aspect... (17)

Both Women and God compete "in man's consciousness with his idea of his own importance" (7). Because women is "something other than man" and the "answer to man's contradictory behavior toward the something else, which I both insulting and propitiatory", she is the answer to the question "Does God exist?" (7). Not surprisingly, when Herod oversexualizes his relationship with Mariamne, he loses both her and God at the same time.

Because Riding has spoken so vocally against the politically and socially oriented manifestations of American feminism, since the 1960s, it is important that we come to understand *Lives of Wives* in a context larger than the historical novel. The key emphasis is not on what history, written mostly by men, did not get to tell us, but in Riding's presentation of woman as the "spiritual other" in the life of man. Change is inevitable; nothing is immutable. Today, women with her intelligence and personality, protect the family from disruption and disintegration. She no longer lags behind the man in the most occupations; she draws the attention of the World as an athlete. Her journey from sea to space has proved unique and colourful. Each and every avocation touched by her. Every time she has proved herself right. She debunked the concept of Patriarchal society.

Conclusion

This paper is a finest attempt to examine "Lives of Wives" from a women's perspective. A woman is someone who is the guardian angel, who is the source of inspiration to all, fit to fight for her right. Above all, she is a nice daughter, a sweet sister, a lovable lover, a friendly wife; last but not the least she is a lovely mother. Literally, she is the guardian angel who creates a beautiful society of " Satyam, Sibham and Sundaram."

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DISCOVERING THE FORGOTTEN FEMALE WARRIORS OF MAHABHARATA

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Abstract:

Women are incredible in our Indian mythology. Throughout the history of Indian civilization; Women have battled to assert themselves as self-reliant individuals, and to vindicate their identities in a patriarchal society. Again and again, these warriors have manifested their prominence in various myths; which are narrated and passed down by various generations in the form of folk traditions. The two great epics The Ramayana (500 BCE) and The Mahabharata (400 BCE) are radiant with many heroic female characters' distinguishing themselves through various skills. The Mahabharata is the story of courageous men and eminent women whose lives are truly motivational. Women in the Mahabharata performed their various roles and responsibilities with their endurance, optimism, nobility, intellect, and faithfulness. Their assertiveness and self-confidence made them rebellious and tough enough to deal with the Patriarchy and Gender-discrimination. Draupadi, Gandhari, and Kunti are the leading ladies of Mahabharata, but there have been some lesser known female warriors who were skilled in warfares, but not attained recognition in the epic. These women performed an important role in shaping the narrative of the epic and their contributions cannot be overlooked. This paper is an attempt to discover some of these forgotten female warriors in the Mahabharata.

Keywords: *Forgotten, Mahabharata, Mother, Power, Shakti, Warrior.*

Introduction:

Hindu Mythology is enormous and we have various warriors with significant powers to conquer over their enemies. In our mythology, the Goddesses are seen as devoted and nurturing figures that remain calm and the figures of humanity. Women *have always been viewed* as the incarnation of 'Shakti.' *Durga, Gauri, and Maha-Kali* are the manifestation (Avatar) of Shakti; these Goddesses are the embodiment of energy, fertility, and power. Shakti is the Creator, the Destroyer of devilish forces and the Restorer of balance. Devi or Shakti takes many appearances, incarnations, and names. She can be a harmonious and sacrificial mother like Goddess *Parvati* is also worshipped as '*Annapurna*' who is considered as the goddess of nourishment and fertility that represents food. A dangerous warrior and epitome of strength like Goddess *Durga* who transformed herself into nine fierce forms to kill demons like '*Mahisasura*', '*Shumbh*' and '*Nishumbh*' because they were fascinated by her beauty and attempted to abduct her forcibly. As the fiery goddess of annihilation *Maha-Kali*; she is the slayer of devil '*Raktabeej*' by drinking every single drop of his blood because with each drop of his blood fell on the ground, produced multiple forms of '*Raktabeej*'.

“The hungry earth, which devours its own children and fattens on their corpses ... It is in India that the experience of the Terrible Mother has been given its most grandiose form as Kali. But all this and it should not be forgotten an image not only of the Feminine but particularly and specifically of the Maternal. For in a profound way life and birth are always bound up with death and destruction”.....

- Erich Neumann (The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype)

If we look into our legendary epics we have found many invincible women, who fought courageously in the battle-field alongside men. In *The Ramayana* For instance, the brave and beautiful

queen '*Kaikeyi*' was the second wife of King *Dasharata*; she was well-trained in self-defense, warfare, drove chariots, and fought wars from a very young age. When '*Indra*' the king of gods asked *Dasharata* to fight with the devil '*Samhasura*', who was the rival of both *Indra* and *Dasharata*. *Kaikeyi* requested *Dasharata* to take her with him on the battlefield. She served him as the charioteer. In the field, *Dasharata's* chariot wheel broke and then it was the fearless '*Kaikeyi*' who took him to a safe place, repaired the chariot wheel, healed *Dasharata's* injuries, then returned to the battlefield again and they won. After that, the king *Dasharata* had promised her two boons.

The Mahabharata was previously known as '*Jaya*', was composed around 400 BCE by Krishna-Dvaipayana Vyasa. The saint Vyasa approached Ganesha, to write *The Mahabharata*. Lord Ganesha graciously agreed on a condition "that during working hours the dictation would have to be continuous and his pen must not be kept idle even for a moment" (*Chaturvedi*, 2). *The Mahabharata* means Great India. The epic is considered as a whole literary text, not just the metrical creation. It consists of 18 Parva's and its central theme is the great Kurukshetra battle lasted for 18 days. The war was fought between two cousins Kaurava's and the Pandava's, which resulted in the absolute destruction of the Kaurava's and finally, Pandava's achieved their kingdom forever because they were standing for the truth.

More than 100 women are discussed in the *Mahabharata*. Draupadi, Gandhari, Kunti are associated with the main theme of the epic, but there are many 'other' women who were lost in the history of *Mahabharata*. These women have shown their eminence in warfares and martial arts. Chitrāngadā, Satyabhama, Shikhandi, and Ulupi were such skilled warriors. These female figures were, surely the embodiment of heroism, but got a remark in very few episodes of *Mahabharata*. The present paper aims to discover the myths of these female warriors in the epic, which will justify their contributions in the *Mahabharata*.

Chitrāngadā: The Warrior Princess of Manipur-

The story of Chitrāngadā finds mention in the "Arjuna-Vanavasa Parva" of the *Mahabharata*. Arjun had met the Chitrāngadā during his exile from his kingdom Indraprastha because as per the condition Draupadi should stay one year with each Pandava brother. If anyone did not follow this condition they had to go into exile for twelve years. When Draupadi was with Yudhishtira, Arjuna entered their room to take his bow *gandiva* to save the cows of a Brahmin. So, as per the condition, Arjuna had to go into exile for twelve years, to visit holy places in this period. In his wanderings, he reaches Manipur, ruled by the King Chitravahan. During hunting, he came across Chitravahan's daughter Chitrāngadā, the warrior princess of Manipur. As Chitrāngadā was the only child of the king Chitravahan, she was brought up as a boy, who loved adventures, hunting, and martial arts. She was exceptional in archery, sword art, horse riding, warfare, and administration. Chitrāngadā was the army chief and the protector of Manipur. She dressed up like a man who fiercely protected her land. Even a skilled archer like Arjun also got impressed by the skills of Chitrāngadā; she gave him a tough competition in archery. Chitrāngadā was not a Man, but she was more than a son for king Chitravahan. After seeing Arjun, she reacquires her hidden womanly qualities and feminine delicateness. She invokes the God of love (Kamdev) and the Goddess of beauty (Rati) to make her elegant and gorgeous to win the love of Arjuna. Pleased with her prayers, Kamdev granted her a beautiful appearance.

When Arjun saw the completely transformed Chitrāngadā, he was fascinated with her charm. *Her angelic beauty* and skills made him *fall in love with her*. Therefore, Arjun requested the king to seek Chitrāngadā's hand in marriage. The king Chitravahan was initially reluctant of getting her *daughter married* to Arjuna because according to the boon of Shiva, every king of Manipur is destined to have only one child, who is appointed as the king's inheritor. Chitrāngadā was his inheritor so; king agrees on a condition that; the child born to Arjun and Chitrāngadā would be the king of Manipur. Arjuna accepts this condition and getting married to Chitrāngadā, he stayed with her for three years. When she gave birth to a son '*Babruvahana*', Arjun went away on his wanderings. Chitrāngadā was left behind to govern and protect

Manipur. She deeply missed Arjun in every single moment. Chitrāngadā became the teacher of her son Babruvahana; she prepares him in all techniques of war such as archery, sword art and martial arts like his father Arjun. According to the Ashvamegh Parva of *Mahabharata*, when Arjun returned to Manipur with his army, following the sacrificial horse of yajna; Babruvahana captures their horse. Babruvahana does not even know that he is the son of Arjun. However, Babruvahana challenges Pandava's army to fight with him, if they want their horse. In this combat, Babruvahana triumphs over 'Bhīma', kills 'Vrishketu' (Karna's only living son) and his father Arjun with an arrow given by Ganga (who wanted to take revenge from Arjuna for the slaying of Bhishma). When Chitrāngadā got to know about this, she was deeply shattered. She rebukes Babruvahana for killing his own father. Chitrāngadā, lamenting with uncontrollable grief fainted and fell on the ground (*Bhawalkar, 352*). And then Krishna sent Babruvahana to the naglok (the land of the snakes), to bring sanjeevani Mani from Arjuna's another wife Ulupi. Arjun was brought back to life with the help of Krishna. Though, Chitrāngadā spent her whole life without Arjun but wanted to die if her husband was not revived (*Bhawalkar, 362*). This kind of devotion has been seen in the women of that era.

Ulupi: The Naga Warrior Princess

Ulupi was a Naga princess and the daughter of the serpent king, Kauravya, who belongs to the dynasty of Vasuki. Kauravya was the ruler of the underwater kingdom of snakes in the river Ganga. Arjun started his exile of twelve years from the banks of Ganga. Ulupi saw Arjun and fell in love with him. Ulupi was a well-trained warrior (*Chandramouli, 2012*), who was skilled in martial arts. She dragged him forcibly into the Naga Lok (the land of the snakes). Ulupi expressed her love and requested Arjun to accept her as his wife otherwise; she will end her own life. Arjuna got impressed with her skills and accepted her by Gandharva marriage because he wants to end the rivalry between the Pandava's and Nagas. He spent that night with her and left the palace on the morning of the next day. They had a son whose name was Iravan. Ulupi gave a boon to Arjun that "he would be unbeatable in the water and all creatures live underwater would always obey him". Some sources also say that that Ulupi had taught war-techniques to 'Babruvahana' (son of Chitrāngadā and Arjun) along with Chitrāngadā. She behaved like an elder sister with Chitrāngadā and loved her son Babruvahana too. When Arjun got slain by Babruvahana, she revived him by giving sanjeevani Mani to Krishna. Ulupi was the second wife of Arjun; the first one was Draupadi, later he had married to Chitrāngadā and Subhadra. Though Arjun had spent only one day with Ulupi; yet she had ended her life by drowned herself in the Ganga, When Pandava's decided to go with Draupadi on their last journey to Himalayas (*Bhawalkar, 360*).

Satyabhama: The Warrior Wife of Krishna

Satyabhama was the only child of Satrajit, the royal treasurer of Dvaraka. She was an incarnation of BhooDevi, the earth goddess. Satyabhama was the third wife of Lord Krishna. She was an ace archer, who expert in war tactics. Unlike the other women of those days; who were satisfied with their household. Satyabhama was the companion of Krishna in all fields, including battles. Her father had given her adequate training of warfares. There is an iconic story associated with Narakasura and Satyabhama. Narakasura was the son of BhooDevi; He became tyrant after getting so many powers from 'Brahma'. He had attacked Indra's kingdom to rule the heaven. He had abducted 16,000 women and captivated them in his palace to satisfy his lust. Narakasura became obsessed with his powers and in greed; he stole the earrings of heavenly goddess 'Aditi'.

When Satyabhama heard of his tyrannies and ill-treatment towards women, she became furious. She approached Krishna to declare a battle against Narakasura. Krishna took her as his charioteer, on the battlefield. In the war Narakasura attacked Krishna with his most dangerous weapon Thunderbolt; being struck with his weapon Krishna got fainted. After seeing Krishna collapsed, Satyabhama got enraged. She doubled her powers, aggressively took the bow and shot an arrow at Narakasura's chest and He died finally. After that Satyabhama released the sixteen thousand women and all the prisoners who were captivated by Narakasura. To protect the Honor of sixteen thousand women, Krishna married to all of

them. Satyabhama was the warrior as well as the loving and caring wife of Krishna. In the Vana-Parva of *Mahabharata*, there is the most popular conversation between Satyabhama and Draupadi; where Satyabhama wants to know from Draupadi, the secrets of winning a husband's heart. Draupadi explains to her how to be a good wife by serving your husband, satisfies their needs, how to become an *indispensable* and loved in the eyes of your husband. Thus, Satyabhama always tried to make Krishna happy, they had ten sons. After Krishna's death, Satyabhama went to the forest to perform penance.

Shikhandini: The Warrior Princess

'Shikhandini' had been born in her previous birth as 'Amba'. She was the princess of Kashi. In her Swayamvar, she was forcibly abducted by Bhishma with her sisters Ambika and Ambalika. Bhishma abducted the princesses for the marriage of his brother Vichitravirya, The king of Hastinapur. However, Amba told Bhishma that she wants to marry Salva, not Vichitravirya. So, Bhishma respectfully sent her to Salva, but Salva refused to marry her because she had been abducted by Bhishma. She returned to Hastinapur, but Vichitravirya refused to marry her. Amba then requested Bhishma to marry her, but Bhishma rejected her due to his vow of celibacy. Bhishma had ruined her life; so she went to Parashurama to kill Bhishma in a war. After twenty-three days of fierce battle with Bhishma; Parashurama could not defeat Bhishma. Therefore, Amba decided to avenge Bhishma herself and kill him by taking birth as a man (*Bhawalkar*, 441). She started very tough penance; Shiva blessed her and granted her a boon that in her next birth she would kill Bhishma but with the condition that she would be born as a girl and later would become a man (*Bhawalkar*, 441).

In her next birth, Amba was born as Shikhandini; she was the daughter of Drupad, the King of Panchal. According to the boon of Shiva, Drupad's wife would give birth to a daughter, who would later be transformed into a man. So, Drupad announced that the queen gave birth to a son and they raised 'Shikhandini' like a prince. They had dressed her up in manly attires. She learns archery, martial arts, war-techniques, and fine arts when she is a mere girl. Dronacharya is her guru; it is not mentioned in the *Mahabharata* whether she has learnt this staying in Drona's house or in her own house (*Ghosh*, 45). She was married to the daughter of the powerful king of Dasarna, who became very angry to know the gender of Shikhandini. He felt betrayed by Drupad, so he terrorized him to attack his kingdom. Being responsible for the sufferings of her parents, Shikhandini left home and went into a forest. There she had seated alone, cried and fasting for days. Yaksha felt pity for her and asked her about her sufferings. He offered her mutual exchange of their sexes for a short period, to satisfy the king of Dasarna. Thus, Shikhandini attained manhood, became 'Shikhandi', after that he happily returned to his own country, Panchal. When Kubera got to know about Yaksha's act of changing gender, he became very angry on Yaksha. Kubera cursed Yaksha that "he would not to regain manhood till Shikhandi's death". It's because of Shiva's boon, Shikhandini permanently got masculinity to avenge Bhishma.

In the Kurukshetra war, Shikhandi fought on the side of the Pandava's. Bhishma knows all the activities of Amba, her penance and her rebirth as Shikhandi. Bhishma took an oath that he would drop his weapons against women. Arjuna took an advantage of Bhishma's oath; he took 'Shikhandi' on his chariot to kill Bhishma. On the chariot, he hides behind Shikhandi and attacked Bhishma with several arrows. Thus, Shikhandi became the cause of the death of Bhishma, this way 'Shikhandi' took the revenge of his humiliation in previous birth as 'Amba'. Shikhandi was killed by Ashwathama on the 18th day of the war. Amba/ Shikhandini had enough courage to challenges patriarchy; she had fought with *Bhishma*, Parashurama and *even Shiva for her self-respect*. From Amba/Shikhandi's life journey we can learn that everything can be achieved by self-confidence, firmness, dedication, and self-sacrifice.

Conclusion

These phenomenal women of the *Mahabharata* were fearless warriors, who performed as fighters and defended themselves in the patriarchal society. They were not just warriors; they were daughters, sisters, wives, and mothers also. These ladies were those who administrated their kingdom wisely; who

fought alongside men in the battle-field, who nurtured their children alone and accept the challenges of hard-pressed life, who trained their children in warfare's, who fought for their dignity and self-respect. These heroic women were the embodiment of strength, courage, and dedication. Undoubtedly, we cannot ignore the contributions of these female warriors in the epic, without them *Mahabharata* would have been incomplete.

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AMBEDKARITE LITERATURE: LIBERATION FOR HUMANITY

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Abstract:

Dalit literature owes its origin to the revolutionary struggle led by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar for Dalit liberation, equality, fraternity, social justice and dignity of life; and for a change in the social, cultural and economic hegemony of the caste Hindus. Ambedkarite literature, as it is now known for its delineation of Dr. Ambedkar's philosophy of creation of casteless, classless and raceless society, is a movement to bring about a revolutionary social change. What Dalit writers want is the complete liberation for all those victimized and suffered for ages. Poems, short stories, novels and autobiographical narratives written by Dalit writers provided useful insights on the question of Dalit identity. Now, the marginalized and subaltern communities found a new name with the perspective 'Dalit is dignified' thereby rejecting the sub-human status imposed on them by the high caste social order. Dalit writers used protest, revolt, negativism as positive creative energy and a weapon for bringing about a change. Ambedkarite literature holds human being as the centre point, opposes the superiority of race, religion, varna, caste and class. Therefore, it can be considered as the literature of liberation and literature of humanity.

Introduction

Emerged in the 1960s in Maharashtra, Dalit literature is essentially a socio-cultural movement. It aims at seeking modernization and change in Indian society in the light of the ideology of Dr. Ambedkar. The thoughts and works of Babasaheb have an immense impact on the emergence, growth and development of Dalit literature. Therefore, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar is called as the father of Dalit literature. He is “the mythic giant of Dalit literature”, “the ideal” and “the embodiment of Dalit self-esteem.” (Bagul 287) “All the Dalit authors seek inspiration from Dr. Ambedkar.” (Arora 222) “Ambedkarite ideology is the true inspiration for Dalit literature.” (Limbale 46) Then there is no wonder, if Dalit literature is known as Ambedkarite literature. The paper is an attempt to discuss Ambedkarite literature as a powerful movement of liberation for humanity.

Ambedkarism and Dalit literature

What Arjune Dangle says is true, “It is no coincidence that the Dalit literary movement began in Maharashtra, the birthplace of Dr. Ambedkar's movement. His revolutionary ideas stirred into action all the Dalits in Maharashtra and gave them a new self-respect. Dalit literature is nothing but the literary expression of this awareness.” (vii) Dalit writings are governed by the principles like liberty, equality and fraternity; and self-respect, self-reliance and self-development propounded by Dr. Ambedkar. Babasaheb's ideas about Dalit liberation, equality and social justice evident in his defense of the untouchables before the Southborough Commission, the Simon Commission, and the Round Table conferences; his publications such as *Mook Nayak*, *Bahishtrit Bharat*, *Janata* and *Samata*; his efforts with the Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha, Majoor Paksha, Scheduled Caste Federation and the Republican Party of India; his leadership role in the Chavdar Lake agitation, his entry into the Kala Ram temple and the burning of *Manusmriti*; his addresses in the meetings, conferences and gatherings; his founding of Siddhartha College and Milind Colllege, his work in formulating the Indian Constitution; and his acceptance of Buddhism function as a creative force behind Dalit writings.

Ambedkarite literature stands out both from the contemporary Marathi literature and another

development of the time named Marxism. It saw a fresh crop of new writers, they wrote with an agenda of human liberation found in Ambedkarism. To name a few of them are Annabhau Sathe, Baburao Bagul, Shankarrao Kharat, Bandhumadhav, Daya Pawar, P.I. Sonkamble, Namdeo Dhasal, Narayan Surve, J.V. Pawar, Raja Dhale, Keshav Meshram, Sharankumar Limbale, Trayambak Sapkale, Arjune Dangle, Waman Nimbalkar, Gangadhar Pantavane, Yashwant Manohar, Bhimsen Detha, Ram Dudonde, Arun Kamble, Laxman Mane, Laxman Gaikwad, Dadasaheb More, Loknath Yashwant, Kishor Shantabai Kale, Dattaa Bhagat, Premanand Gajvi and others; among the Dalit women writers are Baby Kamble, Shantabai Kamble, Kumud Pawade, Jyoti Lanjewar, Heera Bansode, Mallika Amar Shaikh all from Maharashtra; while Sivakami, Edayavendan, Unjai Rajan Abimani, Bama, Anbadavan, Gunasekaram, Imaiyam, Marku Palamalai and others from Southern part of India; Jayant Parmar, Neerav Patel, Sahil Parmar, Raman Vaghela, Mohan Parmar, Dalpat Chauhan Harish Mangalam etc from Gujarat and Mahasweta Devi and others from northern India.

Writing with a Purpose

Babasaheb's assertion to writers is very clear. He says,

Through your literary creations cleanse the stated values of life and culture. Don't have a limited objective. Transform the light of your pen so that the darkness of villages is removed. Do not forget that in our country the world of the Dalits and the ignored classes is extremely large. Get to know intimately their pain and sorrow, and try through your literature to bring progress in their lives. True humanity resides there. (8)

Dalit writings therefore, developed as a movement with a purpose for the social cause, the socio-cultural revolution in arts and ideas. Dalit writers stretched social realities in their writings to the startling effects craving for subverting the social order and bringing a democratic change, a revolution for human liberation of the Dalit, oppressed and exploited. They have an agenda for the creation of a new society based on liberty, equality, fraternity and social justice. They use their writings as a weapon for revolutionary change, consciousness-raising, struggle and social commitment.

Writing about the Oppressed

Dalit writing is realistic from start to end. It gives the stunning reality in the life of the oppressed. Arjune Dangle gives a harrowing picture of their wretchedness in a poem:

We fought with crows,
Never even giving them the snot from our noses
As we dragged out the Upper Lane's dead cattle,
Skinned it neatly
And shared the meat among ourselves,
They used to love us then.
We warred with jackals dogs vultures kites
Because we ate their share. (The Cantonment Has Begun to Shake)

Literature of Protest

The ideology of Dr. Ambedkar breathed a new dimension in the Dalit educated class and they poised for attack on anything that contradicted liberty, equality, fraternity and social justice. The literature that saw light of the day became the literature of protest. Even before 1960, there had been Dalit writing but it had rarely any protest in true sense. The writers wrote within the framework of their conditioning which became just an expression of the life they lived, submitting themselves to existential pressures and situations. For the first time after 1960, there came a total termination of the old way of life and accepting new order that signaled life as real and not the life that had been led before. In the words of Zakir Abedi, "Dalit is a protest literature against all forms of exploitation based on class, race, caste or occupation." (7) It was the protest against the established order of the society that discriminated man from man on the basis

of caste and religion; that oppressed and exploited the so-called lower caste people. Such protest is seen in almost all genres of Dalit literature. It gave a tremendous shock to the high caste Hindus. *Golpitha* (1972), the first collection of poetry by Namdeo Dhasal is one of the fiercest and massive jolts. For Dhasal revolt against established social system and an irrepressible craving for subverting the social order were of main concern in this book. In his poem *Atta* (Now), Dhasal gives a call to Dalits to protest.

Now, now we must explode that
 building which kisses the sky!
 After a thousand years, we are
 blessed with the sunflowers-giving fakir.
 Now, now we must like sunflowers,
 Turn our faces to the sun. (*Golpitha*)

Ambedkarite poetry voices rebellion against social injustice with hopes for a life of dignity for the oppressed. Dhasal raises his voice against sacred books and the culture that have divided mankind on the basis of caste and religion. The protest and anger of a rebel reflects thus, when he writes:

I curse you, your book
 Curse your culture, your hypocrisy

...

one should tear off all the pages of all the sacred books in the world
 And give them to people for wiping shit off their arses.” (*Golpitha*)

The poet himself is a victim who has been agonized, punished, made to suffer for no reason. Therefore, the protest of the Dalit writers is not just “a protest of brandishing a threatening pen, it is the mixture of both fire and water. His aim is to seek his identity as man, and equal position in the society.” (Jilthe 26)

Literature of liberation

The primary motive of Ambedkarite literature is the liberation of Dalits, rather the liberation of humanity. It played an important role as method of propaganda for the liberation movement in India. The mushrooming little magazine transformed it into a movement. This movement contributed in instilling in the youth Dalit writers' bold and pertinent expression which attempted to overthrow the conventional norms of writing. The movement did help the Dalit writers in alleviating the high-handedness of the elitist writers. It has contributed much to the awakening among the Dalits a new level of pride, dignity, militancy, self-respect, self-reliance and generating militant fight against all social ills and evils. Through their writings, Dalit writers promoted the liberation of the common man one who is at the lowest rung of the society. They made a string attack on the exploiters' art, literature, society, culture, economy and politics.

Revolt and Negation

Ambedkarite literature is closely associated with the hopes for freedom of a group of people who, as untouchables, are victims of social, economic and cultural inequality. It is about life and experience, sorrow and poverty, problems and struggles, pain and rebellion. So, it is marked by revolt and negation as a positive ideology against slavery and victimization or institutionalization. A noted writer-critic, Yashawant Manohar rightly asserts, “Revolt is the most valuable truth in life and literature.” (21) Revolt has creating energy. It destroys distortion and fosters culture. Dhasal puts his open and outright revolt against the tyranny of the Caste Hindus when he says,

I do not feel respect for you,
 I do not sing of your honour
 I feel like spiting on you the beetle-leaf juice as I hold it in my mouth now
 I want to drown you into potful of semen. (*Golpitha*)

Rebellious spirit in Dhasal combines the Dalits' determination that they will not be exploited anymore. He says,

We refuse to be puppets on a string

pulled by a governor of our destiny
 who has no pedigree. (*I Slew the Seven Horses of the Chariot of the Sun*)

Similarly, the revolt, rebellion and negativism continue to pour from one Dalit poet to the other. In the same line J.V. Pawar expresses Dalit determination in this poem:

I'm the see; I soar; I surge.
 I move out to build your tombs.
 The winds, storms, sky, earth.
 Now all are mine.
 In every inch of the rising struggle
 I stand erect. (I Have Become the Tide)

The negation of the old outdated, unscientific values and acceptance of new positive values went on simultaneously. In the very act of negation there was creation. Dalit literature became a mirror of this. Dalit writer believes that unless every other shade is obliterated a new print cannot be affected.

Literature of Humanity

Ambedkarism itself is the similar name of humanism. Babasaheb accorded an extremely important place to humanity in his thought system. Therefore, Ambedkarite thought inspired creative literature about fighting against the devaluation of human beings. He expected writer's commitment to common humanity and humanistic ideas in literature. The eminent writer-activist-critic, Sharankumar Limbale rightly asserts,

Inspired by him [Dr. Ambedkar], Dalit literature holds the human being to be its focal point. This literature is a declaration of human freedom. It encourages human liberation, believes in the greatness of human beings, and firmly opposes notions of race, religion and caste. Humanity is the religion of Dalit literature. Therefore, in this world, no imaginary or worldly object is greater than the human being. It rebels against any culture, society of literature that degrades the human being.
 (51)

Ambedkarite literature centers around common man, regards the "greatness of the human being. (259) The exploited and oppressed human being who had been unknown until then has become the protagonist of this literature. In his poem 'Karl Marx' Narayan Surve announces:

... now we alone are the heroes of history,
 Of all the biographies too henceforth... (*On the Pavement of life*)

Conclusion

To sum up, Ambedkarite literature provides ways and means to annihilate the unequal social system by concertizing Dalits for assertion, protest and mobilization; and catalyzing creation of organic intellectuals of Dalits. It voices the problems and sufferings of all those oppressed and exploited in their own societies as well as in other societies. That is why authenticity and liveliness have become hallmarks of this literature. It stands firmly against all type of ills and evils, oppression and exploitation, victimization and institutionalization. It led a movement for human liberation and greatness of humanity. In that sense, Ambedkarite literature can be considered as one of the world's major literary trends of the time. It poised to acquire a national and international presence. However, it is also found that Dalit writings, to some extent are falling into a stereotype; and could not extend satisfactorily its scope for depiction of the changes taking place in the society.

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UTILIZATION OF LANGUAGE LABS AMONG THE FACULTY MEMBERS AND STUDENTS: A STUDY OF SRI MANICKAM COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, PUDUKKOTTAI

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Abstract:

This paper analyzed the Utilization of language labs among the faculty members and students of Sri Manickam college of Education, Pudukkottai. Now-a-days schools and colleges are converting their classrooms into multi-media classes which are used as language labs through internet based instructional materials to improve speaking skills.. Now it is being questioned if language labs are still necessary in our times. In this study, the researcher aims to investigate student's attitude towards usage of language labs. The sample consisted of, 80 students and 20 faculty members. Survey method was used to collect the data. Percentage analysis was used to analyze the data. It was found that students utilize the Language labs more than the facultymembers.

Introduction

The last few decades have seen an exponential growth in the use of technology for language learning and teaching purposes. Researchers have focused on the benefits of emerging technologies and teachers as users are adapting their teaching process as well as the institutes to create a technology enhanced user-friendly classroom atmosphere. For facilitating a better English learning environment and setting, language laboratories are used for English students of non-native countries so that they can feel the atmosphere of target language.

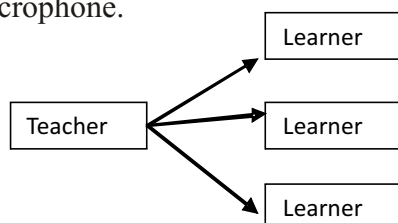
Language labs have become the common ground for all teaching methods and been embraced by many institutions because they are seen as the effective aid for developing communicative skills combining fun and education. Private colleges started teaching through internet based instructional materials using smart boards in the classes.

Language labs are a teaching room equipped with electronic and mechanical devices to aid foreign language learning through internet. There is facility for recording and reproducing voice. In the beginning, the lab consisted of tape recorder, amplifiers, headphones and microphone to aid fast learning using other learning aids also. Then microprocessors were added which controlled different functions like communication. Computers are used now-a-days as multimedia players in the language labs.

The system of language lab

The system console

It is the teacher's desk which controls all the operations. The console (teacher position) is electrically connected to a number of rows of student booths containing a tape recorder and headset with boom arm microphone.



Cubicle of the system

There are sound proof compartments for learners. The learner receives programmes from the console or booth and records it. He receives an utterance, there is a pause and he has to give response and then compare his response with the right one that he receives from the console.

Source of the system

The sources include recorded cassettes and also dubbing, that is, recording of a programme from the console on the master tape.

Operation

Once the master program had been transferred on to student recorders, the teacher would then handover control of the decks to the students. By processing the record key in the booth, the student would simultaneously hear the playback of the program whilst being able to record his/her voice in the pauses, using the microphone. This is known as an audio active comparative system.

Advantages of the Language Lab

It provides equal opportunity to all the students to hear the instructor irrespective of the place where they are seated. It also provides the privacy that encourages the shy students to speak without hesitation. Attention on subject is increased, resulting in better retention of the concepts. Furthermore, it develops the listening and communication skills, since they hear correct pronunciation through their headphones. The students' progress also be monitored regularly so that teacher can provide feedback based on individual pace and ability. Finally, the students can learn the lesson at their own pace thus allowing the classroom as student-centered-approach.

Literature Review

The history of the language labs dates back to 1880s after the tin foil phonograph was invented by Edison but they reached its peak in 1960s when Behaviorism was the most influential theory guiding educational practice (Peterson, 1947; Levy, 1997).

Warschauer and Healey (1998) assert that it is more appropriate to call the language labs as Integrative Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) environment after 1990s, the aim of another study by Yarar (2005) was to explore the effect of computer assisted language learning on the students' achievement in learning English grammar. The study was conducted with 58 Students from a primary school. During the practice phase of the study English plus (New Generation) course software was used. Results showed that in teaching English grammar computer assisted language learning is effective. Several studies on language labs have found that students generally have a positive attitude towards computer technology in the language classroom and such technology has a positive effect on language learning achievement. For example, In yau and Cheng's study (2012) about students 'confidence showed that integrating technological components in their courses enhanced students confidence in language learning however, Walker and white (2013) gave us the new term Technology Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) since computers are not only component for language labs: tables, Kinect games, software programs are also in the spotlight. In a study revealed in 2015, Manurung found that the implementation of contextual internet based instructional materials improves the speaking skill of the students. Similarly, Oz(2015) stated that Turkish EFL Students have positive attitudes towards Foreign Language Learning and integrating CALL applications into language learning process.

Objectives

1. To find out the level of utilization of Language labs among the faculty members and Students in terms of background variables.
2. To find out the significant difference between faculty members and students in the Utilization of Language labs and its dimensions.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between faculty members and students in the utilization of Language

labs and its dimensions.

- There is no significant difference between PG students and UG students in the utilization of Language labs and its dimensions.

Title of the Problem

Utilization of Language labs among the Faculty members and Students: A study of Sri Manickam college of Education, Pudukkottai.

Method Used for the Study

The investigator used the survey method to find out the utilization of Language labs among the Faculty Members and Students:

Population and Sample

The population consists of all faculty members and students of Sri Manickam College of Education, Pudukkottai. The investigator used the simple random sampling technique for selecting the sample from the population. The sample consisted of 80 students and 20 faculty members.

Statistical Techniques Used

Percentage analysis was used to analyze the data

Analysis of Data

The level of utilization of Language labs among the Faculty Members and Students in terms of the background variable

Table 1: Level of Language Labs among the Faculty Members and Students in Terms of the Background Variables

Variable	Sub-variable	Low		Moderate		High	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Status	Asst. Professors	5	25	9	45	6	30
	Students	20	25	35	43.75	25	31.25
Gender	Male	17	26.15	32	49.23	16	24.61
	Female	8	22.86	18	51.43	9	25.71
Designation	Tamil Asst. Professors	2	40	2	40	1	20
	English Asst. Professors	1	25	2	50	1	25
	Subject Professors	3	27.27	6	54.54	2	18.18
	U.G students	18	36	24	48	8	16
	P.G students	6	20	18	60	6	20

Findings:

It is inferred from the above table that 45% of Asst. professors and 43.75% of students have moderate levels of utilization of Language labs.

49.23% of male members and 51.43% of female members have moderate levels of utilization of Language labs respectively.

25% of Asst. Professors and students have Low levels of utilization of language labs respectively.

30% and 31.25% of Asst. professor and students have high level of utilization of Language [abs respectively

24.6 % and 25.7% of male and female members have high level of utilization of Language labs respectively.

25% of English professors, 18.18% of Tamil Asst. Professors, 16% of U.G students and 20% of P.G students have high level of Utilization of language labs respectively. It revealed that English Asst.

Professors used the Language lab more than that of other subject staffs. So the need of language labs in English is very important.

It is inferred from the table that the level of utilization of Language labs by the students is greater than the faculty members. And also utilization of Labs by P.G Student's is higher than U.G Students.

Conclusion

The language laboratory is a very helpful tool for practicing and assessing one's speech, testing in four skills, learning at their own pace without teachers. At the same time, it is raising the motivation, reducing the fear and it makes students feel comfortable. In this study, most of the participants agree with the idea that it is very helpful to study English in the language labs. It appears that students think the language labs are beneficial in their language studies. They also want to spend their time there. This result is in tune with Yang's study carried out in 2001. Both studies show that students have positive perceptions on using language labs in language education. Students can record and access their performance to make sure that they are paying attention to all aspects of phonetics such as pronunciation, accents and stress etc. As strong communication skills are essential in almost all of the professional careers, language labs can help in acquiring this important skill.

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INNOVATIVE TECHNIQUES OF EVALUATING ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE LEARNING

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Abstract:

This research topic focuses techniques of evaluating and testing for the improvement of the students at the various levels. It requires bringing validity and reliability for the positive assessment in the classroom. It clears that, while facing test and evaluation, the learner should learn a new skill to strengthen abilities. So, all the activities of major tastings are beneficial and rewarding for the teacher's feedback on learner's overall performance. It enables new form of learning in language classroom on the grounds of evaluation.

Introduction:

On the part of language teachers, learners and researchers, there is common issue about techniques of testing and evaluation in validity, reliability, practicability in language course. No doubt, learning is the responsibility of learner but it is the moral duty of teacher to enhance the students to train the language skills and abilities. It is not proper to evaluate the students at the end of the course. It does not have proper values in language communication communities. So, while evaluating the learner, there might be objective assessment instead of subjective for judging merits and evidence of student's self-reflective abilities. To evaluate the students' in objective mode, where grades and ranks are not significant but the stress is given on student's fluency and ability. In evaluation the task of learner is assessed continuously. All round measurement and assessment of learner are made throughout the year. It involves objectives of testing, methods to achieve theme and findings out how far they have been achieved.

For applying evaluation, testing and assessment tools in the class, the teacher's effective flexible performance of teaching level should be applicable for the low and high level students. Due to circumstances, unfortunately this role of teacher is unable to fulfill the criteria of measurement and the teacher ignores the real abilities of students at the end of the course. Hence to implement the objectivity is considered more important in the overall language evaluation. Again the task of evaluation depends upon framing of good syllabus structure with respect to standards and the techniques in which students can improve. So, sometimes it becomes more critical to evaluate the students due to classroom size, curriculum, limited time and resources. In response to all forms of evaluations, testing and assessment, teachers and educators innovate the new channels with considering the standard and abilities of learners so, the atmosphere in the class, time element and syllabus are considered for well improvement of the learners.

Evaluation of Literary Field:

It records that testing and evaluation have been playing basic role in the literary forms like drama, poetry, fiction and essay to enhance literary ethics in learners. The teachers should clarify, purify and discuss some basic concept of literature and language like validity, reliability, discrimination and objectivities. Again, the teacher should clear the difference between test and examination, evaluation and assessment. In fact, these techniques of teaching take of long duration for directions to improve learners at particular standard in language and literature testing. Apart from this, the language teacher should innovate new angles and insides in evaluation considering social, cultural and economic needs of learners.

The evaluation of learners can be done in various tracks as paper and pencil test and home task based test in objective mode. But this evaluation depends upon high and low group of learners. The teachers should change his authentic role and alternate forms with respect to the more active role of learner. These techniques are beneficial for the well progress of learners on the grounds of learning-teaching progress in education setup. *This paper is an attempt to innovate the significance of such new concepts in testing and evaluation in classroom to motivate the learner for learning skills of language and moral standards of literary field in Indian students.*

Discourse in Language and Literature:

While innovating the different techniques of evaluations, the literary language and communicative language teaching should be consider. The learners should be participated in language discourse and literary discourse in the classroom situation. Here, firstly the teacher should follow appropriate methods for communicative evaluation which has also merits and demerits. A linguist Bachman (1993) has stressed task based testing in communicative language evaluation where the teachers' measures broader range of language abilities in theory and practice, function and situation in the classroom. With the help of this approach the learner can make discourse with outside world but the teacher's evaluation should be form based than fluency based. It enables the student to become active participant and to demonstrate the world learning progress. In this method the teacher can evaluate learning goals and completes his target to improve the learners for literary and language discourse. Again the student applies a review or reflection at any discourse item as a whole for creating living atmosphere in the class. The teacher and learner come to meet at particular part to evaluate communication. It depends upon the role of the teacher and learners response in the evaluative process. A linguist like Skehan and Alderson opine that sometimes communicative language tests and evaluations create artificial atmosphere in language classroom. In fact, this artificiality creates obstacles in language evaluation and further tips to develop language skill in day to day language. Then Simon Andrews (2005) signifies the need to innovate a new tool to evaluate different modes of testing upon group testing and self-assessment, computer and internet based testing. There should be a dynamic approach for language and literary evaluation and learner centered concept like 'learning validity' and 'learning reliability'. At last, it requires the teacher's basic knowledge about testing, evaluation and assessment of student in learning teaching process in Indian atmosphere.

Brain Tomlinson views that, the main goal of language testing is not only to be fair, reliable and valid but also create learning opportunities for the students in specific times. He suggests a new and significant principle of testing and evaluation called 'learning validity' which focuses on the possibility of language test having no impact on the classroom instruction. It needs learner's participation not only in evaluating activities but also in designing and framing the standards of learners in language and literary fields. It creates the opportunities for learners to participate and to achieve mastery over literary and language discourse in the real world.

Dynamic Evaluation Techniques:

Apart from traditional and static techniques of language and literature evaluation, in multilingual countries like India these are not applicable. So there must have a dynamic evaluation technique which depends upon social, political, economic and cultural atmosphere of the teacher and the learner. There should be total reaction against the limits and limitations of the concepts of in present teaching English. Here the teacher and the syllabus framer cannot be affected from the changing socio-political facts of learner in the learning, teaching and testing. The teacher must have more contact and sensitive location for adopting dynamics in content, strategies and testing modes in language class. So, classroom communication and culture are significant to adjust teacher's method because both are interdependent factors and modify attitude of the learner. Henry Widow son points out that communicative language teaching (CLT) creates classroom atmosphere artificial which is away from real outside world. A fact is that, 'classroom' is the only platform alone for the real social communication when the learner participates

and spends a major time in the class. So, this part becomes core element for language teachers for the evaluation of learner. If there is positive personal relationship not only before the teacher and the student but the learners themselves. At that time, learners become self-oriented for accepting teacher's dynamic methods of testing and evaluation. These things help to promise learning skills in Indian language classes.

The English teacher should adopt for learning validity in the classroom community to achieve mastery over language--the grammar and writing activities, vocabulary and reading exercises, listening and speaking tasks. According to this approach i.e. post communicative approach, it aims at developing the learner cognitive skills drawing conclusions and making hypothesis based on the compare between L1 and L2. Unlike CLT (Common Language Test) here in the post communicative approach grammatical accuracy is treated as a part of communicative efficiency. The learner's structure is considered more important because the learner trains his target language in the company of learners in classroom atmosphere.

Evaluation of Skills Reading and Writing:

Testing and evaluation of reading writing skill in language and literature measure the students' participation in the classroom activities-skimming, scanning and predicting. The teacher should motivate the learners to understand basic skills of reading while adopting different strategies for the learning-teaching process. Then the teacher focuses playful aspect of language in reading beauty of language-irony, simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, jokes, gestures and body language. Here the learner can realize the value of enjoying language for its own sake. The learner should discuss the real life experiences as feedback of classroom learning and the realization of language elements and literary element about day to day life. This kind of language writing plays vital role in the learner's ability to expand the skills of language.

Like 'reading', 'writing' test encourages to expand knowledge of language with sufficient training in the use of element of language. The teacher should adopt appropriate devices, specific vocabulary topic, phrases and idioms and some registered words. For the better testing, the tester should frame time which can be effectively in writing activities such as debate, argument writing, verbal-non-verbal message, charts, graph, appeals, improving written text...etc. Then the criteria of students' progress and achievement in skill of speaking and writing should include fluency, effective paraphrasing, accuracy, punctuation, spellings and pronunciation. It may be called judging merits and evidences of students' self-reflection and efforts. It shows that each and every aspect in language communication is necessary to consider over teaching, testing, evaluation and assessment of learners on the objective ground. Then learning language through basic skills is the responsibility of learner and the teacher should motivate and innovate new skills to enhance the knowledge of the students in the literary and non-literary field.

Positive Effect of Evaluations:

It is fact, the process of testing and evaluation creates new learning and positive response among the learners. They can develop better awareness of aims and objectives of test and evaluation in the classroom activities. No doubt, a well-organized and purpose oriented test brings out a new potentialities, skills and abilities in the learners for uttering language in daily life. Naturally due to testing and evaluation, there is cultivation for language learning and at last, it creates learning potentialities in learners' brains low level to higher level performance. Then the learners are able to acquire remarkable skill and ability which can lead to success in the positive atmosphere. A problem is that, some students are more skilled learners in mathematics and science subjects but the same students are unable to get success in admission test of English language. So, it is correct to say that, our best students are poor communicators. To solve this issue, the language teacher and subject teacher should attempt effective and skill based language test along with the subject test. And the success in the language test is to be compulsory for the students to seek admissions at various faculties. The credit goes to our universities and autonomous colleges because they are strengthening language testing and evaluating system such as methodology, curriculum development,

teachers training and implementation. They are making broader aims for teaching systems which are beneficial for the learners to perform as the best learners in learning teaching transaction.

Reliability and Validity in Language Test and Evaluation:

In this research paper, there is a discussion at length that, the primary task of language testing and evaluation is to measure and to promote more effective learning. For training the learners and acquiring language abilities, the measurement of test and evaluation must be fair, realistic, reliable, and valid and aim oriented. These things provide the opportunities for variety of experiences at every time for the teachers to learn new skills in language and use their abilities in literary context.

In fact, there should be clear measurement for testing atmosphere and purely focus on the specific aspects of learners' performance. Then the implementation of new techniques and concepts creates language and literature testing beneficiary. The said things encourage the learners to learn from their test and evaluation from experience which has positive response in the classroom instruction of the aim oriented teacher. It shows the compromise between the teacher and the learner to acquire skills of language at different stages on the grounds of reliability. It can possible only through impartial manner and in objective mode in language and literary Indian classroom.

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ENGLISH MECHANICAL LOANS IN ADENESE ARABIC

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Abstract:

The study aims at investigating the English mechanical loans in Adenese Arabic. Since the two languages systems (English and Arabic) are different, modifications of phonemes are expected strongly. Broadly speaking, borrowing phenomenon occurs subconsciously; therefore, people think that the mechanical loans are part of their authentic, genuine linguistic lexicon. This study tries to collect these words and analyze them phonologically. A number of sections comprises this study such as introduction, aims of the study, value of the study, data source, language change, language lexicon, and the phenomenon of borrowing, loan words, pure loan words, loan blends, loan shifts, historical and linguistic background of Aden, Arabic language, English language, data analysis and finally conclusion.

Key words: *borrowing, loan words, phonological change.*

1. Introduction

Languages are sometimes in need of new words to express new ideas or concepts. Therefore, they rely on different ways to obtain these words. However, word formation is the most important source of having these new words. It is the most important process for filling the language gap. Occasionally, because of the appearance of new concepts, ideas or inventions, sometimes a number of old words can be used for new meanings. It is noteworthy to indicate that through the long run, language change is not clearly touchable or recognizable for the native speakers. What is striking is that, English is a heavy borrower language. It has borrowed a number of words from different languages. And one of them is Arabic. It is approximately impossible to find an English sentence without a borrowed lexical item.

Arabic also has borrowed a respectable number of words from Eastern languages such as Turkish, Indian and Persian. In addition, it has also borrowed from Western German languages such as English, German and French. This is due to a number of reasons and the most important of them are *contact*, *occupation* and *technology*. This study aims at investigating English mechanical loan words in Adenese Arabic and identifying the phonological modifications that took place during this process. A number of dictionaries are used to depend on especially Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (henceforth LDC) and A Comprehensive Engineering Dictionary (henceforth CED). The researchers relied on R.P. accent for phonemic transcription.

2. Aims of the Study

This study aims at two main points:

- 1 Investigating the English mechanical loans in Adenese Arabic dialect.
- 2- Identification and accounting for the linguistic modification, specially the phonological modification during the process of borrowing.

3-Value of the Study

It is expected that the current study would shed some light on the phenomenon of borrowing and loan words in general, and the functioning of this process on the use of mechanical loan words in Adenese Arabic discourse in particular.

4. Data Source

The data have been collected personally by the researchers from everyday speech of people in Aden. The data analyzed with the help of monolingual and bilingual dictionaries of English and Arabic.

5. Language Change

No doubt, language is a social behavior and the most important medium of communication in our globe. It is an expression for the intellect and one of the basic elements that distinguishes human beings from animals'. Therefore, language is a must. It can be compared to human beings, gets old, gets sick or even dies such as Latin, Greek and Sanskrit languages.

Linguistically, each language hosts and lends a respectable number of lexical items. No language is almost purely of native words. Therefore, language is in continuous change. According to Lyons (2009:179), Language change is *universal, continuous and regular*.

6. Language Lexicon

Almost each Language Lexicon has two types of lexical items; native and non-native lexical items. What is more interesting is that a number of non-native items find their way to the lexicon and nativized. Some of the borrowing lexical items stay for a short time then they vanish. While others stay forever. Most of the non-native items are borrowed due to the lexicon need.

Some native speakers believe that some of the non-native words are native words, for example, the English words *sofa* and *cotton* are from Arabic origin.

7. The phenomenon of Borrowing

Borrowing is a linguistic phenomenon that will last forever since we use language. In its literary meaning the term borrowing is not honest and suitable since the language borrower does not bring back the borrowed words. It is noteworthy to indicate that approximately each language in the globe has borrowed a number of lexical items from various languages. In fact, no language is free or immune from lexical items borrowing, because no language has ever been totally isolated. However, borrowing is considered as the main factor for language change for many languages. Lexical borrowing and grammatical structures are the main elements in borrowing, however, the lexical items borrowing is the most salient one. Grammatical borrowing takes place between two languages genetically related to each other or neighbors or in great contact with each other, for example English and German.

A number of reasons for the phenomenon of borrowing can be mentioned here:

- 1- The language borrower need for new lexical items to fill the linguistic gap.
- 2- Cultural and commercial contact between languages
- 3- War, inventions and occupation as in the case for British occupation for Aden.
- 4- Nonstop scientific and technological inventions' such as the computer, internet, and satellite.
- 5- Some speakers use borrowed words to show knowledge or prestige
- 6- Some speakers use the borrowed items because they already labeled, they do not bother themselves to look for the native terms.

8. Loan Words

A loan word is a word that borrowed from another language. However, it is not easy to count or trace back the loan words in any society. Crystal (2009:125) defines the loan words "when one language takes lexemes from another the new items are usually called loan words or borrowing. The amount of loans is not the same in each language quantitatively". Some languages are heavy borrowers, while others are not. It is noteworthy to indicate that Loan words can be classified into three main types:

8.1. Pure Loan Words

This kind of loan word is the most important and common one. It does not change a lot phonologically and morphologically. For example: *brake*, بريك

8.2. Loan Blends

Loan blend is a result of two words overlap in form and make a new lexical item. Richard et. al.

(1992, 216) defines it “a type of borrowing in which one part of a word borrowed from a second language and the other part belongs to the speakers native language.” An example for this in Arabic is *كهرومغناطيسي* *electromagnetic*

8.3. Loan Shifts

In this type, the meaning is only borrowed while the form is in native language. A number of speakers do not recognize that some of their lexical items are in fact loan shifts. For example, *the sixth line* الطابور الخامس

9. Arabic Language

Arabic is regarded as one of the world major languages and comes under Afro-Asiatic or sometimes called Hamito-Semitic family. It is the most important member in the Semitic branch and considered as a religious and sacred language. Twenty eight (28) letters comprises the Arabic writing system (Nasr, 1963:27). This alphabetical system is used globally by many countries for religious purposes. According to Welfenson (2007:196-197) Arabic alphabet system derived from Aramaic and Phoenician alphabet systems. Morphologically, Arabic depends heavily on case marking process. It begins mainly with verb + subject + object but it can start also with subject + verb + object.

10. English Language

English belongs genetically and linguistically to the Indo-European family and to the Germanic branch in particular (Katzner, 2003:2). English writing system comprises 26 letters and 44 sounds. Twenty four (24) sounds are consonants and 12 are pure vowels and 8 are diphthongs.

It follows the word order of subject + verb + object. Morphologically, this language does not have case marking as Arabic. Linguists divide English into three periods: Old English dating from 700 to 1100, Middle English from about 1100 to 1500 and Modern English from 1500 to now (Price, 2001: 137). However, English is regarded as one of the languages which depends heavily on borrowing. It has borrowed from about 350 languages (Crystal, 2001: 126).

Even though English is a heavy borrower, nowadays, it is regarded as a global and the premier language in the world. Of course, this is due to a number of reasons (see section 7).

11. Historical and Linguistic Background of Aden

Aden is situated in the South Western part of Yemen. Adenese speakers use Adenese Arabic in informal situations and modern standard Arabic in formal situations. There are a number of dialects in Yemen and the most prominent ones are Adenese Arabic, Sanaani Arabic, Taizi Arabic and Hadhrami Arabic. As it is known, British army invaded Aden in 1839. The occupation lasted for about 128 years. During the occupation, English language was imposed in Aden as a second language. It became the medium language for Education and governmental sectors.

British army brought military and civil vehicles to Aden especially in the 1920s. A number of Adenese people worked with the British mechanics and drivers in the hangars and garages of British armies. Accordingly, mechanical loans took place in Adenese Arabic dialect.

12. Data Analysis

The data will be analyzed through two sections; the glossary and the phonological analysis. Five points will be discussed for the glossary;

- 1- Transcription of the English word.
- 2- Transliteration of the Arabic word.
- 3- The meaning of the English word.
- 4- The meaning of the Arabic word.
- 5- The Arabic equivalent and its transliteration.
- 6- The phonological changes that the word has undergone.

1-battery /'bætəri/

2-بطارية/baṭṭa'rija/

3-An object that provides for electricity for something such as radio, car or toy (LDE, 2009:125).

- 4-The same meaning.
 5-ذخرة /ða:xira/ (CED,2007:89).
 6- /t/→ /ṭ /, /j / and /a/. Stress from the first syllable to the third syllable.
 1-brake /'breik/
 2-بريك/'bri:k/
 3-A piece of equipment that makes a vehicle go more slowly or stop (LDE, 2009:190)
 4-The same meaning.
 5-مكبج /mikbaħ/(CED,2007:118).
 6-Stress from the first syllable to the first.
 1-bolt /'bəult/
 2-بولت/'bult/
 3-Screw with flat head and no point for fastening things together (LDE,2009:174)
 4-The same meaning.
 5-مسمار ربط /mismark rabṭ/(CED,2007:111).
 6-/əu/→ /u/ ,stress from the first syllable to the first.
 1-cluch /'klʌʃ/
 2-كليش/'klish/
 3-The pedal that you press with your foot when driving a vehicle in order to change gear or the part of the vehicle that this control (LDE, 2009:309).
 4-The same meaning.
 5-قايض/qa:biḍ/(CED, 2007, 190).
 6-/ʌ/ → /i/, /ʃ/→/sh/.Stress from the first syllable to the first.
 1-cover /'kʌvə/
 2-كور/'kawar /
 3-Something that is put on top of something else to protect (LDE, 2009:390).
 4-To indicate to the bonnet (hood) of the car.
 5-غطاء/ghīṭa/
 6-/ʌ/ → /a/, /v/ → /w/, /ə/→/a/.Addition of the sound /r/. Stress from the first syllable to the first.
 1-dynamo /'dainəməu/
 2-دينمأ/'dinama/
 3-A machine that changes some other form of power directly into electricity (LDE, 2009:529).
 4-The same meaning.
 5-مولد/محرک كهربی /muwalid- muḥarik kahrabi/ (CED, 2007:329).
 6- /aɪ/ → /i/, /ə/ → /a/, /əu/ → /a/.Stress from the first syllable to the first.
 1-exhaust /ɪg'zɔ:st/
 2-إجزوز /ig'zu:z/
 3-A pipe on a car or machine that waste gases pass through (LDE: 2009:587).
 4-The same meaning.
 5-عادم /9a:dim/ (CED,2007:367).
 6- /ɔ:/ → / u:/, /s/ → /z/. Deletion of the sound /t/.Stress from the second syllable to the second.
 1-fuse /'fju:z/
 2-فيوز/'fju:z/

- 3-A short thin piece of wire inside electrical equipment which prevents damages may melting and stopping the electricity when there is too much power (LDE,2009:714).
- 4-The same meaning.
- 5-صهيرة إشعال /šahirat ish9a:l/ (CED,2007:440).
- 6-/ u:/ → /u/.Stress from the first syllable to the first.
- 1-garage /'gæriʒ/
2-جيرش /'girish/
3-A building for keeping a car in usually next to or attached to a house (LDE,2009:721).
- 4-It is sometimes used to mean car workshop.
- 5-مراب (إصلاح السيارات) /mira:b/ (CED,2007:444).
- 6-/æ/ → /i/, /ʒ/→/sh/. Stress from the first syllable to the first.
- 1-gear /'giə/
2-جير /'gi:r/
3-The machinery in a vehicle such as a car truck or bicycle that you use to go comfortably at different speeds (LDE, 2009:725).
- 4-The same meaning.
- 5-جهاز نقل الحركة /gihaz naql alharaka(CED,2007:449).
- 6-/iə/ → /i:/. Addition of the sound /r/.Stress from the first syllable to the first.
- 1-hand-break /'hændbreik/
2-هن بريك /'hanbrik/
3-A brake in a car that you pull up with your hand to stop the car from moving when it is braked(LDE,2009:793).
- 4-The same meaning.
- 5-ذراع الفرمله (CDE, 2007:482). /ðira9 alfarmala /
6-/eɪ/→ / i/.Deletion of the sound /d/.Stress from the first syllable to the first.
- 1-handle /'hændl/
2-هندل /han'dal
3-The part of an object that you use for holding it (LDE, 2009,794).
- 4-The same meaning.
- 5-مقبض /ممسك/ /maqbaḏ mamsak/ (CED, 2007:484).
- 6-Addition of the sound /a/.Stress from the first syllable to the second.
- 1-horn /hɔ:n/
2-هون /hun/
3-The thing in vehicle that you use to make a loud sound as a signal or warning (LDE, 2009:848).
- 4-The same meaning.
- 4-بوق /bu:q/(CED,2007:510).
- 6- /ɔ:/ → /u/.Stress from the first syllable to the first.
- 1-machine /mə'ʃi:n/
2-مكيينة /ma'kina/
3-A piece of equipment with moving parts that uses power such as electricity to do a particular job(LDE, 2009:1048).
- 4-It is used to indicate to the car engine.
- 5-الهمكنه /alamakana/(CED,2007:635).

6-/ə/ → /a/, /ʃ/ → /k/, /i:/ → /i/. Addition of the sound /a/. Stress from the second syllable to the second.

1-motor /'məutə

2-ماطور /ma'tu:r/

3-The part of a machine that makes it work or move by changing power, especially electrical power (LDE,2009:1138).

4-They use this word to mean the generator. In Hadhramout, they use this word to indicate to the *motor car* then they omitted the *car*, therefore it became *motor* /motar//which means car.

5-محرك كهربى / muħarik kahrabi/(CED,2007:696).

6-/əu/ → /a/, /t/ → /t/, /ə/ → /u:/.Addition of the sound /r/.Stress from the first syllable to the second

1-nut /'nʌt/

2-نيت /'nit/

3-A small piece of metal with a hole through the middle which screwed onto a bolt to fasten things together (LDE, 2009:1196).

4-The same meaning.

5-صمولة /šammula/(CED,2007:735).

6-/ʌ/ → /i/.Stress from the first syllable to the first.

1-pedal /'pedl/

2-بيدل /'bidal/

3-One of the two parts of a bicycle that you push round with your feet to make the bicycle go forward (LDE, 2009:1283).

4-The same meaning.

5-دواسة /dawwasa/ (CED, 2007:95).

6-/p/ → /b/, /e/ → /i/.Addition of the sound /a/.Stress from the first syllable to the first.

1-piston /'pɪstən

2-بستون /bis'tu:n/

3-A part of an engine consisting of a short solid piece of metal inside a tube, which moves up and down to make the other parts of the engine move (LDE,2009:1316).

4-The same meaning.

5-كبأس مكبس /kabbas-makbas/ (CED, 2007, 821).

6-/p/, → /b/, /ə/ → /u:/.Stress from the first syllable to the second.

1-plug /'plʌg/

2-بلاك /'blak/

3-The part of a petrol engine that makes a spark, which makes the petrol start burning (LDE, 2009:1331).

4-The same meaning.

5-قابس /qa:bis/ (CED,2007:831).

6-/p/ → /b/, /ʌ/ → /a/, /g/ → /k/.Stress from the first syllable to the first.

1-pump /'pʌmp/

2-بمب /bamb/

3-A machine for forcing liquid, gas or air into or out of something (LDE, 2009:1406).

4-The same meaning.

5-مضخة /maɖxxa/(CED,2007:882).

6-/p/ → /b/, /ʌ/ → /a/.Stress from the first syllable to the first.

1-puncture /'pʌŋkʃə/

2-بششار/'banshar/

3-A small hole made accidentally in a tire (LDE, 2009:1407).

4-It is used to indicate to flat tire.

5-ثقوب/θuqb/(CED,2007:883).

6-/p/ → /b/, /ʌ/ → /a/, /η/ → /n/. Addition of the sound /r/ and deletion of the sound /k/. Stress from the first syllable to the first.

1-screw /'skru:/

2-سكروب /sek'ru:b/

3-A thin pointed piece of metal that you push and turn in order to fasten pieces of metal or wood together (LDE, 2009:1565).

4-The same meaning.

5-برغي /burǧi/ (CED, 2007:1003).

6-Addition of the sound /e/ and /b/. Stress from the first syllable to the second.

1-spanner /'spænə/

2-بانة/'bana/

3-A metal tool that fits over a nut, used for turning the nut to make it tight or to undo it (LDE, 2009:1686).

4-The same meaning.

5-مفتاح ربط /miftaḥ rabṭ/

6-/p/ → /b/. Deletion of the sound /s/. Stress from the first syllable to the first.

1-spring /'sprɪŋ/

2-اسبرنج /as'bring/

3-Something usually a twisted piece of metal that will return to its previous shape (LDE, 2009:1703).

4-The same meaning.

5-زبرك /zanbrak/(CED,2007:1110).

6-/p/ → /b/, η/ → /n/. Addition of the sound /a/. Stress from the first syllable to the second.

1-tank /'tæŋk/

2-تانكي /'ta:nki/

3-A large container for sorting liquid or gaze (LDE, 2009:1801).

4-The same meaning.

5-خزان /xazzan/ (CED, 2007: 223).

6-/æ/ → /a:/, /η/ → /n/. Addition of the sound /i/. Stress from the first syllable to first.

1-tyre /taɪə/

2-تاير /ta:jar/

3-A thick rubber ring that fits around the wheel of a car bicycle etc.(LDE,2009:1905).

4-The same meaning.

5-أطار مطاطي /iṭar-maṭṭaṭi/ (CED, 2007:1294).

6-/a/ → /a:/, /ə/ → /a/. Addition of the sounds /j/ and /r/. Stress from the first syllable to the first syllable.

13. The Analysis

It is agreed up on that the two phonological systems of English and Arabic are totally different genetically and linguistically. Accordingly, phonemic changes might take place such as substitution, addition, deletion etc.

13.1. Phonemes Substitution

This substitution is of two types; consonant for consonant substitution and vowel for vowel substitution.

Consonant for Consonant substitution:

/t/	→	/t̤/
battery		بطارية
/'bætəri/		/'bat̤t̤a'rija/

ʒ	→	Sh
garage		جيرش
/'gæriʒ/		/'girish/

/ʃ/	→	/k/
machine		مكينة
/mə'ʃi:n/		/ma'kina/

/p/	→	/b/
pedal		بيدل
/'pedl/		/'bidal/

/g/	→	/k/
plug		بلاك-
/'plʌg/		/'blak/

/v/	→	/w/
cover		/كور/
/'kʌvə/		/'kawar/

/tʃ/	→	/sh/
/cluch /		كليش
/'klʌtʃ/	→	/'klish/

/s/	→	/z/
Exhaust		إجزوز
/ɪg'zɔ:st/		/ɪg'zu:z

/ŋ/	→	/n/
-puncture		بنش
/'pʌŋkʃə/		/'banshar/

Vowel for vowel substitution

/əu/	→	/u/
bolt		بولت
/'bəult/		'bult/

/u:/	→	/u/
Fuse		فيوز
/'fju:z/		'fju:z/

/aɪ/	→	/i/
dynamo		دينماً
/'daɪnəməu/		/'dinama/

/ə/	→	/a/
Machine		مكينة
/mə'ʃi:n/		/ma'kina/

/ə/	→	/u:/
Piston		بستون
/'pɪstən /		/bis'tu:n/

/ʌ/	→	/a/
cover		كور
/'kʌvə/		/'kawar /

13.2 Addition of Phonemes**Addition of the phoneme /b/**

l-screw	→	سكروب
/'skru:/		/sek'ru:b/

Addition of the phoneme /a/

spring	→	سبرنج
/'sprɪŋ/		/'sbrɪŋ/

Addition of the phoneme /i/

tank	→	تانكي
/'tæŋk/		/'ta:nki/

Addition of the phonemes /j/ and /a/

battery	→	بطارية
/'bætəri/		/baṭṭa'rija/

13.3. Deletion of phonemes**Deletion of the phoneme /s/**

spanner	→	بانة
/'spænə/		/'bana/

Deletion of the phoneme /d/

hand-break	→	هن بريك
/'hændbreik/		/'hanbrik/

Deletion of the phoneme /t/

Exhaust	→	إجزوز2
/ɪg'zɔ:st/		/ɪg'zu:z/

14. Stress Shifting

From the first syllable to the second syllable

Screw		سكروب
/'skru:/		/sek'ru:b

From the first syllable to the third

battery		بطارية
/'bætəri/		/baṭṭa'rija/

15. Conclusion

Before indulging into conclusion, it should be mentioned that linguistic borrowing cannot be avoided by any language in the world. To sum up, this paper is an attempt to study the English mechanical words in Adenese Arabic. It concentrates on the phonological modification that undergo these words. It is known that the phonological systems of English and Arabic are dissimilar. Therefore, phonological modification is expected.

According to this study, a number of modifications identified such as substitution, addition, deletion and stress shift. It is noteworthy to indicate that this study might be of some help to lexicographers, English and Arabic language teachers and translators.

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Appendix

The Phonemic Symbol used to Represent the Arabic Data in the Study are Listed below with their Arabic Graphemes.

/b/	Voiced bilabial stop	ب/ب
/t/	Voiceless dento-alveolar	ت/ت
/t̤/	Voiceless dento-alveolar emphatic stop	ط/ط
/d/	Voiced dento-alveolar stop	د/د
/d̤/	Voiced dento-alveolar	ض/ض
/k/	Voiceless velar stop	ك/ك
/q/	Voiceless uvular stop	ق/ق
/ʔ/	Voiceless glottal stop	ء/ء
/ʒ/	Voiced alveo-palatal	ج/ج
/ħ/	Voiceless pharyngeal	ح/ح
/ʁ/	Voiced pharyngeal fricative	ع/ع
/f/	Voiceless labio-dental	ف/ف
/θ/	Voiceless dental fricative	ث/ث
/ð/	Voiced dental fricative	ذ/ذ
/ɣ/	Voiced dental emphatic fricative	ظ/ظ
/s/	Voiceless dento-alveolar fricative	س/س
/ʃ/	Voiceless dento-alveolar fricative	ص/ص
/z/	voiced dento-alveolar fricative	ز/ز
/sh/	Voiceless	ش/ش
/x/	Voiceless uvular fricative	خ/خ
/gh/	Voiced uvular fricative	غ/غ
/h/	Voiceless glotal fricative	ه/ه
r//	Voiced alveolar flap/trill(when geminate)	ر/ر
/l/	Voiced alveolar lateral	ل/ل
/j/	voiced palatal glide	ي/ي
/w/	Voiced bilabial round glide	و/و
/i/	High front vowel	ـِ
/a/	Low front vowel	ـَ
/u/	High back round vowel	ـُ

GRADUATE STUDENTS' WRITING

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Abstract:

Learning to write a second language is not merely learning to put down on paper the conventional symbols of the writing system, but it is also purposeful selection and organization of ideas, facts, and experiences.

In fact, writing is a thinking process. It is different from speaking, as it aims compactness and precision in expression as well as grammatical, idiomatic and orthographic accuracy and in that conventions of writing, it tend to be less flexible than those of speech. Moreover, the graduate students' who learn to write English has not only to cope with the mechanical problems connected with the script of the language but also with the problems of ease and fluency of expression, of grammatical and lexical accuracy and of the appropriateness of the style of writing according to context and situation in particular discipline. Now the question is how to set about the task.....?

Keywords: Graduate, student, writing, level.

Introduction

As both the academic and professional environment continue to grow more rapidly with each passing year, there is increased level of competition, a greater number of students' are deciding to continue their education beyond the under graduate level. This is well, and the students' should be commended for striving for the highest level of achievements. However, the recent studies indicate that the average student writing ability, including those students', going on to masters' program, has reached incredibly low level of competency. Professors' expect writing assignments at graduate level [Masters' program] to be of higher order. Graduate level writing needs to be explicit, concise, and free from common error, as compared to under graduate. Writing well at the graduate level is very important, where nearly all thinking must be translated into text. What makes writing at the graduate level more challenging is the need to communicate thoughts that go beyond basic understandings. Through the typical graduate course, students are asked to elaborate on their thinking, question their assumptions, examine the biases, and defend the positions they take with in discussions parts and assignments. . . .all through clearly written communication.

Graduate versus under graduate level

Technically speaking, there are no specific rules of writing that differentiate graduate level work from under graduate. The following suggestion provides information to help students to cope up with their writing

- Compare general graduate level writing expectations with under graduate writing expectations.
- Identify common academic writing strategies applied within graduate level writing, including basic writing mechanics, using quotes, making assertions and attributing sources.
- Identify where to find more specific writing support through professors' and guides.

Under graduate

- Paraphrase the conclusions from basic research article.
- Summarize the events in a story
- Write a personal response to a book or a movie.

- Summarize what a teacher said in a straight forward lecture.

Graduate

- Framing an argument.
- Taking someone else's argument apart.
- Systematically inspecting a document, issues, events...etc
- Synthesizing different points of view.
- Applying a theory to different phenomena.

Mechanisms

- In general, the following rules should be applied to specific writing within graduate paper.
- Avoid contractions.
- Avoid passive language.
- Introduce and explain all acronyms.
- Avoid biased and offensive language.
- Avoid ending sentences in preposition.
- Avoid use of figurative language and clichés.
- Avoid syntax, grammatical, punctuation, and spelling error.
- Use less complex structure.
- Write in third person voice unless directed to write in the first person voice.
- Create succinct paragraphs with clear topic sentences, supporting sentences, and quotes and summaries from sources, and succinct conclusions and transition sentences.

WRITING STRATEGIES

“Engrave this in your brain. Every writer gets rejected.
You will be no different.” - John Scalzi.

Writing means putting yourself at the mercy of others who may not always say nice things about what you write. Learn to make the most of the insults and accept the praise with a dose of skepticism. Use the criticism from others to improve and strengthen the writing. The following principles of writing must be addressed in order for the work to be of 'graduate level.'

1. Separate and identify your beliefs from that of your research

The most difficult and complicated part of the writing process is the beginning. Graduate level writing is meant to be an exercise in critical thinking and personal analysis on the part of the student. Our ideas and beliefs on the writing topic should be explicitly stated and it should be separate from those of their research.

2. Know your reader

Any piece of writing should keep one question in mind: Who is the audience and why are they reading your writing? In addition to clearly presenting your ideas, bear in mind, that, the writing is original contribution to your particular discipline. Its explicit facts should help in guiding the reader for better comprehension.

3. State the reason for writing early

By writing much, one learns to write well. It is important to start writing early, as it helps in, to overcome the hurdles and helps the writer to accomplish his task in a better manner. Hence, state your purpose early and use as much space as possible for solidifying the statement.

4. Define all ambiguous or potentially confusing terms

This applies to an ambiguous word or technical jargons that can only be understood by experts in a specific field. Make sure to define all such terms, i.e. technical jargons that readers may have difficulty with, assuming that the reader has zero knowledge on the subject.

5. Using quotes correctly

'The art of writing is the art of discovering what you believe.' G. Flaubert.

Graduate level writing uses quotes in such a way that they enhance the writing, not to carry it. Before adding verbatim quotes to graduate paper, ask yourself: 'What does this mean in the context of my writing?' This question forces to elaborate on quoted material or introduce it clearly in the context of your points or assertions. This may prevent you from quoting as much, opting for cited paraphrasing and summaries instead.

6. Making Assertions

Always substantiate claims. It is not that having thoughts, beliefs or feelings are banned as a graduate learner or scholar, but in the context of academic writing those do not 'matter'- what matters is how such ideas, findings, and assertions link to existing knowledge in the field, so that writer can expand the existing conversation and knowledge. Thus, attribution of sources to support writer's assertions is key and synthesizing multiple perspectives is ideal.

7. Transition

A graduate level of writing should flow smoothly from start to finish. To achieve this, the writer must use transitions to connect ideas together and also to connect each paragraph to one that follows it. Then, the writer must form a strong conclusion for the writing to be considered anywhere near the graduate level.

8. Seek Feedback

While graduate level writing is largely an individual effort, there is a need of guidance and criticism, from experts of that particular field, right from the selection of a topic and refining the manuscript to editing, proof reading etc. till completion.

9. Revision process

No piece of writing gets it perfect the first time. In fact, research and writing go hand in hand with revision. Revision is not merely proof reading for mistakes; rather, it's an act of complete "reviewing", which involved expanding on key concepts, deleting a good material if it doesn't make an essential contribution to writing.

Conclusion

Writing is a transferable skill. One of the best means to better your writing is to read top journals, eminent writers and writing techniques, dissertation in particular field to familiarize with the corpus of research while gaining a better sense of the language used to demand varying concepts. Graduate students' can continue with these skills to be a better writer, thinker, and communicator throughout their professional and personal life.

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PROMOTING SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL) IN ENGLISH CLASSROOMS THROUGH PAULO COELHO'S *THE DEVIL AND MISS PRYM*

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Abstract:

*Education plays a pivotal role in shaping not only the intellectual ability but also the personality of the beneficiaries. The modern world which is entangled in emotional turmoil can be enlightened only when education is amalgamated with life skills. Among the many challenges faced by educators, the most striking is the psychological problem among students which occurs as a result of emotional imbalance. This leads them to take extreme steps which costs their life. In India, emotional instability is evident among students who are in the portals of higher education and therefore socio-emotional intelligence is a prerequisite. Hence, Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is gaining paramount attention and needs to be inculcated among students. It is an intervention method that assists students in handling challenges, along with being a prevention and promotion strategy that enables cognitive development. SEL aids in the enhancement of analytical skills, problem-solving skills, decision-making skills, negotiation skills, improved relationships, better empathy skills and improved communication skills. The paper highlights the significance of SEL and how it can be taught in English classrooms. It can be included in English classrooms with the help of literature, especially novels, as they deal with contemporary issues, relatable characters and are easily accessible. So, Paulo Coelho's *The Devil and Miss Prym* is used as a primary source to illustrate on how SEL can be applied in classroom teaching. The novel revolves around the battle that the character Chantal Prym ensues between good and evil. Through SEL, students can identify and work with their own emotional struggles through analysis and application with reference to the characters and incidents in the novel. The method adopted is collaborative learning through interactive sessions based on activities like reading, pictorial design and feedback (RPF) that facilitate practical application of SEL. Accordingly, this method of learning is the need of the hour to develop socio-emotional competencies in the younger generation to mold them as socially responsible and emotionally balanced individuals.*

Keywords: *Social Emotional Learning, Social Emotional Competencies, Paulo Coelho, The Devil and Miss Prym.*

Introduction

By maintaining a sound system of education and upbringing, you produce citizens of good character.

- Plato in *The Republic*

The education system has evolved through the ages based on the needs of the learners. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is an approach to inculcate and enhance social-emotional skills as a life skill. Maurice Elias, Professor of Psychology at Rutgers University defines SEL as “the process through which we learn to recognize and manage emotions, care about others, make good decisions, behave ethically and responsibly, develop positive relationships, and avoid negative behaviors” (qtd. in Edutopia, par.3). It has

been implemented as part of school curriculum in many countries and has received positive outcomes. Victoria Clayton has quoted that “in 2011, a meta-analysis published in the journal *Child Development* showed an 11 percentile gain in academic achievement for students who participated in a well-implemented SEL program versus students who didn't” (par.4). SEL can also be extended to the level of higher education since students tend to face many challenges when they are exposed to a new environment of education and at times have social and emotional meltdowns. This approach will work as a prevention and intervention module to assist students. It is a student centered method of learning, in which the teachers are facilitators and co-learners. Hence, SEL is imperative in higher education.

Why English classroom?

The English classroom is more suitable for social emotional learning due to the following reasons:

- In the English classroom there are students who have a basic level of reading, listening, writing and speaking skills in English, in comparison to students of other major.
- With regard to science and commerce subjects, the scope to disseminate the skills is less due to time constraint and since the subjects are technical, the concepts require more explanation. Further, there is considerable pressure both on the teacher to complete the given syllabus and the students to learn them with comprehension.
- On the other hand, major genres in English literature like fiction, poetry and drama, help in understanding human nature better and thereby assist in teaching the social emotional skills better to the students. Students of English major are able to answer the questions based on the works from different genres well in their exams, since they have a better understanding of characters and situations.
- Students have a conducive setup without pressure to learn, along with opportunities to bring out their latent potential in the English classroom.

Aim of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in English Classrooms

- The aim of SEL in English classrooms are:
- to enable students to identify their positive and negative emotions and choose them pragmatically
- to develop life skills such as negotiating, problem-solving and decision-making, that can be used in real life situations
- to improve communication and interpersonal skills, that can be applied to enhance relationships in life
- to inculcate social emotional skills through activities based on listening, reading, writing, speaking

Five Competencies in SEL

CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning) an organisation established in 1994 and the forerunner to establish and define SEL has identified five connected sets of competencies (along with their benefits) as given in Table 1

Table 1: Five Competencies of SEL given by CASEL

Competency	Purpose	Benefits
Self-Awareness	To recognize one's emotions, strengths and challenges	Less emotional problems and better cognition of oneself
Self-Management	To control one's emotions and impulses, motivate self, manage stress, set and achieve goals	Lesser internal crises and enhanced motivation, perseverance that is goal oriented
Social Awareness	To identify other's emotions, show empathy, understand the perspective of others	Lesser emotional meltdowns and positive social behaviour
Relationship Skills	To build cordial relationships, work, play and learn with others along with conflict resolution and communication skills	Lesser relationship problem and enhanced communication and interpersonal relationship
Responsible Decision making	To make wise choices and evaluate potential consequences.	Lesser risky behaviour and better achievement drive

Methodology for Implementing SEL in English Classroom

Barbara Fatum in her article “Healthy Classrooms, Emotional Intelligence, and Brain Research” believes that the best possible way for the brain to learn is through stories. The following method may be used as a model to impart SEL through novels in the English classroom at the Under Graduate level. The method will be substantiated with examples based on *The Devil and Miss Prym* by Paulo Coelho.

Warm Up

In the first class, the teacher can introduce the novelist and the novel by giving interesting background information about the novelist and the novel.

Example:

Brainstorming is done to give details about the author Paulo Coelho

<p>(i) Which country is famous for the following: Football, Samba, The Christ Redeemer Statue? <i>Answer:</i> BRAZIL (Birth place of Paulo Coelho)</p> <p>(ii) Who is called as The Alchemy writer? <i>Answer:</i> Paulo Coelho</p>	<p><i>An Introduction about Paulo Coelho</i> Born in 1947 Written a trilogy based on seven days Was addicted to drugs Joined magic and occultism At 39 years had a spiritual awakening Took to full-time writing Has written 30 books, translated into many languages Now he resides in Switzerland.</p>
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In the subsequent class, students can recall the progress of the storyline that was dealt in the previous class.

The warm up can be followed by a variation in reading, listening, writing and speaking activities that have interest, variety and avoids boredom, redundancy. Only a few sample activities are discussed below to explain SEL method through Paulo Coelho's *The Devil and Miss Prym*.

Step 1: Listening

Purpose: To demonstrate the ability to listen and observe keenly, since they are essential for social emotional development

Input: (i) Students listen to the reading of the novel

(ii) Students can see the movie adaptation of the novel (if available).

Output: Improved concentration, observation, analytical skill.

Competency: Develops Social Awareness

Step 2: Reading Wizards

Purpose: To enhance reading ability

Input: Students are divided into groups. All the groups are given a passage from the novel. The group members have to read the passage and then frame statements that could either be true or false, or choice based questions (they will retain the answers). The prepared set of statements are interchanged between the groups and each group tries to identify the true or false statements and answer the questions from the new set of questions given to them. After all the groups have completed answering, the answers are checked and revealed by the original group that framed the statements.

Example:

Sample passage from *The Devil and Miss Prym* (pp. 115-116)

'I'm telling you the story for one simple reason: gold itself has no value. Absolutely none. We cannot eat it or drink it or use it to buy more animals or land. It's money that's valuable, and how are we going to turn this gold into money?' 'We can do one of two things: we can ask the blacksmith to melt the bars down into 280 equal pieces, and then each one of you can go to the city to exchange it for money. But that would immediately arouse the suspicions of the authorities, because there is no gold in this valley, so it would seem very odd if every inhabitant were suddenly to turn up bearing a small gold bar. The authorities would become suspicious. We would have to say we had unearthed an ancient Celtic treasure. But a quick check would show that the gold had been made recently, that the area round here had already been excavated, that the Celts never had this amount of gold - if they had, they would have built a large and splendid city on this site.'

'You're just an ignorant young woman,' the landowner said. 'We'll take in the bars exactly as they are, with the mayor at a bank and divide the money between us.' 'That's the second thing. The mayor takes the ten gold bars, goes to the bank, and asks them to exchange them for money. The bank cashier wouldn't ask the same questions as if each of us were to turn up with our own gold bar; since the mayor is a figure of authority, they would simply ask him for the purchase documents for the gold. The mayor would say he didn't have them, but would point out - as his wife says that each bar bears a government hallmark, and that it's genuine. There's a date and a serial number on each one. 'By this time, the man who gave us the gold will be far from here. The cashier will ask for more time because, although he knows the mayor and knows he is an honest man, he needs a authorisation to hand over such a large amount of money. Questions will be asked about where the gold came from. The mayor will say it was a present from a stranger after all, our mayor is an intelligent man and has an answer for everything. 'Once the cashier has spoken to his manager, the manager - who suspects nothing, but he is nevertheless a paid employee and doesn't want to run any risks - will phone the bank headquarters. Nobody there knows the mayor, and any large withdrawal is regarded as suspicious; they will ask the mayor to wait for two days, while they confirm the origin of the gold bars. What might they discover? That the gold had been stolen perhaps. Or that it was purchased by a group suspected of dealing in drugs.'

Statements:

1. The Celts had enough gold to build a splendid city. (FALSE)
2. Gold itself doesn't have value. (TRUE)
3. The _____ can melt and share the bars equally. (a) goldsmith (b) blacksmith (Ans: b)
4. Who would represent the villagers at the bank? (a) blacksmith (b) landowner (c) mayor (d) mayor's wife (Ans: d)

Output: Improved critical thinking, in-depth reading

Competency: Develops Social Awareness

Step 3: Writing

Purpose: To demonstrate writing ability, creative ability that will help bring out and decipher individual's social emotional intelligence

Input: Activity based tasks are given to students

Task 1: Draw it out/ Spell it out

Students can represent the emotion (i) the character feels in the novel (ii) the student feels for the character and (iii) the student substitutes himself as the character, and represents it through diagrams (even

emoticons), words/phrases that represent emotions like anger, fear, etc., in tabular columns like the one given below

Name and Emotion of the character in the novel	Student's Emotion towards Character(s) in the novel		
Student's Emotion as the Character(s) in the novel	Evaluation Write down all emotions, then tick (✓) if emotion is positive or negative		
	Emotion	Positive Emotion	Negative Emotion

The activity may be done as an individual activity or in pairs.

Note: This can be maintained as an individual journal by the student, where he/she records the different emotions throughout the novel.

Output: Helps student to name and define emotions

Competency: Develops Self-awareness.

Task 2: Paragraph Writing

Students can write short compare and contrast paragraphs or cause and effect paragraphs based on incidents and emotions read in the extract from the novel. It is an individual activity and can be given as assignments.

Example:

- (a) Bring out the comparison between the villagers of Viscos in about a paragraph of 250 words.
- (b) Write a paragraph of 200 words on the outcome of "one man's [the stranger] madness".
- (c) Write your views on the evils of weapons based on the novel in about 150 words.

Output: Improve writing technique, vocabulary usage, analytical thinking and critical thinking, self-management skill

Competency:

Develops Self-awareness

Task 3: Work Sheet

(a) **Match Making**

Input: Students are given worksheet where they have to match terms/concepts in Column A with statements, dialogues of character in Column B that are taken from the novel.

Example:

S. No.	Column A	Column B	Answer
1.	Fear	Berta felt happy because she would reunite with her dead husband	3
2.	Anger	Chantal acknowledged the bitterness she carried around inside her day and night	5
3.	Joy	“Your heart is dead, your soul is in darkness, you want revenge”, Chantal said to the stranger.	6
4.	Sadness	Berta spent her years sitting in her front door waiting	7
5.	Acceptance	Chantal was astonished at the quantity of gold she saw before her	8
6.	Disgust	Chantal became increasingly nervous, afraid	1
7.	Anticipation	“I travelled to the four corners of the earth with my grief”, said the stranger	4
8.	Surprise	“You are the irresponsible ones, mixing lead with blood”, Chantal said to the villagers	2

Output: To understand the eight basic emotions- fear, anger, joy, sadness, acceptance, disgust, anticipation and surprise, as given by Robert Plutchik

Competency: Promotes Self-awareness

(b) Word Collocation

Input:

Students are given a set of words that are related to emotions and they can identify words/expressions that are related to them from the novel.

Example:

Write words that relate to given emotion from novel		
S.No	Emotion	Words
1.	fear	nervous, anxiety, worry
2.	anger	irritation, frustration
3.	love	affection, compassion
4.	sadness	unhappy, grief, depression

Output: Builds vocabulary and students are able to know about the different terms related to the different emotions.

Competency: Develop Self-Awareness

Step 4: Speaking

Purpose: To demonstrate speaking ability to express emotions and feelings to others through activities and social interaction.

Task 1: The Expressionist

Purpose: To demonstrate ability to highlight emotions through reading

Input: The chosen novel must be read to the entire class. Students can take turns to read different chapters in the novel.

Output: Improved intonation, stress and pause while reading

Competency: Better Self-Management**Task 2:** Role Play

Input: Students can enact important incidents in the novel with the guidance of the teacher. It can be a group activity.

Sample situations

1. The first meeting of Chantal Prym and the stranger.
2. The villagers meeting in the Church.
3. The conversation between Ahab and St. Savin.

Output: Helps student express the emotions felt by the character, empathize with them along with social awareness.

Competency: Develops Social Awareness**Task 3:** The Spokesperson

Input: Each student expresses and justifies his views to the full class based on questions asked by the teacher or his peers.

Sample Questions:

- (a) What emotion do you feel towards the stranger?
- (b) What emotion does Berta in the novel feel?
- (c) What do you think triggered the emotion you (or the character in the novel) felt?
- (d) Where do you feel the emotion in your body? or In the novel, where do you think Chantal feels the emotion in her body?
- (e) What attitudes, beliefs or values are connected to the actions of Chantal?
- (f) Why do you think fear is felt?
- (g) How do you think your family will react if you were in a similar situation as Chantal?
- (h) Do you justify the actions of the villagers of Viscos?

Output: Boosts confidence level, exemplify speaking skill.

Competency: Develops Self-awareness and responsible decision making skills.

Task 4: War of Opinions

Input: The teacher divides the students into groups of equal numbers. Each group can choose a name. They can exchange and express their views about important events and characters of their choice in the novel. The group has to give an outcome of their discussion.

Example:

Discuss in groups on the following topics:

- (a) Do you agree with the stranger that “Good and evil have the same face”?
- (b) “Tragedy always happens, nothing we do can alter by one jot the evil that awaits us”. Do you agree or disagree?
- (c) Who is the protagonist- the stranger or Chantal Prym?

Output: Develop communication along with relationship skills, social skills, decision making skills

Competency: Social Awareness, Responsible Decision Making

The above tasks are only some of the sample activities that can be used in English classrooms to enable Social Emotional Learning.

Teacher's Evaluation:

The teacher can evaluate the students based on their performance in the various tasks and maintain a record of their progress. There is no set scale to measure the outcome of the learning, so the teachers can design their own format.

Benefits of SEL in English classroom

The following are some of the benefits of SEL in English classroom

- Teachers are aware of the emotions of their students, which will assist them in handling the student's better
- Students are aware of their own emotions, which will make them confident individuals
- Better understanding and relationship within students of a classroom, which will avoid negative group formations and create congenial atmosphere for learning
- SEL improves the performance of students in class through various tasks.

Conclusion

SEL learning can make the English classroom an interactive one, wherein it “aspires to teach (our) students to be good citizens with positive values and to interact effectively and behave constructively” (Elias et al., ch.1). However, there is a need to develop an effective scale to measure SEL in classrooms. But still, it can be an effective approach to enhance the emotional stability of the younger generation by teaching them to acknowledge their emotions, choose the appropriate emotions and use them efficiently for the betterment of themselves and the society around them.

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**IMPARTING MORALS AND CULTURAL VALUES THROUGH CHILDREN'S
LITERATURE: A STUDY OF CHITRA BANERJEE DIVAKARUNI'S *THE
BROTHERHOOD OF THE CONCH TRILOGY***

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Abstract: *Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is a postcolonial, diasporic woman writer whose works for children are influenced by the folk and fairy tales her grandfather used to narrate to her as a child. The grand heroes and heroines with their virtues and vices etched many cautionary morals into her child-consciousness. She incorporates these morals through the messages that she imparts in her literature for children. These messages are inspired from values, ethics and spiritual insights from Hindu mythology and Indian philosophy. The present paper explores and examines these messages conveyed by Divakaruni in her trilogy, *The Brotherhood of the Conch*.*

Keywords: *Ethics, morals, values, children, humanity.*

Morals and values are an integral part of children's literature. Childhood is considered to be the best age for inculcating ethics, values and morals among children. Thus books for children and messages imparted through them have a great role in the building of their characters and in making them responsible and conscious beings who respect not just their own self but all their fellow beings and work towards the cause of making the world a better and a worthier place. One such effort has been made by an Indian-American author, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, through her works for children. Divakaruni is a postcolonial, diasporic woman writer whose works have continued to cast a spell on the readers across the world through her works such as *The Mistress of Spices* (1998), *Sister of My Heart* (1999), *The Palace of Illusions* (2008), *One Amazing Thing* (2010) and *Oleander Girl* (2013). Her works blend myth, magic and folklore of her native Bengali culture with the present-day reality, dealing with contemporary issues. As a diasporic writer, she mainly writes about immigrant experience and within that, she is most concerned about the predicament of women immigrants who face greater difficulties being embroiled in the patriarchal structure of their society.

Divakaruni has also penned some significant books for children. Her first novel for children was *Neela: Victory Song* (2002). It depicts the magical feats of a twelve-year-old girl, Neela, to find her missing father and also her involvement in India's struggle for freedom in 1939. Divakaruni has also written a picture book titled, *Grandma and the Great Gourd* (2013), for very young children. It retells an old Bengali folk tale about a grandmother and her adventurous journey through a jungle to meet her daughter. Her most significant work in the field of children's fiction is however her trilogy for young-adults, *The Brotherhood of the Conch*. This includes *The Conch Bearer* (2003), *The Mirror of Fire and Dreaming* (2005) and *Shadowland* (2009). The series follows the fantastic journey of a young Indian boy named Anand, his friend Nisha, and their mentor, Abhaydatta, on a mission to return a magical object, a conch, stolen by the evil Surabhanu, to its original place in the Silver Valley in the Himalayas and to save the world from annihilation. The characters on this journey discard many doubts and gain insight about their true selves and attain realization.

The aim of this paper is to explore and examine the morals and spiritual messages that have been incorporated by Divakaruni in *The Brotherhood of the Conch* trilogy.

Divakaruni's novels for children are inspired by the folk and fairy tales of her Bengali culture, mostly narrated by her grandfather during her childhood days. She inherited from him, a rich reservoir of mythic tales from the epics, *The Ramayana* and *The Mahabharata* and also the Bengali folk and fairy tales such as *Thakurmar Jhuli* (Grandmother's Sack of Stories). Divakaruni wanted to keep bringing back this rich part of her culture to show how magic shapes the thinking of people and their manner of seeing the world. Her main aim was to pass on morals and cultural values of her native culture to the young generation. Divakaruni shares:

I spent childhood vacations with my grandfather in a little village three hours outside of Kolkata. At night, he would bring me and my cousins together, light a kerosene lamp, because there was no electricity, and tell us wonderful stories from folktales, fairytales, and epics. . . . It made me understand the power of storytelling, and how, through stories, so much is communicated and passed on from generation to generation. (“Sisters and Spices”)

Folk and fairy tales provide an insight about the world around us and about the workings of a society. They also provide an escape from the frustrations of the society into the world of imagination. The main aim of these tales has been to impart values, ethics and religious knowledge, especially among children during their formative years. Divakaruni has also been influenced by the morals she imbibed while listening to and reading such tales. The grand heroes and heroines with their virtues and vices etched many cautionary morals into her child-consciousness. Divakaruni infuses in the series these morals, values, ethics and spiritual messages inspired from Hindu mythology and Indian philosophy. Uma Krishnaswami states in this regard:

The Conch Bearer and its sequels are unusual in that they draw from the cultural and literary history of their setting in a consistent, organic way. The conch itself, the visitor who creates a feast out of minimal offerings of food, the rejection of a heaven-like place in favor of loyalty and friendship—each of these aspects echoes aspects of Hindu mythology, so culture and myth in *The Brotherhood of the Conch* feel structural and not merely decorative. (par.1)

Metka Zupancic in her paper, “Ethics of Wisdom and Compassion in the selected works of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni” affirms the same:

In today's world ruled by self-absorbed individuals, with egoistic preoccupations that foster divisions, conflicts and separations, Divakaruni's depiction of deep, albeit often unseen connections, with interdependence and necessary reliance upon the most honourable features in ourselves, is not just refreshing but a powerful reminder of a potential that humanity needs to uncover at the earliest to avoid more crises and catastrophes. In this sense, Divakaruni's prose writings, especially some of the more recent ones, carry profound ethical values and the promise of a world that we could all build together, with literature, understanding and love as a binding force that may perform miracles. (107)

Divakaruni's works however do not bore the readers with continuous didacticism. She believes that a message needs to be dramatic and not didactic. A message can only have an impact on children if it rises out of a young and an inspirational character's understanding of the situation. It should be an outcome of a dilemma that the young protagonist has been battling with a decision to be made or an obstacle to be passed.

Divakaruni's two young sons, Anand and Abhay, inspired her to write novels for children with characters they could relate to. They were fascinated by the world famous *Harry Potter* series by the renowned British writer, J. K. Rowling, and wanted Divakaruni to write about something similar. *The Brotherhood of the Conch* was the outcome. The series however is unique as it is set in Indian background, depicts Indian landscape, describes Indian people and showcases Indian values. Divakaruni as an immigrant wanted to project her native culture and its people in a positive light so that children from

minority cultures living abroad do not develop inferiority complex. Also, the incident of 9/11 attacks in New York, America, and a personal incident of racial abuse pushed her to present an authentic picture of the India, its culture, people and positive values in order to reduce suspicion against people from minority cultures during such times.

Barbara F. Harrison in her essay, "Why Study Children's Literature," observes that children's writing "is concerned with human experience, with heroic possibilities fulfilled and unfulfilled, with longings which are gratified and longings brought down by circumstance" (243). The most appealing and enticing feature of children's literature is that they "are written by adults who have brushed the dust from the past and have looked long and hard at what they have found. They are wise in memory" (243). Harrison also notes that literature is a means that "allows us, as it does our children, to hold life in our hands, the whole and the parts, to gather them into a coherent pattern" (243). It provides an insight into the ambiguities and ambivalences of life and makes us stronger to confront life with greater courage and strength. This becomes possible through the messages and morals that are imparted through stories for children.

In Harrison's opinion, the misconception about children's literature as simple and direct is partly because of the myth of childhood as an idyllic stage, devoid of responsibilities and pressure of life. Peter Hunt, a British scholar and a writer of children's books, in *Understanding Children's Literature*, notes that it is wrong to believe that writing for children is not so challenging and toilsome. He observes that children's literature has been assumed to be "blissfully free of the "oughts" what we ought to think and say about them" (1). Hunt is of the view that books for children are more than just a source of personal pleasure and entertainment. They are the result of direct or indirect social, cultural and historical factors. He says:

They are overtly important educationally and commercially with consequences across culture, from language to politics: most adults, and almost certainly the vast majority in positions of power and influence, read children's books as children, and it is inconceivable that the ideologies permeating those books had no influence on their development. (1)

Thus, Hunt considers children's literature as a complex area and even more complicated he says "is the position it finds itself in between adult writers, readers, critics and practitioners, and the child readers" (2). Even though the language they opt for is simpler, the process of writing for children is in fact more extensive and painstaking. Writers employ metaphors and parables to connote some profound and deep ideas, thoughts and emotions. Divakaruni also makes use of such metaphors (for eg; the conch and the mirror). Zupancic says in this regard:

The magical objects such as the conch and the mirror are metaphors for the need to acknowledge the existence of other dimensions and forces at work in the universe, but especially a call to all of us to understand that we would be lost without these dimensions-as they cannot function without our cooperation-again, without our deepest commitment to love and understanding. (115)

The first part of the trilogy, *The Conch Bearer*, begins the adventures of Anand and his companions, Nisha and Abhaydatta. The novel opens in the city of Kolkata with young Anand struggling to make ends meet by working at a tea-stall in order to provide for his financially unstable family. This was not the case when Anand's father was around. His family had led a comfortable life in a small apartment until the receding business opportunities in Kolkata forced his father to take up a job in Dubai. After sending letters and money for a few months, the father suddenly disappeared. As the money stopped coming, the family confronted a financial crisis. Anand's mother had to take up a job as a cook in a rich household. Things got worse when his sister had a mental breakdown after witnessing a murder. The entire saving of the family went in his sister's treatment. Anand was forced to leave school and help his mother. Anand is fed up with his life and is eagerly waiting for some magical intervention to transform his life's circumstances. Opportunity comes in the form of Abhaydatta, a healer, who tells him about a magical

world called the Silver Valley hidden in the Himalayas. This place is run by the Brotherhood of Healers, who are endowed with magical abilities and teaching the same to young apprentices. Abhaydatta wants Anand's help in returning a magical object, a conch, stolen by an apprentice, Surabhanu, who has turned evil. This conch was the source through which the healers of the Brotherhood drew their magical powers and helped people in solving their problems. Without it, the powers of the healers are weakening and the world is on the brink of destruction. Anand is overjoyed at the exciting chance of helping Abhaydatta to save humanity and to escape his difficult situation.

Divakaruni weaves several values, morals, and ethics into the fabric of this novel. These aspects come to the forefront during the fantastical journey of the characters. One of the values that children are taught from a young age is to be kind to others. That is also one of the values that Anand had been taught by his mother: "Sharing what you have with others really makes you feel good" (CB 13). As the novel opens, Anand is shown to be feeling extremely hungry and cold while working at Haru's tea-stall in the cold weather. He is eagerly waiting for lunch that comprises of leftover stale food from the stall. However, when Anand sees a poor old man wandering around the tea-stall, he assumes that the man is hungry and gives his share of meagre food to him. This act of kindness makes him feel warm suddenly and even his hunger subsides.

Another very significant value that Divakaruni imparts through the novel is that goodness does not crave for power or break the promises made. Anand's goodness is revealed through the fact that he decides to accompany Abhaydatta and help him return the conch not out of any ulterior motive but out of his genuine concern for humanity. Abhaydatta entrusts him with the responsibility of keeping the conch on their journey, as he knows that Anand will never use it for his personal purpose. Though Surbhanu tries to lure Anand throughout their journey, Anand is able to overcome his strong urge to use the conch to gain power and fulfils his promise of returning the conch to its original place in the Silver Valley.

Another important message that Divakaruni communicates through the novel is to believe in one's self and in others. Throughout his journey, Anand is inflicted with self-doubt. Initially, when Abhaydatta asks him to accompany him on the mission, Anand is not sure whether he is the right person for such a crucial task. He also doubts Abhaydatta and his mission. He doubts Nisha's loyalty many times. When Abhaydatta gives him the conch, he feels humiliated but is not sure whether he can do justice to this important position "I'm really a Conch Bearer!" "What if, when the time came, he failed the old man?" (CB 104). He also is unable to think of himself as worthy enough to be talked to by an object of such great power. When Anand is unable to cross the river, he is again filled with self-doubt about his magical abilities as only a Being of Power could cross it. He thinks of himself as "an ordinary boy who couldn't make it past even the first obstacle the Healers had set on the way to the hidden valley"(CB 148). Anand again doubts the existence of the Silver Valley when he does not receive a reply to his request of permitting entry. However, gradually, he comes to realize that doubting things had been his biggest weakness on this entire journey: "All through this journey he'd doubted the words of the Master Healer and trusted his own intelligence, the little, tiny voice of logic that said this isn't real. And each time it had led him into one trouble after another, had cause him to ruin everything" (CB 194). He learns to trust himself and others around him.

The writer also stresses on the need to have faith in magic and the miraculous in the age of *Kali Yuga* (Age of Darkness and Disintegration). Even when the going gets tough, Anand does not let go of his faith in the magical. In this, he is inspired by the folk and fairy tales that led him to believe in the presence of magic. His mother on the other hand has lost faith in magic after a series of difficulties that she confronted in her life. It is Anand's faith in magic and his earnest wish for things to change that transforms his life completely.

The entire novel is interspersed with moral dilemmas confronted by Anand. He needs to make some important decisions in order to move ahead in life and also to grow as an individual. Initially in the

novel, he is confronted with first such predicament. When Abhaydatta offers him a lifetime opportunity of experiencing magical adventures that he had always wish for, Anand is caught in a big fix. He will have to choose between his family and his desire to help others. Through this dilemma, Divakaruni asserts the significance of family and responsibilities towards loved ones in Indian context and also the concern for the greater good of mankind. Towards the end of the novel, Anand has to choose between his friends and his dream of entering the secret domain of the Silver Valley. He chooses the former. Anand practices what he preaches. On being asked a question by the healers as a part of the final test to gain entry into the Silver Valley, his reply is befitting and the main message of the novel. On being asked that which of the virtues out of honesty, loyalty and compassion is the most important, Anand replies that they all are important and interconnected. His answers form the biggest lesson of the novel:

The three virtues are connected one can't exist fully without the other. Without one, the others lose their flavour. Honesty without compassion is too harsh to do any good. Compassion without loyalty lacks power, so you can't help the people you care for. Loyalty without honesty may make you follow the wrong person, or the wrong cause. (CB 203)

Divakaruni emphasizes that the virtues of honesty, loyalty and compassion hold power only when practiced together. Independently, any of these virtues may become a vice. Anand realizes that. He also practices the same by deciding to stay with his friends during their difficult time rather than choosing a life of power. The final dilemma that he is caught in is to decide between an adventurous life that promises power and fame as well as a chance to help the entire mankind and a life with his family back home where everything is back to normal with his father having returned from Dubai. He finally decides to stay back in the Silver Valley and be the Keeper of the conch even though he is pained to lose his family. But in order to gain something beloved to gain his self and become a healer, he will have to sacrifice something equally cherished

Divakaruni also imparts some spiritual messages from Indian philosophy to acquaint children growing far away from their native country with their spiritual culture. Some of them are: humans should be patient and not fret over minor problems and issues; they should not think of themselves as all-powerful and in control of everything that happens in their life as the events in their life are decided by a supreme power; however, having said that, every human being has to make her/his own happiness; one should wish for magical intervention only when one has made all efforts in improving circumstances. Other insights such as, everything is pre-destined and death is the beginning of another journey, are also delineated through the conch. A very important spiritual revelation is made by the conch towards the end, explaining why it did not prevent Surabhanu from stealing the conch in the first place even if it could easily have done that:

... everything's connected in the universe ... Sometimes bad things or things that seem bad have to happen so that wrongs elsewhere can be righted or other good things come to pass. Sometimes an action is set in motion, and it must be allowed to run its course. To stop it forcibly would wrench the design of the web. (CB 263)

The second part of the trilogy, *The Mirror of Fire and Dreaming*, continues the quest of young protagonists, Anand and Nisha. As they both begin their lessons as apprentices at the Brotherhood in the Silver Valley, Anand gets a rare message from a black wind, warning him about something evil happening nearby. Anand and Nisha sneak out of the Silver Valley to help their mentor Abhaydatta in the village of Sona Dighi, where a sorcerer, Kasim, and his jinn, Irfit, are making the village men dig up the ruins of a palace and are sucking their souls to gain entry into the world of Nawab Nazim that existed three hundred years ago. In order to find Abhaydatta and his apprentice Raj-bhanu, Anand follows them to this world with the help of a magical mirror called the Mirror of Fire and Dreaming. When there, he discovers that his companions have lost their memory and have assumed different identities. Thus, the responsibility of finding the lost conch, and saving Nawab Nazim and his family as well as the villagers of Sona Dighi from

Kasim and Irfit, falls on the shoulders of Anand.

This novel is also interspersed with several importance messages. The importance of kindness, love and compassion is again highlighted in the second part. Ramu, a poor village boy, lets Anand stay at his place and shares his meagre meal with him even though he is too poor. Ramu's grandmother divides the food in three equal portions instead of two: "The portions were too small to satisfy anyone's hunger, but the boys took them with good cheer. When the grandmother's back was turned, Ramu scooped a surreptitious handful of food from his plate to hers" (MFD 64). Towards the end of the novel, Anand is willing to sacrifice his life in his fight against the jinn, Irfit, to protect humanity. His love for his fellow human beings affects deep change upon the energies of Bismillah's world. Tara Ma risks her life in order to protect other villagers out of sheer love for them.

Divakaruni also stresses on the significance of honour and friendship in the novel. Nawab Nazim and his Chief Minister, Haider Ali, share a strong bond. When lured by noblemen to take over the kingdom, as Nawab Nazim is growing weak in health, Haider Ali refuses to betray his friend and does not consider it an honourable thing to do. Later, however, he does betray him after joining Kasim but soon realizes his fault after Nawab Nazim apologizes to him for earlier refusing to betroth his son, Mahabet to Haider Ali's niece, Paribanou. It takes "no more magic than a bit of human kindness and humility, and a remembrance of friendship" to solve a problem (MFD 265).

The second part is also incorporated with spiritual insights like one should happily accept everything that life throws and resist pleasurable desires or fear of pain. This will bring true happiness. The Brotherhood teaches its apprentices to keep their emotions in check as they can destroy their self. This can be attained through self-control and endurance. The apprentices also learn to acclimatize themselves easily to all types of situations and endure under the toughest of circumstances. They are sometimes given a meagre meal or sent into forests to search for food. The Weather Masters keep regulating the weather to make them adapt to the rough weather conditions. Anand is continuously advised by the conch to wait patiently for his magical abilities to surface: "*One cannot rush it. One has to be patient*" (MFD 34). Some other insights include: If one suffers the result of a mistake in mind, one doesn't need to be caused further pain through punishment, there are always some mysteries and unanswered questions in the magical realm, and the drama of life lies in not knowing everything before time. Another important spiritual insight that comes towards the end of the novel is that one has to pay a price for every victory. The conch successfully destroys the jinn but is injured in the process. It develops a crack on its surface. The conch decides to keep the crack even though it can repair it. It tells Anand:

Sometimes vulnerability inspires love more than perfection does. Seeing my cracked body might make Healers understand how every significant victory requires a sacrifice. It might make them fight harder to protect what I stand for, which is at once immensely strong and immensely fragile. And Anand, what I stand for is more important than me. You, especially, need to learn this. (MFD 328)

In the third part of the trilogy, *Shadowland*, Anand and Nisha travel to the city of Shadowland (future Kolkata) to bring back the stolen conch and to restore their Silver Valley to its former glory. The citizens of Shadowland, called the city of Coal (or Kol from Kolkata), are living in utter poverty and breathing through masks and wearing body suits as the air has become poisonous. A cold war between the scientists who live in the domes and enjoy all luxuries and magicians who live in the slums and are struggling for basic needs, has augmented the situation. Anand and Nisha decide to stay back to prevent the impending war between them. *Shadowland* is a dystopian novel that predicts a dark future for Divakaruni's native city, Kolkata, and in fact for the entire world where the class division is stark, where people have become completely apathetic to values and ethics and where the environment has degenerated completely. Divakaruni's message is clear; the entire world will be turned into Shadowland (as projected in the novel) if measures are not taken to stop it.

The last part of the trilogy is also fused with messages. Importance of loyalty in friendship is again highlighted through Nisha's constant help and loyalty towards Anand. She always had the ability to calm him down in difficult situations:

Nisha squeezed behind him, her shoulder pressed against his spine. In spite of the dangers that beset them on all sides, her presence made him feel safe. As he gave in to the wave of sleep that broke over him, he wished he could tell her that. (S 62)

Importance of love is also highlighted again. Even though Anand urgently needs to return to the Silver Valley with the conch in order to save his home, he decides to stay back and help his new friend, Dr. S, who is in dire need of help to save the city of *Kol* from a serious clash anticipated between the scientists and the magicians. Divakaruni also stresses on the significance of fellowship and solidarity in resolving difficulties. The conch and the mirror remind both the scientists and the magicians of their previous camaraderie and urge them to revive it because the city can be saved from destruction only if both the parties work in alliance. Divakaruni also depicts some spiritual values such as trusting one's self, not being egoistic, accepting every situation calmly and making all efforts without getting frustrated, a situation can sometimes be changed through help, and pain is sometimes imperative for the greater good.

Shadowland suitably compiles the main message of Divakaruni's works for children. According to Zupancic, the author's works assert the urgency to collectively construct a world that is "based on mutual understanding and love as a binding force that may perform miracles" (107). Divakaruni's return to spiritual aspects of love, kindness, compassion and ethics is to motivate people, particularly children, from all parts of the world to come together and work towards the common cause of making the world a better and a happier place by acknowledging similarities and respecting differences between them. The allusion to a Sanskrit mantra at the end of *The Mirror of Fire and Dreaming* appropriately sums up the writer's ultimate message through her trilogy:

Sarve bhavantu sukhinah
Sarve santu niramayah
Sarve bhadrani pashyant
Ma kashchit dukha bhag bhavet.

May all beings be happy
May all beings be healed
May all behold only what is good
May no one experience sorrow. (MFD 312)

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STUDY OF VARIOUS ASPECTS OF SURVIVAL IN MAYA ANGELOU'S POETRY

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Abstract: *Maya Angelou is one of the most influential personalities who proved her versatile identity as a celebrated poet, memoirist, autobiographer, dramatist, producer actress, film maker and civil right activist. She has published variously volumes of poetry which deal with various subjects like African American life, past history, work, love African American and Self-identify, class struggle, racial concerns, survival, confession, feminism, etc. The theme of Survival is remained as one of the major themes in her poetry. The term survival can be considered as an action or decision which generally means to continue to exist and to live in spite of wreck, destruction, painful event. It is a power of will to endure the maltreatment and to rise hopefully. There are various aspects of survival reflected in the poetry of Angelou. It includes individual survival, generational survival, survival against racial discrimination, survival of African American women, Survival through revival of traditional forms etc.*

Maya Angelou is one of the most renowned and influential personalities. She has proved her versatile identity as a celebrated poet, memoirist, autobiographer, dramatist, producer actress, film maker and civil right activist. She was born on April 4th 1928 in St. Louis in Missouri but was raised in St. Louis and Stamps, Arkansas. Her original name was Marguerite Johnson but adopted the nick name 'Maya' given by her brother. Her life up to fifteen years old was full of grave experiences where she had been victimized to inhuman experiences. It is the reading and the efforts of a lady Mrs. Flower and her grandmother Angelou moved out not only from her speechless and depressed world but also emerged with a new love and hope for literature. Though she is popular and acclaimed for her autobiographical writings, her poetical career is not less powerful as she proved herself prolific poet. She has published various volumes of poetry which include *Just Give Me a Cool Drink of water' fore I Diie*, (1971), *Oh Pray My wings Are Gonna Fit Me Well*, (1974), *And Still I Rise*, (1978), *Shaker, Why Don't You Sing?*, (1983), *Now Sheba Sings the Song*, (1987), *I Shall Not Be Moved* (1990), *Life Doesn't Frighten Me*, (1993), *Phenomenal Woman: Four Poems Celebrating Women* (1994), *A Brave and Startling Truth*, (1995), *Amazing Peace* (2005), *Celebrations: Rituals of Peace and Prayer* (2006), etc. Angelou's recited one of her best-known poems "On the Pulse of Morning" at the presidential inauguration ceremony of U. S. President Bill Clinton in 1993. Her poems received mixed reviews. In fact Angelou's started writing poetry to express her painful experiences. However, the area of the themes enlarged as she dealt with various issues like love, painful loss, music, discrimination, pride, identity, cultural consciousness protest, survival etc.

The meaning of the term survival is given by the Cambridge Dictionary is, "when a person, organization, etc. continues to live or exist". The Oxford Dictionary defines it as, "the state or fact of continuing to live or exist, typically in spite of an accident, ordeal, or difficult circumstances." Taking into consideration the above definitions we may consider the concept of survival as an action or decision which generally means to continue to exist and to live in spite of wreck, destruction, painful event. It is a power of will to endure the maltreatment and to rise hopefully. A close study of the poetry of Maya Angelou reveals that survival remained one of the major themes in her poetry. There are various aspects of survival reflected in her poetry. The present paper aims to study and explore the various aspects survival in the poetry of Maya Angelou.

The individual life of Maya Angelou was full of sufferings and shocking experiences in the

beginning. Her autobiographical writings recorded the kind of life she suffered and lived. Her autobiography *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* chronicles her life up to adolescent age. The work contains a horrible account of how she had been raped at an early. This act of inhuman treatment committed against her caused her to be speechless for nearly five years. As a result of it she went under depression. It was because of the continuous efforts of Mrs. Flowers and her grandmother and family that she could come out not only from her speechless depressed world but also emerged with a new love and hope for literature. Besides, she suffered from other tensions like premature motherhood, as well as social and political tensions. She had to do various jobs. Though Angelou does not refer individual experiences directly in her poetical work, she refers to it indirectly in some of the poems like "Men", "Little Girl speaks", "Born That Way", etc. She refers to an individual survival in the poetry. The poem "Men" from the collection *And Still I Rise* she refers to her views on the unfavorable and disgusting vice. Here, the poet exposes the sexual dominance and physical hunger of men. The poem "Born That way" from the volume *I shall not be Moved* gives an insight into the pain that she went through. The poet describes: "childhood whoring fitted her/for deceit. Daddy had been a/fonder. Soft lipped mouthings, /soft lapped rubbings. (P. 244, *The Complete...*). It is noteworthy that the very titles of her poetical collections like *And Still I Rise*, *I Shall Not Be Moved*; we come across the poet full of hope, optimism, and courage.

Racial discrimination is one of the most complex and most discussed issues in African- American literature. Racial discrimination on the ground of colour complexion is one of the major racial segregation. The African- Americans were considered as nigger. Angela's poetry celebrates the concept "Black is Beautiful" which was the motto of *Black Arts Movement*. Her poetry describes survival against racial discrimination. Her poetry reflects how she overcomes the feelings of subordination. Angelou's poetry reflects survival of African Americans which helps to overcome disturbance as well as psychological prison. She is not ashamed of her appearance. She accepts her physical appearance though not deserving for a fashion model's size. She accepts her characteristics that she possesses hopefully. One of the well-known poems written by Maya Angelou is "Phenomenal woman" from the collection *And still I Rise* where she refers to her survival regarding physical appearance. The poet depicts:

Pretty women wonder where my secret lies.
I'm not cute or built to suit a fashion model's size
But when I start to tell them,
They think I'm telling lies. (P. 130, *The Collect...*)

Here, the poet is proud to reveal her 'Black Beauty', which makes her 'a woman phenomenally.' Here, though she accepts the truth that her beauty does not suit of fashion model's size, her physical gestures are not less than the white woman. Similarly the poem "The calling of Names" describes how the poet is over come from the shameful utterance 'nigger' which refers to darkness of skin with its varieties:

Light, Yellow, Brown
and Dark-brown skin,
were okay colors to
describe him then. (P. 46, *The Collect...*)

Similarly the poem "Passing Time" is a great slap on the so called concepts of colour complexion superiority. Her optimism for dark complexion and race is well described with comparison when the poet describes "Your skin like dawn,/Mine like dusk./One paints the beginning/of a certain end./The other, the end of a/Sure beginning." (P. 67).

Generations after generations of African- Americans has struggled for survival and freedom since the migration to America from their homeland Africa. Throughout the struggle each generation had its own experiences of loss, destruction and even deaths. Maya Angelou deals with the themes of loss, struggle and

deaths and feels proud about her people's courage and survival that are optimistic about better future. African Americans succeeded to create their own identity. It is the survival through generation and history. She is always impressed by the survival of her ancestors and previous generations in the most horrible and misfortunate conditions. Some of her poems like "When I Think About Myself" from *Just Give Me a Cool Drink of Water 'fore I Diie'* refers to how African-Americans survived in spite of oppression and injustice, while the poem "No No No No" expresses inevitability of survival of starved mother 'picking undigested beans from yesterday's shit.' The poem "Harlem Hopscotch" talks about the game which symbolizes slavery at Harlem, place of African-American civilization. . Life itself becomes a brutal game of hopscotch a series of desperate yet hopeful leaps landing but never pausing long. The poem records how African-American get lower treatment at social environment as well as hope for better future. The poem "The Pusher" taken from *Oh Pray My wings Are Gonna Fit Me well* talks about black ethnic power and real pride. The poem expresses hope of bright future through survival:

BLACK IS!"

"NATION TIME"

TOMORROW'S GLORY HERE TODAY (P. 95)

The survival of the ancestors is finely reflected by Angelou in "Song for the old Ones" when the poet declares: "I understand their meaning/it could and did derive/from living on the edge of death /They kept my race alive.' (P. 109)

Survival and search for self-identity are also the major themes that Angelou deals with in her verse. The themes of survival of African Americans with pride and courage in America after migration are discussed in various poems by the poet. In the poem "Weekend Glory" Angelou portrays several working classes African -Americans who willingly accept their black identity. The poem presents an African American woman taking pride in being black and hopeful about her self-image. It encapsulates Angelou's perseverance in dealing with the emotional racial economic and relational aspects of the life:

If they want to learn how to live life right,
they ought to study me a Saturday night.

(P. No. 206, *The Complete ...*)

The poem affirms that they have right to enjoy the life as the whites. The poet is glad at her status which is neither heaven nor hell. The poem ends with a strong feeling of survival: "if I'm able to work/and get paid right/ and have the luck to be Black/on a Saturday night." (P. 207) .In the poem "Life Doesn't Frighten Me" the poet expresses her pride and courage where she says life doesn't frighten me when I look back at the grave past. In the poem "A Georgia Song" the poet discards cultural dominance.

The four most famous poems of Maya Angelou published earlier but collected together in the collection titled *Phenomenal Woman* are "Phenomenal Woman", "Still I Rise", "Our Grandmothers" and "Caged Bird". These poems can be considered as the representation of survival of the woman. The poem "Phenomenal Woman" presents the poet as a self-confident woman who wants to show the world what makes her beautiful. The poem asserts the courage audacity, strength and offers the creative and willful spirit of the 'phenomenal Woman.' The poem celebrates the strength of a black woman as she pursues economic stability in order to bring her recognition and independence : "Now you understand/ Just why my head's not bowed. (P. 131) .

The poem "Still I Rise" is one of the most celebrated and popular poems by Maya Angelou. It celebrates courage and pride of an African American woman. The poet speaks about all sorts of maltreatment she can be failed with:

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,

You may trod me in the very dirt
But still like dust, I'll rise. (P. 163)

The speaker challenges the stereotyped behaviour and refers to indomitable spirit of Black people. The poet compares herself to Black Ocean which is the source of endless energy and courage empowering the dominated people to survive, triumph over oppression and achieve positive self-identity. The next poem 'Caged Bird' displays a strong desire to break through the fences of racial oppression. African-Americans in this poem are compared to be caged bird, the image taken by Angelou from Dunbar's poem. The oppressive condition of African-Americans is metaphorically symbolized by expressions like 'clipped wings' and 'tied feet'. Due to cultural dominance and Anglo-American norms and loss of African culture, the African-Americans feel to be 'caged Bird.' However, the poem ends with a hope to sing for freedom.

The poem 'Our Grandmothers' confidently and courageously praises grandmother figure of the slavery and post-slavery era. The poem talks about the survival of a woman in spite of struggle, discrimination, slavery, starvation etc. The poet talks about the names given to African Americans once nigger, nigger bitch, heifer/mammy, property, creature, ape baboon/whore, hot tail, thing it." (P. 254) and takes it positively and declares her survival. She expresses her pride in the words: "I have a certain way of being in the world". (P. 254). Only due to her determination that she has certain way of being in this world could other generations learn how to stay upright, straight and unbroken. The poet praises the grandmothers for their survival and these faces are given noble names of popular African-American women like 'Sheba', 'Sojourner', 'Harriet' and 'Zorro', 'Angle' etc..

Survival through culture, humour religion and music is one another crucial means of staying alive for the poet. Maya Angelou uses humour to depict maltreat and oppressive condition of African-Americans. She uses black humour which satirizes or parodies the demeaning views. The poem "Old Folks Laugh" presents the feeling of comfort who forgive in spite of the sad realization of their life. Similarly the poem "Song for the Old Ones" talks about the sad 'lowly Uncle Tomming / and Aunt Jemima's smiles.'" Angelou expresses how these people kept the race alive living on the edge of death.

There are a few poems written by Angelou which show survival of African Americans through religion. The poem, 'Thank you Lord' is a fine example of it. In this poem the poet sees God "Brown-skinned Neat Afro Full Lips." She views him in the great leaders like Malcom, Martin and goes on to declare that Sunday services become sweeter when you are Black. The poet feels grateful for God as only because of him she is survived.

Maya Angelou always expressed her protest for cultural dominance. She tried to revive African folk culture through her poetry. A good number of poems were written in *Blues* and *Jazz* tradition by Maya Angelou. *Blues* are generally sad songs which generally speak of hard times, sad lives and obstacles the black people have experienced. Similarly *Jazz* stems from several musical sources. In a poem "A Good woman Feeling Bad" Angelou Says "The blues may be the life you've led". Angelou has written some other poems "Still I Rise", "Ain't that Bad" in the same style.

The close study of Angelou's poetry reveals that the theme survival is one of the distinctive trait remained in her poetry. Once she declared, "All my work, my life, everything is about survival." (P. No.13, *Conversations with Maya Angelou*). She has broadened the theme by dealing with various aspects of survival like individual, generational, survival against racial discrimination, through culture etc.. Angelou has presented and painted a crystal clear picture of African American with its past generations. Though her poems reveal the racial treatment full of slavery, oppression, struggle marginalization, she emerges optimistically for better future. This kind of survival and unshakable faith about better future is the major trait of her poetry. Survival of human beings always remained an interested theme to Angelou.

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PATHOS OF THE GULF MIGRANTS IN BENNYAMIN'S GOAT DAYS*Neethu M B, Guest faculty, Sreekrishna College, Guruvayur, Kerala*

Abstract: Kerala is one of the states in India from where people have been migrating consistently to the Gulf for the past 50 years. The Gulf boom refers to the vast migration of a large number of people from Indian state of Kerala to the Gulf cooperation Council from 1972-1983. About 10% of Kerala's population of over 30 million does not live in the state. Every third house in Kerala has a man working in the Gulf. Kerala's tryst with Gulf began as early as the fourth century BC when Arab traders used to follow the monsoon winds blowing in from West to East and made a trading for spices in Kerala. The Gulf dream has found its expression in Malayalam film and literature. Over the years Malayalam films have tried its part well with unique themes which have won national as well as international accolades. Film makers here have dared to attempt on controversial subjects avoiding threats and bans from across the states and even from the county.

Keywords: migrant, subjugation, Gulf Malayalee, dream.

Introduction:

Indian novelist and short story writer Bennyamin's novel *Goat Days* was shortlisted for the DSC prize in 2013 has written extensively on a variety of issues, including the experiences of migrant labour in the Gulf States originally written in his native Malayalam. A novel that chronicles the ruthless violence and hardships of desert life has sold millions of copies of "Aadujeevitham" or "Goat Days" has completed more than 100 editions. The story "Aadujeevitham" by Bennyamin as told in the book is from the real life experience. The author interviewed and extracted best out of the person who suffered the life of Najeeb and mixed it with a lot of thoughts and imagination to make it as a reading experience and positively different. The prose is simple which makes the impact more powerful. The book is garland of motions. One cannot read it by personally involving in it and feel for the characters. When the author was asked about the scope of the topic he dealt with in the novel; he said

I am from Kerala and I know millions of people have travelled to the Gulf state for employment. Some have come back and yet no one has talked about what the reality is and what type of life they are living there. As a writer I decided to go myself and experience first-hand the reality of life there. I needed to do so to portray what happens there. Am not saying every person goes through such an experience, but there are realities that need to be told.

About the particular chord with which the novel struck the readers, he answered

Firstly it is an unknown story that had not been told. Secondly, it is related to a person who has actually worked in such conditions. His story bears resemblance to the lives of millions. It is a story of anticipation of struggle and survival. So it is for everyone; not just for a person who has lived in the Gulf and worked there but for anyone who is struggling in the world.

When sorrows fill our thoughts, tears spill out. When life spills out from a book, the reader gets its tears. Bennyamin's "Aadujeevitham" (Life of Goat) is one such book which will fill our minds with thoughts, helps us to appreciate the conditions we live in and look at life on a positive note. More than this, the book will raise the humanity in an individual to sympathize to fellow humans sufferings.

This is the chilling account of extreme subjugation of body and mind; a journey into darkness that could easily lead to defeat or self-annihilation but for the existence of the third entity, the spirit. 'Goat Days'

is based on the real life experience of a Gulf escapee in the 1990s. Najeeb, a sand-miner in Kerala, dreams of better times. His wife is pregnant and he needs to sort out his life. Perhaps the same stock dreams that the 1.4 million Malayalees in the Gulf had when they were in Kerala gold watch, fridge, TV etc. He reflects, worse that scorch with hideous irony when we later think back on them.

After a long wait in Bombay, he lands in Riyadh one evening with a companion. There's no one to pick them up the airport. It is night when their journey almost endlessly, from bright city to dark desert, from expectation to despair. Najeeb is separated from his companion and dumbered unceremoniously in a masara- a goat farm in the middle of Saudi desert. From now on, he will live with his boss, his Arbab and a scary figure. 'A stinking unkempt, long beard fellow who had 'matted hair like that of a savage'. And the starving and scared Najeeb realizes his dreams are set to fade away, and yet he has hope, faith and the innocence to imagine. The scary figure is the shape of things to come; during the course of the next three years this is what he will become.

'Goat Days' is about Najeeb's life in the desert and his painful escape. It is not what you would expect to bring with you that comfortable. The narrative is like a diary. And yet, it's one of the most gripping books you will read. And instant best seller in the original Malayalam.

The depth of tragedy bought home in the mutilation and death of a kid he identifies with his own unseen child. The horror of his situation strikes him when he discovers the bonus of his predecessor buried in the sand. He grabs the chance to escape. The flight across the desert is painfully poetic. A companion dies, another disappears, and he is alone again. Finally, he reaches civilization without papers, without identity and gives himself up to the authorities. Jail is like heaven and there is a possibility that he will be picked up and send home. And even here, there is a shocker as he comes face to face with his Arbab, but he survives to tell his tale and Bennyamin will write it down.

The book leaves us in the middle of the desert and we see a world which is never heard before. Life of the desert opens before the reader to whom there is nothing left but to go astonished. The author emphatically asserts that Najeeb catastrophic voyage cannot be tempered with, or redesigned for securing popularity or critical acclaim. He says, I didn't sugarcoat Najeeb's story or fluff it up to please the reader. Even without that, Najeeb's story deserves to be read. This is not just Najeeb's story; it is real life-“a goat's life’.

The migrant laborers in Gulf because of their inability to settle down, keeps strict vigil about their identities such as caste, religion, political association etc. In Gulf countries large majorities of migrant laborers are living in ethnic enclaves where they engage themselves in a kind of self-denial about other communities. The return migrant largely cut off from the reality back home, comes back with all kinds of deprivation and loneliness ; suddenly finds themselves in a society which is entirely different from what he dreamt of. Thus the return migrant who is unable to cope up with this change feels that home doesn't belong to them and develops an attitude of denials and again make attempts to escape. Years ago desperately poor Malayalees with no hope, little skills and a growing belly, hung on to the sails that took them to an unknown land of plenty. The newly gushing oil wells of the Persian Gulf were beckoning cheap labour in the mid-1960s. The first generation of the migrant Malayalees who ended up in the deserts of West Asia knew not where they were headed for. They only know their Dravidian language, the virgin paddy fields, the bountiful rivers and the sound of the never ending rain, but soon they were all Malayalees of Arabia, turning their desert dreams into mansions back home; building a New Kerala

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**THE IDIOM IDENTITY CRISIS AS A RECURRENT THEME IN
THE SELECT NOVELS OF SAUL BELLOW: A STUDY**

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Saul Bellow is one of the most eminent and acclaimed American novelists of the modern literature. Being a Post Modern war writer, he has been often compared to the great American writers like Hemingway, Arthur Miller and Tennessee William. For his literary talent, he has been honoured with a number of prestigious Awards such as Nobel Prize, Pulitzer Prize, National Book Award and National Medal of Arts. In his novels, he vigorously seeks for human's fulfilment through his imaginary characters. Therefore, this present paper aims to bring out the human's inexhaustible search for self-identity as described in Bellow's novels *The Adventure of Augie March (AAM)* and *Seize the Day (SD)*.

The identity of an individual in a society may be viewed as a kind of psychological garment that he puts on and takes off, and it affects his mental make-up and social behaviour. The role an individual plays in a society is a kind of affirmation of how he perceives himself in a given situation, how he feels confirmed in his expectations for himself in his values and so forth. As he moves from one situation to another, he reveals various aspects of his personality to others and to himself.

As an individual plays the role he learns ways of perceiving himself and the world in general, and these ways of perceiving tend to become rather stable and persistent aspects of his self. He also learns a repertory of roles that, to a large extent, explore and define 'who he is'. As Augie proclaims: "I am an American, Chicago born Chicago, that sombre city- and go at things as I have taught myself, free-style, and will make the record in my own way" (AAM 3)- such a man is a contingent force and an intensely personal participant in the world about him. This idea was expressed from time to time through different revolts against traditional philosophy, identity is a recent philosophical term deals with man's disillusionment and despair. It flourished on the American continent especially after World War II. Since then the theme of identity has penetrated modern fiction.

In America popularly known existential concepts are meaninglessness, alienation and identity crisis. Hemingway and Bellow are generally regarded as existential novelists. They have close links with the European sensibility; Hemingway by virtue of his expatriation and Bellow by virtue of his self-conscious intellectualism. Bellow makes a more conscious use of existential ideas and vocabulary than Hemingway. Their existentialism tends to foundation in their works as a modernized guise for both criticising and upholding established American values.'

The confrontation of the typical Bellow hero is paradoxical. He proves his authentic existence in a way which belies his separateness from society. In the meantime they are isolated from reality also. The extent of this paradox is clear when Bellow portrays the obsession of an individual's confrontation with society. *The Adventures of Augie March* was published in 1953 and *Seize the day* in 1956.

In his first two novels *Dangling Man* and *The Victim* Bellow created two characters that were strangers and alienated in a dreadful society, but in *The Adventures of Augie March*, Bellow portrayed a protagonist who feels at ease in a colourful Chicago. His new and give Approach in *The Adventures of Augie March* earned him critical acclaim and popularity. The portrayal of the fifties. K.M. Ophadal observed that "the third novel *The Adventures of Augie March* combines the proletarian and picaresque

traditions to examine the full range of American social experience.”

In *The Adventures of Augie March*, Bellow remains within a broadly social tradition in his flirtation with formal or aesthetic bias of James and Flaubert. Like James, he is conscious of the high quality and, like Flaubert, aware of telling details. To place Augie firmly within sociality he portrays the ritual of an ethnic society, i.e. Jewish family.

Though Bellow celebrates America in *The Adventures of Augie March*, he rejects its false value. In one of his interviews Bellow said “that Chicagoans have for the most part escaped contamination by pseudo culture. I say 'for the most part' because television and cultural journalism do great damage to the innocent vulgarity of Chicago. Still the 'ethic neighbourhoods' resist with the words. “I am American, Chicago born, Chicago that sombre city and go at things as I have taught myself free style, and will make the record in my own way. First to knock, first admitted, sometimes an innocent knock, sometimes a not so innocent. But a man's character is his fate.” (AAM 3)

The Adventures of Augie March caught the spirit of the fifties against the variety of seeking 'the great good place', the ideal situation. Because Bellow declared that “the idea of a great good place for writers and painters is a flop in America.” While other writers struggled to discover a new ideology and felt themselves disarmed by the size and lethargy of their culture, Bellow turned from ideology to a World justified in itself. Having progressed from Joseph's rejection of the world to Leventhal's qualified acceptance, in this novel, Bellow made another leap, rejecting Flaubertian polish and despair to create rough-hewed energetic new world. The question of the Novel's form is also the question of Augie's character. Augie presents himself as a man of love open to any and all experience. Augie ventures into the world but he does not feel himself a part of it, his constant movement is an evasion rather than an engagement of life.

The narrator identified with the main story and soon he turns back from it. Augie's neutrality is really narrator's objectivity. He views adventures in which Augie is immersed with a cool eye that keeps them at a distance. As the adventures of the protagonist go on the narrator's comment provides the compassion, the analysis, the learning and the form which are lacking in the adventures themselves. Except for the last chapters episodic novel would belong to the boy who lives the adventures, and the Bildungsroman would belong to the man who is reliving them. The gist of the novel is the development of Augie's mind and character, as he passes from childhood through varied experience, and usually through a spiritual crisis into maturity and the recognition of his identity and role in the society

By writing a picaresque novel, Bellow could a large number of episodes without worrying about thematic problems. Augie rejects the middle class but he feels no compulsion to justify himself; he is too busy living to worry about the 'original nature'. Being the hero of an episodic novel he (Augie) needs little internal character development. At some places bidding good bye to the psychological and thematic problems of the self, Bellow celebrates the world of colour and vitality which has different scenes and characters. All of them have their own importance and meaning. Just as Augie accepts all mixes poolroom slangs with erudite quotations.

According to Lewis, Augie March, “the protagonist in Bellow's novel, is similar to the nineteenth century Adams evident in Copper, Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman, because Augie is as youthful, innocent, optimistic and adventurous as are the earlier Adams”. But Augie is a modern American Adam whose personality has been shaped by twentieth century confrontation with his Eden. Despite the squalor of his surroundings and the vexation of the city, Augie remains unbeaten in life and optimistic in his disillusionment with the reality

Bellow's novel *Seize the Day* which depicts the death throes of a drowning man, is a short novel set in New York over a very short span, a period of twenty four hours-one sized day. In this book the paradox of protagonist's confrontation with the world are brought forward by a skilful combination of third person narrator and the reflector. The voices of the third person narrator and the reflector are not easy to

distinguish, but Bellow tries to keep the difference between the two voices to maintain the distance between Tommy's private and public life. Tommy soliloquies in all the remote privacy of his consciousness, takes the narrative to pre-speech levels of thought. Thus the novel deals with the consciousness of Tommy alone. The focus shifts outward only when it is required for the central situation. Tommy Wilhelm's actions, his environment, and reactions of the other characters are reported by the third narrator. The reflector is in a troubled psychic state, and is troubled by his existence he confronts various person and himself. And it is a long way before he succeeds.

Tommy Wilhelm wants to live for, and in the present unthreatened by past or future- but learns that this is impossible in the creed of a materialistic American. His days become the days of suffering and atonement. Wilhelm in his trouble-torn mind thinks how he could make comfortable moneyed people of New York understand his plight. Tommy Wilhelm confronts complete submergence of self in his failure. He brings his day by plunging downward in hotel elevator to a city sunk metaphorically beneath the sea. Wilhelm tries to keep the waters of the earth from rolling over him. He looks like a man about to drown. The ambiguity of the Wilhelm's drowning which is both a failure and a triumph is the central problem of *Seize the Day*.

Examining the book closely we find some possible alternatives. If Tommy had not made those choices he might have had a secure identity and earned much more money. He might have been a success. But what he chooses is, it was only due to his adverse screen test that his sophomore conviction confronted this consequence. His rejection of joining a medical college is also based on a conviction, as he says that he is not mentally fit for the job. He says: "I might make a mistake and hurt someone or even kill a patient." (SD 27) he remains from his salesman's job against the wishes of his father and wife to assert his dignity. Before investing \$ 700 Tommy suspected, hesitated, thought but invested, as he says: "Ten such decisions made up the history of his life" (SD 27).

Tommy's own introspection suggests that he is simply an indecisive and confused man. The relationally or irrationally is always determined in the context of certain goals. So the rationalists can argue that Tommy's choices are wrong for the goal he ought to have. Rationalists can say they were wrong for Tommy when he made them or are wrong for him now. And even rational choices do not guarantee predictable results. In any case, in the identical view there are no rational ground choices. Although in so many of one's choice one is governed by certain criterion, the criteria one applies are themselves chosen. Though Tommy is not a successful man, he would have not minded not being a successful man or a wealthy man if it was not the prestige that goes with it. Tommy knows about his father's attitude, that if he had money, they would have been good father and son. Although Tommy admits that he needs some money from his rich father yet his more urgent requirement is some sympathy. However, Tommy reaches the breaking point, and even then his father Dr. Adler refuses to render him any sort of help.

One day when Wilhelm was drunk he reproached himself as 'you fool, you clunk, you wilky'. He realized that his father's opinion about him was changed the day he cut off his father's name. And how he realizes that it was his bid for liberty. He says, "Alder in his mind the title of the species, Tommy, the freedom of the person. But Wilky was in his inescapable self" (SD 29) Failure makes Wilhelm superstitious when he explores that Tommy had brought his genuine success off, cheating Wilky of his birthright. There is no doubt that Wilhelm is weak and often masochistic but there is even less doubt that his final grief is a triumph of greater depth than purgation of self-knowledge.

From the identifiable point of view, life involves an honest encounter with facts of one's situation to the extent it is possible. In this perspective Tommy is shrewd enough; but also introspect the truth about his own being. In the identifiable attitude there is no other reality expect the subjective one. So it involves doubt, uncertainty, anguish and fear before the choice is made. From the identifiable point of view, success is not guarantee. It is a continuous quest. Failure in finding one's true self is part of existence. Failure of the pretender self to smother the real self is not so striking. What is more striking is Tommy's attitude in taking

a new self. By changing his mane he thought he could change his identity.

In identical concepts like meaninglessness, alienation and subjectivity are considered a defence mechanism to escape from the social wholes, from the network of the relationships in which individual is embedded. Like other Bellow's heroes Joseph, Asa, Augie, Herzog, Humboldt, Tommy Wilhelm is also separated from society. He sees a cold, alien, disinterested world which reflects his own isolation and alienation. In fact, Tommy is his own obstacle. What he believes to be his confrontations are not his real confrontations, and this is the paradox of his confrontations. He allows Margaret to place a financial burden on him, but he knows that no court would have awarded her the amount he has paid. He himself chooses to live in a hotel made for retired persons. He chooses out of pride to leave the company where he was employed and does not look for another job. Throughout his life he takes wrong decisions. He continuously provokes his attitude towards his drug addiction, he waits until his father arrives to swallow a phenaphen, just to annoy him, he indulges in the bad habits which disgust his father, the old physician.

Tommy is a self-persecuted individual. He acts like a little boy and uses Tamkin as a substitute father who betrays him, which is a symbolic liking for his own father, a punishment which is a form of love. This false world represented by his father and by the investment office, is his burden. His need is to live in the here-and-now, the world that is to be not someone else's ideal image but simply human.

At the end he suspends his will, forgoes the world and is flooded with the sense of transcendence that can set him free. His drowning is the culmination of his masochism. Like other Bellowian heroes, Wilhelm is also a victim of society. His final release may be supposed to be his restoration, his atonement, his discovery of not only his own mortality but also of its potential. Tommy weeps for the body of another person, unknown to him as it symbolises his own insufficient and debased body. Being part of the compromised confrontation that life makes with lifelessness, his devotion of the whole day to the dead acquires a meaning and a sense.

In *The Adventures of Augie March* and *Seize the Day* it may be noted that Bellow shows that notwithstanding one's authentic identity, an individual finds himself in an agonizing situation which demands that he should choose and fully bear the dreadful responsibility of his choices. Bellow depicted them in a painful human situation a situation in which accomplishment is a mere illusion and happiness an evasion which permits only value the value of recognizing and bearing the nothingness of human identity. In fact, the human dignity rests on the heroic confrontation of the challenging cosmic forces.

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A. K. RAMANUJAN'S LIFE AND WORKS

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Attipate Krishnaswami Ramanujan (1929-1993) is a well-known Indian poet and scholar-critic of Indian literatures. Ramanujan was a bilingual writer. He was a poet, scholar, philologist, folklorist, translator and playwright. He did academic work in English, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu and Samskrit. Ramanujan published works on both classical and modern variants of this literature and argued strongly for giving local, non-standard dialects their due. Though he wrote widely and in a number of genres, his poems are remembered as enigmatic works of startling originality, sophistication and moving artistry. For all this achievement Ramanujan was awarded the Padmashree by the Govt of India.

Ramanujan was born as a Brahmin Iyengar in Mysore city on 16 March 1929. His father Attipat Asuri Krishnaswami was an astronomer and professor of mathematics at Mysore University. The father influenced his son for the pursuits in arts, language and literature. Ramanujan's mother was an affectionate woman. It is said Ramanujan had a brother A.K. Srinivasan who was also a writer besides being a mathematician. Later Ramanujan married a Syrian Christian woman and divorced her.

Ramanujan was educated at Marimallappa's (Bhanumaiah's) High School, Mysore and graduated from Maharaja College, Mysore. He majored in English and had his BA and MA in English. Ramanujan became a Fellow of the erstwhile Deccan College in Pune, Maharashtra (1958-59) where he did a Diploma in Linguistics. Then he got the Fulbright Scholarship at Indiana University from 1959 to 1962 for a Ph. D. Ramanujan then served for a brief spell in Lingaraj College, Belgaum, then in Quilon, Kerala and finally at Maharaja Sayajirao University in Baroda (Gujarat) for eight years. He had a multidisciplinary attitude and taught in several departments. Ramanujan felt the need of going abroad, and his Fulbright experience encouraged him. He taught at other US universities as well, including Harvard University, University of Wisconsin, University of Michigan, University of California at Berkeley, and Carleton College. At the University of Chicago, Ramanujan was instrumental in shaping the South Asian Studies program. He worked in the departments of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, Linguistics, and with the Committee on Social Thought. Ramanujan specialized for 30 years in Dravidian languages and Linguistics.

The Dravidian is a race and family of languages. The five important Dravidian languages are Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, Malayam and Tulu. The Dravidian languages are independent though they are heavily influenced by Samskrit, the major Indo-European language. Of all, Tamil happens to be the most ancient. The Dravidian languages are rich in art, literature, culture and sciences. A.K. Ramanujan worked in all the important Dravidian languages, barring Malayalam and Tulu. In fact, he has written poetry in Kannada. He was immersed in the linguistics of these languages; and focused on dialectal studies.

Ramanujan was awarded several fellowships (including the Fulbright). He was given the MacArthur Prize Fellowship (Shulman) in 1994. He was appointed as the William Colvin Professor in the Department of South Asian Languages and Civilization at Chicago. He was a member of the Committee on Social Thought at the University there itself. The Government of India awarded Ramanujan with Padmashri, the fourth-highest civilian award of the country in 1976 for his phenomenal contribution to India and world literature. Ramanujan was once elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Now the Chicago University honors Asian scholars with A.K. Ramanujan Book Prize for

Translation and it is awarded from The South Asia Council of the Association for Asian Studies. Ramanujan passed away on 13th July 1993 in Chicago, Illinois.

Ramanujan was essentially a poet. His father's influence in his fashioning as a writer can be remembered. The age-old bhakti traditions of South India might have affected him affirmatively. What more as a Brahmin he dedicated to scholarship. Mysore that nurtured him, and later his education in Pune and abroad; and his service at Belgaum, Quilon, Baroda and at various places in the USA might have, naturally, motivated him for writing poetry. Of course, as a linguistics professional it is more so. Ramanujan began writing poetry in the 1960s. He established as an iconic figure for the Indian literary community for a long time. The following are his poetry collections: *The Striders* (1966), *Relations: Poems* (1972), *Selected Poems* (1976), *Second Sight* (1986), *The Black Hen* (1995), *The Unpublished Poems and Prose* (2005), and *The Collected Poems* (1995). The book *The Collected Poems of A.K. Ramanujan* (1995) received a Sahitya Academy Award in 1999 posthumously.

The Striders (1966): This book of poems was published by Oxford University Press in 1966. It had a wide recognition as a Poetry Book Society Recommendation. The important poems of the book are 'The Striders', as a title poem, 'Snakes,' 'Bearded Fish,' 'A River,' 'A Poem of Particulars', and 'An Image for Politics.' Ramanujan has an eye for the particulars and niceties of people and things. *The Striders* a kind of New England (USA) waterbugs are described as follows:

Thin-stemmed, bubble-eyed waterbugs
see them perch/on dry capillary legs/
weightless/on the ripple skin/of a stream (Striders 38).

The waterbug sits on land as in water with a perfect ease that comes native to its genius and stands in comparison with the supernatural powers of prophets 'walking on water.' In the image of this amphibian is united the insect with the human and the divine worlds. The poem 'The Striders' bears a comparison with W.B. Yeats's 'The Long-legged Fly.' Ramanujan's poem 'Snakes' can have a comparison with D.H. Lawrence's poem 'Snake.' The creature's suppleness and fluidity of movement is poetic in its feeling and evocation. A.K. Mehrotra observes:

Like tricky Chinese boxes, A. K. Ramanujan's poems are difficult to open but of exquisite workmanship. They are objects to hold between fingers as much as they are printed lines to read with the eyes. One senses this from even the way they appear on the page, the left-hand margin carefully jagged, and the overall design often original to the poem. In this he resembles that other inventor of stanzas, George Herbert, who, it is worth remembering especially here, wrote 'My thoughts are all a case of knives.' (Mehrotra 34).

M.K. Naik thinks, in poetic technique, of all his contemporaries, Ramanujan appears to have the sure touch, for he never lapses into the romantic cliché. His unflinching sense of rhythm gives a fitting answer to those who hold that complete inwardness with language is possible only to a poet writing in his mother tongue. Though he writes in open forms, his poetry is tightly constructed. He can surprise us with a startlingly apt adjective as in 'the *naked* parting of her hair' or blend image and word music perfectly as when he describes snakes as 'writing a sibilant alphabet of panic/On my floor.'

Relations: Poems (1972): The Oxford University Press published this book which is mature in both themes and poetic techniques, compared to the earlier one. Critics think that *Relations* recalls relations or relationship established between India and abroad (which is also between the east and the west). These poems, mostly written abroad, recall associations with India, and its past. The poetic pieces convey Ramanujan's sense of history. The consciousness of the tragedy of India, and of being an Indian the ancient chaos of a country - comes through clearly in poems like 'Compensations' and 'The Last of the Princes.'

Second Sight (1986): Ramanujan's third collection, *Second Sight*, is more like a free-ranging commentary on a private book. The poems, for this reason, may lack the immediacy of lyrics, and we

cannot always put our finger on the emotion that triggered them off. As in the example from 'Entries from a Catalogue of Fears', unhurried tone and deliberate manner are everything here, almost everything:

Composed as I am, like others,
of elements on certain well-known lists, father's seed and mother's egg
gathering earth, air, fire, mostly
water, into a mulberry mass,
moulding calcium,
carbon, even gold, magnesium and such,
into a chattering
self tangled in love and work ...

(Elements of Composition' 65)

Ramanujan's poem 'Highway Stripper' reads very lyrical. There is a mystical touch. In 'Highway Stripper', the 'chattering self disappears from our field of vision altogether. We feel quite naked without clothes, but without disguises even more so. The former condition does not rob us of our identity as completely as the latter does. In the event, the stripper throws away both, which still leaves him at the wheel of his 'once-blue Mustang', 'rushing forever / towards a perfect / coupling / with naked nothing'.

Ramanujan's poetry is known for its thematic and formal engagement with modernist transnationalism. Issues such as tradition, modernity, diaspora, hybridity and multiculturalism figure in his works of poetry. Ramanujan has written poetry in Kannada. The collections are as follows: Hokkulalli Huvilla (No Lotus in the Navel), 1969 and Mattu Itara Padyagalu (And other Poems), 1977. Then A. K. Ramanujan is one of the finest translators India has ever seen. Ramanujan translated Tamil writings into English. He translated Kannada works into English too. What more his translation of Telugu courtesan songs are noteworthy. The following is the list of books he translated. These are translations and literary studies: *The Interior Landscape: Love Poems from a Classical Tamil Anthology*, 1967; *Speaking of Siva*, 1973; *The Literatures of India*. Edited with Edwin Gerow. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974; *Samskara*. (translation of U R Ananthamurthy's novel) Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1976; *Hymns for the Drowning*, 1981; *Poems of Love and War*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1985; *Folktales from India, Oral Tales from Twenty Indian Languages*, 1991; "Is There an Indian Way of Thinking?" in *India Through Hindu Categories*, edited by McKim Marriot, 1990; *When God Is a Customer: Telugu Courtesan Songs by Ksetrayya and Others* (with Velcheru Narayana Rao and David Shulman), 1994; *A Flowering Tree and Other Oral Tales from India*, 1997. Ramanujan's work translated includes *Poems and a Novella: Translated From Kannada*, 2006, A. K. Ramanujan (Author), Tonse N. K. Raju (Translator), Shouri Daniels-Ramanujan (Translator).

This book contains a translation of Ramanujan's Kannada novella *Mattobbana Atma Charitre* (Someone Else's Autobiography) and the poetry collections *Okkulalli Hoovilla* (No Flower in the Lotus), *Mattu Itara Kategalu* and *Kuntobille* (Hopscotch).

In his 2013 essay on Ramanujan in *Caravan* magazine ("Reading The Small Print"), Nakul Krishna goes to great lengths to establish Ramanujan as a literary modernist, through his poetry as well as translations. A.K. Ramanujan is a fine folklorist. He was like the German Grim brothers or more like Hans Christian Anderson. As an India with a background rich in orature, Ramanujan loved to work in folklore in various capacities. He was a collector of folk songs and tales, and riddles.

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**A. K. RAMANUJAN'S *SECOND SIGHT* AND *BLACK HEN POETRY*
COLLECTIONS**

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*A. K. Ramanujan is a celebrated Indian English poet. His last two poetry collection *The Striders* and *Relations* speak of his predilection about India and his past. There is a Tamil and Indian nationalist not far below the surface and, as with many patriots/nationalists, the perspective has been created by going outside the culture and looking at it from abroad. This is a kind of hawk-like vision as we notice it in Thomas Hardy's Wessex poems. Ramanujan writes,*

My poem, too, talks about some Indian attitudes to the Indian past, with which I was somewhat despondently preoccupied at the time. I had felt that Sanskrit itself and all that it represented had become an absence, at best a crippling and not an enabling presence, that the future needed a new past. Many things have changed since then and so have I. But the mood, the relation to what the God Murugan means, is a real one, and I hope it speaks not only for me. (Ramanujan qt Rama Nair 12).

Ramanujan published *Relations* in 1971 and his next book *Second Sight* appeared in 1986. This book is different from the earlier poems in its apparent increasing frenzy and Buddhist acceptance of change as the only continuity. It is seen in its increased openness about sexual desire and the tensions of his marriage. Bruce King remarks:

While the poems in *Second Sight* are among Ramanujan's best, they seldom offer the easier pleasures of some of the earlier poems; they tend towards complexity, violence, and obscurities (King 93).

The title of his third volume of English-language poems comes from the last poem in the book. 'Second Sight' is one of Ramanujan's near sonnets. It consists of thirteen lines, six stanzas each of two lines, and a final line consisting only of one word, 'sight'. Ramanujan recalls *Pensees*, Article III, fragment 199, where Pascal imagines the condition of mankind as that of condemned individuals chained together without any hope.

The modernist English influences of Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot helped Ramanujan to avoid the abstractions of the post-Independence Indian English verse. In *Second Sight* he successfully fuses the forms and tropes derived from poets like William Carlos Williams, Wallace Stevens, and W.B. Yeats with the traditions of ancient Tamil and medieval Kannada poetry. Ramanujan avoids the 'monism' of the pan-Indian Sanskritic Great Tradition since he believes that "cultural traditions in India are indissolubly plural and often conflicting. As he thinks India does not have one past, but many pasts.

Here the speaker fumbles in the dark until he can 'strike a light' to regain his 'first, and only, / sight'. The dark is the existential world he lives in our blindness in regard to the divine, heaven, or spiritual purpose. We are the accursed.

The poems are bleaker in tone, rather, compared to the poems in the earlier collections. For example, one of the poems 'On the Death of a Poem' reads like a single sentence cropped into a poem as in the case of William Carlos Williams' poems:

Images consult
one

another,
 a conscience-
 stricken
 jury,
 and come
 slowly
 to a sentence (*Second Sight, CP 142*).

The poem looks like a miniature painting; or like a lyrical piece. Ramanujan's poetry speaks of continuity: from the past to the present; from India to America and from his marriage with a Syrian Christian Malayalam woman of Quolon (where he served once) to the breaking away of it in Chicago. There is a continuous flux of people, relations and things. Life is seen as a rushing, changing flow as in Virginia Woolf's *Waves*.

The poems of *Second Sight* sound like a whole. To begin with the poem 'Elements of Composition' sounds like a creation hymn. Then it moves from the physical to the spiritual plane,

composed as I am, like others,
 of elements on certain well-known lists,
 father's seed and mother's egg
 gathering earth, air, fire, mostly
 water, into a mulberry mass,
 moulding calcium,
 carbon, even gold, magnesium and such,
 into a chattering self-tangled
 in love and work,
 scary dreams, capable of eyes that can see,
 only by moving constantly,
 the constancy of things
 Like Stonehenge or cherry trees (*Second Sight, CP 121*).

The paradoxical 'like Stonehenge or cherry trees' concludes the first section, a unit which consists of four two-and-a-half-line stanzas. The *Taittiriya Upanishad* (3.10.5) says: 'I am that food which eats the eater of food.' Ramanujan has translated this as 'Food Chain Sanskrit Style'.

The next poem is 'Ecology' ironically. The poem speaks of life as if a flowing river as found in ancient philosophy. 'No Amnesiac King' examines our nostalgia for an idealized world in terms of the stream image. The title refers to *Shakuntala*, a classical Sanskrit play by Kalidasa, in which a king recovers the memory of his former lover when he finds a lost signet ring in the belly of a fish.

The poems of this volume run as if in a series 'Elements of Composition' to 'Second, Sight' and include such poems as 'Questions,' 'Death and the Good Citizen,' 'The Watchers,' 'Snakes and Ladders,' 'Pleasure,' 'The Difference,' 'Moulting,' 'Connect,' 'Looking and Finding,' 'Looking for the Center,' 'Chicago Zen' and 'Waterfalls in a Bank'.

These poems treat of the relationship of past to present, of what one is made, of death, and, especially, of the two sides of the self, the active and the self-observant, or the doer and the done. Ramanujan tends to pair poems (as in 'Love Poem for a Wife' 1 and 2) and there are several pairs and two-part poems in *Second Sight*. Besides 'A Poor Man's Riches' 1 and 2, 'In the Zoo' is here paired with the new 'Zoo Gardens Revisited'. There are two 'Looking' poems.

Ramanujan's last collection is called *The Black Hen* (1995). The title poem, 'The Black Hen', in its narrative is a statement and example of how a work of art is discovered, made, and found to speak inner anguish including fears of death. 'The Black Hen' might be taken as an example of how Ramanujan's vision of life evolved from poem to poem, book to book, leading to *The Black Hen*. These poems are collected and published after Ramanujan's death in 1993. Molly Daniels Ramanujan in "A Note on The Black Hen and After" feels that these poems, though they could be read fast, need to be read twice as they gain accumulated effect. She writes,

Ever the Keatsian chameleon, in the final sixth of his life Ramanujan could forge contraries to recreate a world in which he could, like his salamanders, find birth in death and death in birth. He prayed for double vision and found it in the interconnectedness of vegetable and mineral, man and animal. Above all, he found life-in-art and art-in-life (Molly Daniels Ramanujan, *CP* 278).

Ramanujan died in 1993. He had in 1976, published *Selected Poems*. He left 148 finished (but not arranged) poems at the time of his death. His wife and friends collected them into two parts one *The Black Hen* (of the coherent pieces) and the other *Uncollected Poems*, though the division is said to have been improper. Yet all these poem do appear in *The Collected Poems* (1995) and *The Oxford India Ramanujan*.

The last poems, however, should not be left to scholars. Every decade Ramanujan consciously tried to renew himself with further interests and each of his volumes of poetry has different characteristics while in themes and references alluding to previous poems.

The Black Hen is a continuation of Ramanujan's earlier poetic output with vigour and relish. It is like the continuation of creation, and destruction is a part of it.

Although many of the individual poems at first appear simple, *The Black Hen* seems to have been intended as Ramanujan's *Divine Comedy*, a grand encompassing vision of life ranging from microbe to poems based on Indian myths and legends. It is a kind of a grand finale. Taken as a totality his English-language poems form an evolving, loosely linked body of work, of which *The Black Hen* was meant as a conclusion.

These poems are filled with the world that is too much with us as Wordsworth feels in a sonnet. There the speaker appears to be isolated, and alone. For example, 'Death in Search of a Comfortable' speaks of crisis. The elephants, however, die alone and those left behind by their death are not consoled. The poem reads thus:

Grandmother's version
of how scorpions die
to give birth
may not be true
but sounds right.
in turn, and become feasts
of fodder for working
ants, humus for elephant
grasses that become elephants
that leave their herds
to die grand lonely deaths.
But when did elephants
console the living
left behind by a death? (*Black Hen*, *CP* 273).

Although many of Ramanujan's earlier poems spoke of the problems of love and marriage, the late work assumes lack of continued peace and happiness. Many poems mock the conventions of lover's

poetry.

Six of *The Black Hen* poems are titled 'Love' and numbered 1 to 6. *Uncollected Poems* includes a 'Love 10', and both volumes include many other poems about sex and love. 'On Julia' parodies those well-known 17th-century cavalier lyrics so often addressed to a Julia. Here the lyric begins with the conventional listing of the woman's beautiful features which are compared to nature. 'Foundlings in the Yukon' is set in Alaska but it could be any place. It tells of six newly discovered seeds from 'Pleistocene times' which are planted 'ten thousand / years after their time' and rapidly take root and sprout, unlike a modern 'lupine' which would take years to flower.

The poem reads thus of its primeval mystery:

In the Yukon the other day
miners found the skeleton
of a lemming
curled around some seeds
in a burrow:

sealed off by a landslide in Pleistocene times.

Other *Black Hen* poems will refer to time, place, seeds, trees, memory, age, and allude to art and human mystery. The notion that the natural world has buried seeds or other kinds of hidden life awaiting rebirth is felt. It is an untimely irruption into the present, and is related to how memory and the mind have within them both fears and poetry awaiting the light of day.

The African poet-novelist Gabriel Okara has written a novel called *Voice*, where 'it' seems to mean everything. Likewise, several poems in the volume, including 'Salamanders', 'Three Dreams', 'It', and 'From Where?', allude to the 'it' of 'The Black Hen'. Salamanders are like lizards, snakes, chameleons, one of those creatures which Ramanujan often uses to represent the unexpected, usually the past, being hidden in reality which is waiting and will sometime emerge.

The Black Hen shows that while Ramanujan's themes remained similar throughout his life there was, however, a significant shift in his focus from the particulars asserted in *The Striders* to the generalizations of the last poems. These poems are philosophical, indeed.

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LANGUAGE THROUGH LITERATURE: AN EFFECTIVE METHOD FOR THE NEW LEARNERS OF ENGLISH

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Abstract: *There is strong relationship between literature and language. This bond is a reciprocal one: language is promoted through the works of literature and literature is enriched by using the words and their construction that exist in the structure of a language. The history of English literature and language clearly shows how theirs this reciprocal relationship has lent us a great variety of works. We enjoy reading these works of English literature, and in a way learn a lot how and in what way English language is used to express the given idea. Since English is a foreign language for us, it poses some difficulties in learning it. The rules and regulations are there to learn it thoroughly, but this method may not create that entire effect wherein the words of language achieve their highest value in the true sense of the term. The process of language learning in its normal course may prove itself to be a mechanical one, so we need to make it somewhat more interesting. The students, especially from the rural areas of our Indian sub-continent, are very poor regarding the knowledge of English language. English is a hard nut to crack for them. English, being the need of today, is essential for them. Literature can be a better tool in language learning since it can create their interest in it. And in another way will make them true human beings as, while reading the works of great authors, they experience the human values on their own. My attempt, in this paper, is to reveal how much beneficial this blend of literature and language can be for a new learner.*

Key Words: *Literature, Language, Learning, Relation, Comparison, Humanism.*

To learn a foreign language is always a difficult task. By the word 'learning' I mean 'a complete knowledge' regarding reading, writing, listening and speaking. And above them all is the question 'where to start from?' It is of great importance to choose the right beginning. And so is the case with learning English language in India. Our universities are running various programmes to simplify the process of learning English language. No doubt, these programmes are helpful in one way or the other. The students start learning with much enthusiasm, but gradually, not all, but many of them suffer the boredom in learning mechanically. This results in acquiring a little knowledge which, according to Alexander Pope, is a very "dangerous thing." So this is our responsibility to wipe out this boredom and apply something interesting in language learning. Literature can be that interesting option for us since it is not just about words. It is all about 'expression' in the best possible way incorporating the emotion, tone, time, and place along with culture.

The first step in this direction should be in the selection of literary texts which can meet the demand as per the need. These literary texts should have both high moral values and an aesthetic appeal. The blend of these two will create a healthy interest into them which, in turn, enables the students to learn English language easily and to develop humanistic values as well.

There are various genres in English literature like: drama, poetry, novel, short story, and essay. Each has its own way to express the theme with which they deal. They project various situations which have clear connotations with real life. It is a unanimous truth that literature is all about life. So, when students experience life through them, they will feel a kind of affinity with them. They will mark how the particular situation is being projected using what type of words (vocabulary); what type of tone (pronunciation); and what type of sentence construction (grammar). Literature uses language dexterously.

However it will not be possible to fathom out each jewel that lies lurking into the deep and vast oceanic territory of literature. Let us deal with some of the remarkable extracts from drama and poetry for the purpose.

Drama is one of the oldest genres in English literature beginning with Mystery, Miracle and Morality Plays. The action in drama develops through dialogue delivery. The students should notice how they give an outlet to their own thoughts in the particular situation. Attention should be given to the pronunciation of the words and to the tone of sentence as a whole. If one does not listen carefully, his own pronunciation will falter. This problem of pronunciation is raised by Dr. Higgins in Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* (1916) when, listening what Eliza speaks, he says: "Listen to this, Pickering this is what we pay for as elementary education this unfortunate animal has been locked up for nine years to speak and read the language . . . and the result is Ahyee, BƏ yee, CƏ yee, DƏ yee." (41)

As a classroom activity we can choose students to play the role of characters after giving them an imitation reading of the dialogues. We should also instruct them about the use of punctuation marks in the text and the necessary pause they demand, so that they can apply it in their reading and writing skill. Let us discuss an extract from *All My Sons* (1947) where the character Chris uses words as weapons to wake the human inside us up. This is superb for its rhetorical language and the use of pause. Even the silence, where we pause, speaks a lot. Talking about his dead fiends in army, he says:

It takes a little time to toss that off. Because they weren't just men. For instance, one time it'd been raining several days and this kid came to me, and gave me his last pair of dry socks. Put them in my pocket. That's only a little things but . . . that's the kind of guys I had. They didn't die; they killed themselves for each other. I mean that exactly; a little more selfish and they'd've been here today. And I got an idea watching them go down. Everything was being destroyed, see, but it seemed to me that one new thing was made. A kind of responsibility. Man for man. You understand me? . . . I felt wrong to be alive, to open the bank-book, to drive the new car, to see the refrigerator. I mean you can take those things out of a war, but when you drive that car you've got to know that it came out of the love a man can have for a man, you've got to be a little better because of that. Otherwise what you have is really loot, and there's blood on it. (36-37)

The above given passage is very rich both in its form and content. From the point of view of language we can discuss: the use of phrasal verb 'toss off' and its meaning; the correct use of tense throughout; the use of passive voice in sentences like 'Everything was being destroyed' and 'one new thing was made' in order to show the object of emphasis; the use of adjectives and adverbs; the use of unfulfilled condition in 'a little more selfish and they'd've been here'; use of present participle in 'watching them go down'; use of conjunctions like and, but, otherwise, and because; use of comparative degree in the word 'better'; use of tone to make the affirmative sentence an interrogative one as in 'You understand me?'; the use of punctuation marks in the whole passage; and above all how the character succeeds in developing his argument step by step and leading towards a thought provoking conclusion.

Poetry is the rhythmic representation of the language in use. Its rhythm has such a mesmerizing effect that the listener's soul remain nothing but captive to it. We can remember a piece of verse easily than that of a prose. The words in poetry mean much more than what they say. The use of various figures of speech enriches the language of poetry. So, poems can play a strong role in language learning. By imbibing the new coinage words and figures of speech we can render an epigrammatic quality to our language. Here are some lines from Thomas Gray's "Elegy Written in Country Churchyard" (1750):

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the Poor. (89)

.....
 The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
 And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
 Awaits alike th' inevitable hour:
 The paths of glory lead but to the grave. (89)

.....
 Can storied urn or animated bust
 Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
 Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
 Or Flattery sooth the dull cold ear of Death? (91)

The universal appeal of these lines has profound meaning. Each word leaves an unforgettable experience. The same words in their normal use cannot create such a lofty impression. The use of 'personification' in 'Ambition,' 'Grandeur,' 'Honour,' 'Flattery,' and 'Death' is remarkable in the first stanza. What Gray suggests us, in the second stanza, is the ultimate truth. And the third stanza uses few powerful rhetorical questions to point out what is permanent in this world.

A new learner of English language will come in contact with the figurative language, its use and the meaning it suggests; perfect words for the things; and what a rhetorical question is along with its purpose. With each new line, certainly, he will learn something new. Learning through poetry is like getting maximum output with least efforts because, on the one hand, the new coinage words and sublime expressions enrich our vocabulary and language respectively, whereas on the other, our interest makes it easier to memorize them. Who can forget P.B. Shelley when, in his "Ode to Skylark" (1820), he says:

We look before and after,
 And Pine for what is not:
 Our sincerest laughter
 With some pain is fraught:
 Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought. (136)

Thought is given here. The poet has used his own words to express that. But the thing is these four or five lines mean much more. Each individual has his own thinking and language. Now, we can ask our students to explain what they understood by these lines. Obviously, while doing that, they will need words matching with their thinking. And if they do not find, they will look them up in a dictionary. Their curiosity will lead them to new vocabulary. The meaning of new words found in this way can be remembered through their context. There will be little chance to forget them. In this way other forms of literature like novels, short stories and essays can be used for the purpose of language learning.

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STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF ENGINEERING STUDENTS

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Abstract:

Being able to communicate effectively is the most important of all life skills. Communication is simply the act of transferring information from one place to another, whether this be vocally, written, visually or non-verbally. How well this information can be transmitted and received is a measure of how good our communication skills are. Developing communication skills can help all aspects of a person life, from professional life to social gatherings and everything in between. The ability to communicate information accurately, clearly and as intended, is a vital life skill and something that should not be overlooked.

Communication is a crucial part of second language learning and teaching. In the professional world, communication matters to the core and oral communication at the work place is vital to the success of any organization. With proper communication, a bonding and trust builds amongst the employees which promote excellent working conditions. 21st century has been adjudged as an era of communication; innovative technologies have revolutionized the business world. In the 'instant world' that epitomizes dynamism the way we convey our thoughts plays a major role in building relationships. Hence there is a need to refine our oral communication.

Keywords: *Second language acquisition, language skills, strategies for developing oral communication skills.*

Introduction

All of us use communication skills when we use them at home with family, at school or college with our teachers and classmates, in the work place with our superiors and colleagues, on computers when we answer emails, and on the telephone when we answer to calls. In fact, communication is lifeblood of social as well as business world. Communication means interacting with others to promote understanding; to achieve a result oriented goal; to pass information to another person so that they can take action. It can involve listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Importance of Communication Skills in Engineers' life

Importance of communication skills starts from their college days which are further carried out in interviews, jobs and their day to day life. Communication skills are very important in Engineers day to day life. For an engineer communication skill is just like oxygen without which he can't survive. As "the engineers design the future" communication is much needed them for their survival.

Importance of Oral Communication Skills

Oral communication skill is an asset for anyone more so a graduate. A graduate with good oral presentation skills has a better chance in career advancement and promotion. According to the Ontario Curriculum for Language, "Oral Communication skills are fundamental to the development of literacy and essential for thinking and learning. Through talk, students not only communicate information but also explore and come to understand ideas and concepts; identify and solve problems; organize their experience and knowledge; and express and clarify their thoughts, feelings, and opinions. Listening and

speaking skills are also essential for social interaction at home, at college, and in the community.”

How to teach oral communication skills

In recent years a debate has developed over which approaches to structuring, planning and implementing lessons are more effective. Many linguistics and ESL teachers agree that students learn to speak in the second language by "interacting". Communicative language learning (CLT) and Task-based language teaching (TBLT) are best for this aim.

Communicative language learning (CLL) in oral communication

The communicative approach is based on the idea that learning language successfully comes through having to communicate real meaning. When learners are involved in real communication, their natural strategies for language acquisition will be at work, and this will allow them to learn how to use the language. Classroom activities guided by the communicative approach are characterized by trying to produce meaningful and real communication, at all levels. As a result there may be more emphasis on skills than systems, lessons are more learner-centric, and there will be the use of authentic materials.

Task-based language learning (TBLL) in Oral Communication

Task - based language learning offers an alternative for language teachers. In a task-based lesson the teacher doesn't pre-determine what language will be studied, the lesson is based on the completion of a central task and the language studied is determined by what happens as the students to complete it. The lesson follows certain stages.

Pre-task

The teacher introduces the topic and gives the students clear instructions on what they will have to do at the task stage and might help the students to recall some language that may be useful for the task. The pre-task stage can also often include playing a recording of people doing the task. This gives the students a clear model of what will be expected of them. The students can take notes and spend time preparing for the task.

Task

The students complete a task in pairs or groups using the language resources that they have as the teacher monitors and offers encouragement.

Planning

Students prepare a short oral or written report to tell the class what happened during their task. They then practice what they are going to say in their groups. Meanwhile the teacher is available for the students to ask for advice to clear up any language questions they may have.

Report

Students then report back to the class orally or read the written report. The teacher chooses the order of when students will present their reports and may give the students some quick feedback on the content. At this stage the teacher may also play a recording of others doing the same task for the students to compare.

Analysis

The teacher then highlights relevant parts from the text of the recording for the students to analyse. They may ask students to notice interesting features within this text. The teacher can also highlight the language that the students used during the report phase for analysis.

Practice

Finally, the teacher selects language areas to practice based upon the needs of the students and what emerged from the task and report phases. The students then do practice activities to increase their confidence and make a note of useful language.

The advantages of TBL

Task-based learning has some clear advantages

- The students are free of language control. In all three stages they must use all their language resources

rather than just practicing one pre-selected item.

- A natural context is developed from the students' experiences with the language that is personalized and relevant to them. With PPP it is necessary to create contexts in which to present the language and sometimes they can be very unnatural.
- The students will have a much more varied exposure to language with TBL. They will be exposed to a whole range of lexical phrases, collocations and patterns as well as language forms.
- The language explored arises from the students' needs. This need dictates what will be covered in the lesson rather than a decision made by the teacher or the course book.
- It is enjoyable and motivating.

Strategies for Developing Oral Communication Skills

Talking About Self

To establish the initial rapport between the students and the teacher this activity really works. This activity is carried out in two stages. Firstly, the students are asked to write in points, about themselves which they would like to share with the other students; focusing on their personal, educational and cultural background. They are also encouraged to share their innermost feelings; or their passion, hobbies and dreams for life. In a nutshell this self-introduction is a way to open up and reach out to others. As it is done in an informal manner, students love this activity. Some tell about their role model, others may disclose their weaknesses and fears of life. Some tell about their failures, and others express frustration over parental, peer and societal pressure. While speaking many students get emotional and start crying; some get overexcited and try to address the audience as if they are real leaders. Some start shivering because of stage fear and some may even fumble. But as a teacher I see to it that every student speaks. Overall it, it turns out to be a very refreshing activity and paves the way for the students towards effective oral communication.

Playing Word Game

In this activity a simple and vivid word is given to a student for example "Temple", "colour green", "mother" etc. The student has to speak out on the given word maximum for a minute without fumbling, faltering or committing any grammatical error. If another student catches an error he points it out and becomes the next speaker, but the word changes. If it is a group activity, the words can be given by the rival team; or even by the teacher. Another way I make them play is as we play "antakshri" where the next speaker has to start with one of the words which may have occurred in the last sentence. The students enjoy this activity to the hilt. In addition, it removes the fear of impromptu speaking.

Role Play

The best way to get students speak is involving them in role-play. Create various social contexts and have a variety of social roles assigned to the students. For instance, the teacher may tell the student "You are David, you go to the doctor and tell him what happened last night, and..."

Giving Reviews on Popular Movies / on a YouTube muted video

Everybody watches movies. Especially the youth is addicted to watching the popular stuff or the box office hits. If we ask them to read an interesting novel and write a review on it, not everyone would come forward willingly. But my experience has made me learn that every student loves to talk about his favourite movie, its star cast, the plot and the good or bad points of it. Again this activity can be both individual and group based. While giving the review the students learn to express their views clearly.

Simulations

Simulations are very similar to role-plays but what makes simulations different from role plays is that they are more elaborate. In simulations, students can bring items to the class to create a realistic environment. For instance, if a student is acting as a singer, she brings a microphone to sing and so on. Role plays and simulations have many advantages. First, since they are entertaining, they motivate the students. Second, as Harmer (1984) suggests, they increase the self-confidence of hesitant students, because in role play and simulation activities, they will have a different role and do not have to speak for themselves,

which means they do not have to take the same responsibility.

Information Gap

In this activity, students are supposed to be working in pairs. One student will have the information that other partner does not have and the partners will share their information. Information gap activities serve many purposes such as solving a problem or collecting information. Also, each partner plays an important role because the task cannot be completed if the partners do not provide the information the others need. These activities are effective because everybody has the opportunity to talk extensively in the target language.

Brainstorming

On a given topic, students can produce ideas in a limited time. Depending on the context, either individual or group, brainstorming is effective and learners generate ideas quickly and freely. The good characteristics of brainstorming are that the students are not criticized for their ideas so students will be open to sharing new ideas.

Storytelling

Students can briefly summarize a tale or story they heard from somebody beforehand, or they may create their own stories to tell their classmates. Story telling fosters creative thinking. It also helps students express ideas in the format of beginning, development, and ending, including the characters and setting a story has to have. Students also can tell riddles or jokes. For instance, at the very beginning of each class session, the teacher may call a few students to tell short riddles or jokes as an opening. In this way, not only will the teacher address students' speaking ability, but also get the attention of the class.

Interviews

Students can conduct interviews on selected topics with various people within or outside the class. It is a good idea that the teacher provides a rubric to students so that they know what type of questions they can ask or what path to follow, but students should prepare their own interview questions. Conducting interviews with people gives students a chance to practice their speaking ability not only in class but also outside and helps them becoming socialized. After interviews, each student can present his or her study to the class. Moreover, students can interview each other and "introduce" his or her partner to the class.

Story Completion

This is a very enjoyable, free-speaking activity involving the whole class for which students sit in a circle. For this activity, a teacher starts to tell a story, but after a few sentences he or she stops narrating. Then, each student starts to narrate from the point where the previous one stopped. Each student is supposed to add from four to ten sentences. Students can add new characters, events, descriptions and so on.

Reporting

Before coming to class, students are asked to read a newspaper or magazine story and, in class, they report what they find as the most interesting piece of news. Students can also talk about whether they have experienced during a day, if it is worth sharing to their friends, before the class commences.

Playing Cards

In this game, students should form into groups of four. Each suit will represent a topic. For instance:

- **Gold:** Earning money
- **Hearts:** Love and relationships
- **Spades:** An unforgettable memory
- **Clubs:** Best teacher

Each student in a group will choose a card. Then, each will write 4-5 questions about that topic to ask the other people in the group.

For example:

If the topic "Gold: Earning Money" is selected, here are some possible questions:

- Is money important in your life? Why?
- What is the easiest way of earning money?
- What do you think about lottery? Etc.

However, the teacher should state at the very beginning of the activity that students are not allowed to prepare yes-no questions, because by saying yes or no students get little practice in spoken language production.

Picture Narrating

This activity is based on several sequential pictures. Students are asked to tell the story taking place in the sequential pictures by paying attention to the criteria provided by the teacher as a rubric. Rubrics can include the vocabulary or structures they need to use while narrating.

Picture Describing

Another way to make use of pictures in a speaking activity is to give students just one picture and having them describe what it is in the picture. For this activity students can form groups and each group is given a different picture. Students discuss the picture with their groups, then a spokesperson for each group describes the picture to the whole class. This activity fosters the creativity and imagination of the learners as well as their public speaking skills.

Find the Difference

For this activity students can work in pairs and each couple is given two different pictures, for example, picture of boys playing football and another picture of girls playing tennis. Students in pairs discuss the similarities and/or differences in the pictures.

Suggestions for Teachers

Here are some suggestions for English language teachers while teaching oral language: Provide maximum opportunity to students to speak the target language by providing a rich environment that contains collaborative work, authentic materials and tasks, and shared knowledge.

- Reduce teacher speaking time in class and increase student speaking time. Step back and observe students.
- Try to involve each student in every speaking activity; for this aim, practice different ways to make student participate.
- Do not correct students' pronunciation very often while they are speaking. Correction should not distract student from his or her speech.
- Involve speaking activities not only in class but also outside the class.
- Move around classroom to ensure that students are on the right track and see whether they need your help while they work in groups or pairs.
- Provide the vocabulary beforehand that students need in speaking activities.
- Diagnose problems faced by students who have difficulty in expressing themselves in the target language and provide more opportunities to practice the spoken language.

Suggestions for Students

- **Listening** - Students need to listen to their teachers, other students, and oral versions of texts. This is to allow students to find meaning in texts and vocal strategies, respond appropriately when involved in a conversation, understand and interpret the content of texts or point-of-view, and demonstrate critical thought
- **Speaking** - Students need to be able to interact with others, using appropriate language, clarity, and strategies that emphasize or help express meaning and emotions
- **Reflecting** - Students need to recognize their strengths and weaknesses when preparing for and participating in communication activities, and reflect on how they can improve.

Conclusion

Teaching oral communication is a very important part of second language learning. The ability to

communicate in a second language clearly and effectively contributes to the success of the learner in school/college and success later in every phase of life. Therefore, it is essential that language teachers' pay greater attention to teaching speaking skills. Instead of leading students to pure memorization, providing a rich environment where meaningful communication takes place is desired. Various speaking activities such as those listed above can contribute a great deal to students in developing basic interactive skills necessary for life. These activities make students more involved in the learning process that makes their learning more meaningful and fun. From the above presentation we concluded that oral communication skills are the very important aspects of the engineers' life. Oral communication skills are much needed in the 21st century to survive in the day to day life for an engineer. An engineer without good oral communication is just like a computer without operating system. Along with knowledge, oral communication is the path that leads to success.

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A CRITICAL STUDY OF SHAKESPEARE'S *HAMLET*

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Abstract: *This paper aims at making a thorough critical examination of Shakespeare's Hamlet. Of all the literary writers of all ages, Shakespeare holds a predominant place. His thirty seven plays and hundred and fifty four sonnets are a realistic reflection of human life. Born in 1564 in Stratford on Avon in the country of warwick, Shakespeare, whose father John Shakespeare was a prosperous farmer and wool merchant, married Anne Hathaway who was eight years senior to him. The couple was blessed with three children. About 1585, Shakespeare left Stratford for London in search of livelihood. Very soon Shakespeare rose to be a force to reckon with among the circle of prominent dramatists in London. Many of them were University wits and looked down upon Shakespeare as an upstart crow. It is said that Shakespeare at first had only mean jobs such as holding horses at the doors of some London theaters. Next, he became an actor doing insignificant roles. Shakespeare was not impacted by the plays of his time and he tried his hand in writing plays which catapulted him to great fame.*

Key Words: *Procrastination, revenge, avenge, ghost, betrayal.*

The play chosen for this study is *Hamlet*, which can be analyzed in the light of psychological, sociological, moralistic and formalistic approaches. When literary works are examined in the light of sociological approach, divisions in society as portrayed in the work need to be examined and highlighted. There is a scope for the application of sociological approach when we shed light on characters like Rosenerantz and Guildenstern and Bernardo and Horatio. The first two characters because of their low social status are forced to execute the diktat of Claudius though they know well about their unjust and unfair nature. They end up being murdered by English king.

Similarly, the protagonist of the novel *Hamlet* can be examined in terms of psychological approach of which one theory is men are attracted towards their mothers like daughters are to fathers. The first complex is Oedipus complex and the next is called the Electra complex. Critics say that Jane Austen's female characters are influenced by Electra complex. Here in this play, Hamlet procrastinated his revenge against his mother because of his attraction towards her. Though he has got plenty of opportunities to eradicate his wicked uncle on so many occasions like his moments of prayer, he is not ready to do it. He constantly feels an internal force pulling him behind, when he thinks of taking revenge against his mother, he experiences instinct of inaction which finally causes the death of him and innocent Ophelia, his lover. Throughout his play, he is seen deferring and postponing his action till a point where he also has to lose his life. If he had acted swiftly, this pitiable plight would not have risen to him. The audience is introduced character like Bernardo, Francisco and Marcellus. These sentinels who have been posted in the castle of Elsinore talk among themselves about the supernatural figure that appeared before them on earlier nights. At this point of time, again the ghost of former king of Denmark appeared before them and when Horatio asks him about the hidden treasures the ghost, on hearing the noise of a crow leaves for its secret abode.

Then the dramatist shifts the scene from the murky castle of Elsinore to the bright Danish court. After the death of king Hamlet, his brother Claudius has been crowned as the king, and he has married the late king's wife Gertrude, prince Hamlet's mother who betrayed her husband. The prince Hamlet is persuaded by Claudius and Gertrude to give up his studies in Wittenberg and stay in Denmark. On his

arrival in Denmark, when he sees his mother being married to Claudius, he finds it a little hard to bear it and he tells his mother he is really very melancholic and gloomy about his father's demise and he does not merely look to be so. At this point, Horatio and the sentinels Bernardo and Marcellus meet Hamlet and apprise him of the ghost of his father appearing before them frequently. Hamlet wants to meet his father's apparition and learns why it roams round without peace.

In the meanwhile, Laertes, who is Ophelia's brother, advises his sister not to trust Hamlet's love. He further exhorts that Hamlet's love like other young men's love will not last long. He adds that though his love is genuine, he cannot marry her due to his prince status. Then Laertes is advised by his father not to borrow and lend money. "Neither be a borrower nor a lender be", he advises. Then, Polonius father of Laertes and Ophelia advises his daughter to abandon her love for Hamlet whose promises are, he adds, analogous to a pimp's, which will aim at getting large number of customers for a whore.

The next shift of scene takes the audience to the meeting spot of Hamlet and his father's apparition, which informs him that in consequence of his murder by Claudius with the abetment of Gertrude he is roaming as a ghost. He then expresses his intention to his son to avenge his murder. The ghost of the king instructs the prince to take revenge on his murderer Claudius who has usurped his wife and kingdom. But it seems to be merciful towards Gertrude who it opines would be penalized in the world of God.

From this point, Hamlet pretends insanity to execute his father's instruction of avenging his death. His fiery revenge feelings are burning bright in him. From here till end, he undergoes a fierce internal conflict on carrying out his plan. Many confused feelings grip him to an extent that he is unable to plunge into action. Meanwhile, Polonius words filled with wordly wisdom relating to his son Laertes are spreaded through one spy by name Reynaldo in France. The old man, supporter of Claudius believes that Laertes needs to learn things by trial and error. His experiences should teach lessons to him. To add to his happiness, his daughter Ophelia states to him about her rejection of Hamlet.

Hamlet who has been hit hard the bitter facts and hard reality pertaining to his father's assassination is further worried by the changed attitude of Ophelia who seems to be bent on ignoring him following her father's words. He, out of disappointment, says to Ophelia that she had better go to a nunnery where her virtues will be protected. Later, when the king Claudius finds the prince Hamlet in insanity he consults this matter with Polonius who, in turn, arranges a meeting of Ophelia and Hamlet wherein he thinks Hamlet's mind would change. But when Hamlet sees Ophelia reading a religious book not considering his presence much, he leaves in chagrin.

Then, Claudius decides to send Hamlet to England for the collection of taxes. The main intention of Claudius is to distract Hamlet's mind from obsessions. When the events happen like this, Hamlet plans to enact a drama, *The Murder of Gonzago* to find out the truth behind his father's death. He instructs the actors not to indulge in excess performance and to avoid gesticulation. Particularly, the clown should stick to his part. In the play within the play the player king is told by his queen she will never remarry in case anything happens to him. The king replies to her in fact circumstances only rule over us and not we. When the king goes into garden to sleep, his nephew pours poison into his ear and kills him. This is followed by the nephew wooing the queen who after with little resistance yields to him finally.

The enactment of his play hugely upsets Claudius for it is a representation of his crime. Then he decides to send Hamlet to England with malevolent intentions. Two persons, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are arranged as stooges to take Hamlet to England with a note to English king to eliminate Hamlet on his arrival there. After this, Polonius eavesdrop on the conversation between Hamlet and Gertrude. The latter is advised and warned in strong terms to mend her way. As it is pointed out earlier, Hamlet seemingly in the grip of Oedipus complex does not become brave for getting rid of his mother though he is conscious of her betrayal in the murder of his father. When Polonius reacts to the words and deeds of Hamlet during his conversation with Gertrude, Hamlet releases arrows that pierce into Polonius and causes his death. Hamlet ferociously shouts to his mother who are all behind the murder of king Hamlet are known to him and he will

avenge his father's murder.

After his departure, the audience is introduced to the bemoaning of Claudius, who offers prayers for the forgiveness of sins i.e unlawful conquering of the kingdom and the former king's wife Gertrude. But he also concludes that his prayer would not bring any result because it is insincere. His guilty consciousness persecutes him so acutely that he becomes more and more restless. Meanwhile, Gertrude meets Claudius and informs about the murder of Polonius by Hamlet and Hamlet's Knowledge of his father's murderers and his intention for revenge. Against her assurance to Hamlet not to reveal Hamlet's plan, she does betray her son also.

Claudius is also informed by Hamlet that Polonius is in supper by which means his dead body is eaten away by worms. He philosophies that the emperor and the beggar become food for worms after their death. When Hamlet is about to board the ship, he finds Norwegian Prince Fortinbras and the Poland king who are hell bent on recovering their lost glory again. The sight of them getting ready for a ferocious struggle for redeeming their kingdom and glory brings about a kind of spark and passion in Hamlet that steers him to speed up his revenge.

On board in ship bound for England with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, Hamlet's mind contemplates on designs of revenge. Unexpectedly, the ship is under attack from sea pirates with whom he fought bravely. Hamlet escapes from them and only the stooges of Claudius leave for England with Claudius' letter manipulated by Hamlet with the direction to English king to kill the letter bearers. The forged letters ensured the elimination of the two minions by the English king in a single stroke. This is an intelligent act on the part of Hamlet.

Then, Laertes who is instigated by the wicked Claudius by pointing out Hamlet responsible for his father's and sister's death is furious with Hamlet. Claudius tells him that he is not in a position to kill Hamlet because if he does so people will rise in revolt him and dethrone him and they will cause danger to his life as well. Another reason he cites is Gertrude may not like the murder of her son. They, then hatch a conspiracy whereby sword fight can be organized between Laertes and Hamlet in which poison smeared swords can be used against the latter. In addition, Claudius devises another plot for poisoning drink that can be given to Hamlet while becoming tired in the sword fight. The sword fight between Laertes and Hamlet becomes more and more vigorous and fierce. The first two rounds were won by Hamlet. To celebrate the victory, the queen consumes drink meant for Hamlet and she dies. Now Hamlet is in possession of the poisoned dagger and plants it in Laertes and he falls down dead. Finally, Hamlet forces Claudius to consume the poisoned drink that consumes his life. Having ensured the death of all the sinners who sinned, Hamlet also finally dies. The Norwegian king Fortinbras comes with his army that captured Poland and now Fortinbras becomes the king of Denmark as well.

One aspect of Shakespearean tragedies is in the end, along with the evil characters, the good also lose their lives. Poetic justice which says that the good should be praised and the evil punished is not followed in many of his plays. In *Othello*, Desdemona is killed for no fault of hers. In *king Lear*, Cordelia is got rid of in spite of her innocence and impeccable values. Here in this play also the poor Ophelia and blameless Hamlet lose their lives. Procrastination is the defect of Hamlet who critics argue might have safeguarded his life, his lover Ophelia and kingdom had he swung into action promptly.

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**EAST-WEST CONFLICT IN THE IDEOLOGY OF R. K. NARAYAN
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO HIS SELECTED NOVELS:
*THE GUIDE AND THE VENDOR OF SWEETS***

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Abstract:

R. K. Nayaran, a prolific Indo-Anglian writer in Indian English literature, the first recipient of the most prestigious award, Sahitya Akademi. He was born in India, Madras, later named as Chennai in October 1906. His works are set in the fictional South Indian town of Malgudi. He is one of the three leading figures of Indian literature in English and is compared with William Faulkner. All of his novels are marvellous and readable. His dialogue is extremely clear, obvious and transparent. By working on 'his two inches of ivory', he has presented the whole life of Indian society and achieved fame and name in Indo-Anglian Fiction. He was regional Novelist like Thomas Hardy. As he has chosen the social life society the root of culture, tradition and dynamic as well. The first three books presented by Narayan contain accepted evil practices of society. The present paper focuses on the major issue, the east-west conflict.

Keywords: *East-west conflict, Malgudi, culture, generation, religion, society, modernity.*

Introduction

R.K.Narayan is a well known literary figure and recognized as a novelist of Indo-Anglian literature. His style, manner, mode, language and ethics are highly praiseworthy. The East-West themes are prominent in his Indo-Anglian novels. One can see the conflict between religion and reason in various novels of Nayaran. It is evident from his characters who were influenced by western culture and were rational in their opinion. Others continue to be slaves of irrational or superstitious or eastern practices assigned to the orthodox Hindu religion. The author exposes these clashes through the characters of his novels. In spite of the fact that Nayaran is a supporter of modernity, he does not objurgate Hindu ethos. He has taken into consideration the middle-class society. As the common masses were not aware of western techniques still they have the desire to prosper and advance in life, Narayan beautifully depicted orients have the anxiety to achieve, adopt or follow the occidentals.

If we have a look at R.K.Narayan's novel, *The Guide*, east-west conflict is a major theme. This work is an attempt to present the conflict between tradition and modernity, east and west, orients and occident's, Nayaran's main aim is to give an artistic expression of Indian life. The novel, *The Guide* is the masterpiece of Narayan. He wrote this novel outside his native land and it brought him name and fame all over the world. It narrates the adventures of railway guide popularly known as 'Railway Raju'. The author describes different roles of Raju at a railway station as a food vendor, a tourist guide, a fornication, a dancing girl's manager, a swindler and a martyred mystic. He has described the life of Raju and later on become the owner of the railway stall. In addition to this, he was also a tourist guide. Through this profession, he came in contact with Marco, who was an archaeologist, and his wife Rosie. Meanwhile, he fell in love with Marco's wife, Rosie. Ultimately Marco came to know about their sinful act and abandons her. With the help of Raju, Rosie became a dancer. In the meantime, Raju's forgery lands him in jail. Somehow he manages to come out and abandons his past by living a new life of Sadhu. There was a famine

and drought the people expected him to take fast on the 12th day Raju fell down exhausted and it is not certain whether he is actually dead or has merely fainted.

In the beginning of the novel, there is a clash between the ideas of the father and the son. The son wants to go to a fashionable school where the western influence was evident whereas his father forced him to take admission in a Pyol school due to the threat of the western civilization. R.K.Narayan has beautifully shown the contrariness of the duo. It is clear from the text when Raju says:

I don't know on whose advice my father chooses to send me here for my education, while the fashionable Albert Mission School was quite close by. I'd have felt proud to call myself an Albert Mission boy. But I often heard my father declare, I do not want to send my boy there; it seems they try to convert our boys into Christians and all time insulting our gods.¹

It is evident from the passage which shows how westernization penetrates into the society. The change in the Protagonists character towards education clearly supports and assists the influence of the westernization on society. Whereas the father of Raju strictly adheres to the traditional or eastern way of education. From the beginning, the protagonist recognizes himself with the railways which show Raju as the post-colonial person. Symbolically railway shows the enforcement of western qualities into a conventional Malgudi. The modern culture, new ideologies, evolution in society, slowly changed the mentality of the protagonist and he accepted these changes in society. R.K.Narayan has shown how Raju goes beyond the spiritual transcendence into a materialistic world which is the trait of modernity. Raju has a modernistic approach. He does not accept an inherited pattern like bow down and touch the feet of seniors or elders. When Raju came out of jail and the villagers took him as Sadhu. Velan wanted to bow in front of Raju and touch his feet but the protagonist did not allow him to do so. As Nayaran states:

Velan Rose bowed down and tried to touch Raju's feet. Raju recoiled at the attempt. I will not permit anyone to do this God alone is entitled to such a prostration. He will destroy us if we attempt. I will not permit anyone to this. God alone is entitled to such a prostration .he will destroy us if we attempt to usurp his rights. (16)

In spite of the fact that Rosie has got an M.A. Degree, she is not modern in nature. She lacks modernistic values. She is a traditional Indian wife longs for care and affection from the husband. Marco did not like anyone to interfere in his professional activities. He expects that Rosie must be thankful for his studies. This difference in their ideology is the cause of quarrel between them. Rosie was compelled to enter an extramarital affair with Raju. Nayaran asserts that in eastern countries society is rigid one in which there is no respect for freedom of once potential, that Orientals regard women as inferior and does not provide them the chance to express themselves. This is the painful thing for the feminine community. R.K.Narayan says in my days:

From times immemorial, man assigned her a secondary place and kept here there with such subtlety and cunning that she herself began to lose all nations of her independence, individuality, her status and strength. A wife in orthodox milieu of Indian society was an ideal victim of such circumstance.²

On the other hand, Marco and Rosie were not married according to the eastern rituals but in the office of the registrar of marriage which is also the sign of westernization which has gradually enveloped the Indian culture., society and civilization. If we have a look at the name "Rosie" is westernized and its utilization in the text shows her state of ejection. This type of name was not familiar to the people living eastern countries or to the orthodox Hindu society in which the protagonist was living. Here the foreign name is the sign of Rosie's social fusion, through which Nayaran portrays the real face of Indian society.

After knowing about the extramarital affair of Rosie, Marco deserted her and went to Madras by train. She came to Raju's house for shelter. Raju's mother was shocked after seeing Rosie alone in the evening. To quote from the text:

The very first question she asked was, 'who has come with you, Rosie'? Rosie blushed,

hesitated and looked at me. I moved a couple of steps backward in order that she might see me only dimly and not in all raggedness. I replied I think she has come alone, mother. My mother was amazed. 'Girls today! How courageous you are! In our day we would not go to the street corner with an escort. And I have been to the market only once in my life, when Raju's father was alive'. (*The Guide* 141)

The difference in character, as well as the temperament, is obvious. The mother of the Raju was a traditional Hindu woman who does not permit public. She has not permission and hence afraid to go out alone, on the other hand, Rosie is a modern woman. The western influence is apparent in her attitude, behaviour and temperament. She is not at all concerned to go out alone. In this novel, one can feel a conflict between the eastern and western culture and synthesizes the two through their assimilation which has been represented by Rosie's transformation into Nalini. Whereas her change of name from Rosie to Nalini is a clue of her desire to adapt herself in that very conventional society which she challenges and abandons. "Nalini "means "the Lotus", the place where goddess Lakshmi sat. According to Mythology of Hindu, Brahma too sat on the bed of lotus petals in the state of rumination. Hence the westernized Rosie shows her state of social exclusion. The name of Nalini, Rosie symbolically searches the path through which she can enter the orthodox society that rejects her.

Modern European and American novels influenced the Indo-Anglian writers as Narayan was not able to prevent himself. Thus the western fictional paradigms of bildungsroman and picaresque narrative are obvious in *The Guide*. Narayan's concerns as a citizen writer are articulated in a difficult way through his characters and their conflicts. Narayan writes:

This is how Narayan's novels show Indian society negotiating the complex terrain of the modern. Malgudi, in that sense, becomes a laboratory where various possibilities and positions are tried. *The Guide*, undoubtedly Narayan's best-known novel, as a narrative of modern India is about the nature of an ancient Indian institution, that of the guru, which indeed has no exact counterpart. R.k. Narayan's use of slightly lighter, slightly more frivolous and certainly more ambiguous word, "Guide", is therefore telling. (174)

If we have a look at the characters in the novel, Rosie, Velan, Raju's mother, and uncle Gaffur, the driver, Joseph, The Steward of the bungalow stayed where the husband of Rosie stayed, are all characters representing the traditional Indian civilization, culture and custom. Raju and Marco, on the other hand, exhibit features of western culture and manners. Thus the conflict between east and west is clear in the behaviour and dialogue of these characters throughout the novel.

The character in *The Guide* depicts not only Indian society and their traditions, customs, culture, religious faith and orthodox principles but they have presented a conflict between the eastern and western values which are shown by the protagonist's mother and his maternal uncle on the one hand and by Raju and Rosie on the other. In such conflict, cultural, customary or old values have to give place to new values and hence Raju's mother leaves her home for Raju and Rosie. Narayan's novels are written in bi-cultural perspective. The clash between the ancient eastern Indian tradition and values on the one side and modern western values, on the other side, is visible in many novels.

Raju, the protagonist of the novel, *The Guide* goes through intense conflict traditionalism and modernity, and in this book, the episode that beautifully depicts is the relationship with Rosie. Also showing Raju's character was turned by the increasing western civilization around him and has been enforced by the patriarchal society that established. Raju, after coming out of jail abandons the society and went towards the countryside by the river 'Sarayu' were due coincidences and acts of kindness by him, he changes into a holy man or Guru as they call him. What Narayan so frankly and subtly presents before us is nothing short of unlimited wisdom. Raju's character is indispensable to the novel and revolves round the story from a tourist guide he becomes a guide for life as that is what the essence of the guru is. Here Narayan exhibits Raju's change from modernity to traditionalism, from being the infamous and notorious

Railway Raju (traits of westernization) to a Sadhu who strived to achieve salvation. C.D.Narasimhaiah considers Raju a transformed man, in the end, a saint whereas G.S. Balarama Gupta believes, "Raju is a selfish swindler, an adroit actor and perfidious megalomaniac."³ To quote Paranjape again:

The question is not so much whether Raju is a willing saint or not because, like all of us, everyone within the novel notices Raju's reluctance, even his unfitness for gurudom. But does that really change who or what he ends of becoming, so what we have here is a real problem, one that leads up to the crux of Narayan's artistry and to his relationship to Indian modernity. Because if Raju is a fake, Narayan is putting into doubt not just an individual but the institution of guru itself. (177)

Raju seems to be the psychological projection of the typical individual in Indian society. The social norms, Raju is against such age-old institutional values, though he himself is rooted in the family tradition. Rosie's caste system is attacked by the common people as 'public woman', but Raju opposes them all and asserts that her caste is 'the noblest caste on earth'. R.K. Narayan depicted that time has changed as no one accepts Rosie according to their eastern orthodox norms but Raju faces the ups and downs, even and odds to give her the identity in the society which Raju has attributed from the modern and or western civilization.

As soon as Raju disunite himself from the society and went after Rosie, she has moral degradation and he faces harsh repercussions. When he returns to society as a Sanyasi he achieves salvation. In the words of Arun Soule:

Thus, it is seen that in the western context, the individual can grow and develop, if he dissociates himself from society and becomes individualistic: whereas in the Indian context if an individual dissociates himself from society he comes to grief, but if he takes society along with him then he will be at peace with himself and his surroundings, and will be able to grow and develop.⁴

Malgudi is a microcosm of India. Railway's presence or inclusion to Malgudi is symbolically the influence of industrial and urban society on a simple agricultural community. The cherished values of life give way to modern and their attendant evils. Raju who gave up a decent home has now picked up terms of abuse from the Railwaymen and his father's words 'just my miss fortune!' sound ominous in the light of the impending disaster. His father does not follow the orthodox Brahama calling of the priesthood. Hence it becomes ironic Raju comes back full circle to his caste occupation as a performer of sacred rites. Raju's father was a materialistic man who took the full toll of the colonial world, trade and commerce. It is the railway which brings the western world, with its westernization to Malgudi. R.K. Narayan brought western notions to the traditional Malgudi and enforces the people of the town to recoil themselves from it. The influence of the locale that opposes eastern are the westernized parts of the town where Raju and Rosie carry on their practices- the cinema hall, the Taj Restaurant and the hotel. *The Guide* not only depicts Indian society, it's customs, traditions, culture, ostentations, superstitious beliefs but also presents a clash between the traditional values which are symbolized by Raju's mother and his maternal uncle on the one hand and by Raju and Rosie on the other hand.

This latest work *The Vendor of Sweets* of R.K.Narayan came out in 1967, and the novel was published in London by the Bodley Head Limited. Its 17th report appeared in 2006. The east-west encounter is the major theme of the novel. It is the conflict between the staunch Indian or eastern father and his western- bred son, depicting the rare complexities of the Indian middle-class society trying to adapt to the changing world, blinding the eastern values with the western outlook and style.

Jagan is the most vibrant character of the novel, *The Vendor of Sweets* from the first to the last. Mali, his son who returned from America after his three years of education there has totally changed from an Indian to a western. Grace, the companion of Mali from America is undoubtedly western and rational.

The opening paragraph of the novel is highly comic, especially to western ears. To quote from the text, "conquer taste, and you will have conquered the self", said Jagan to his listener, who asked, "Why

conquer the self"? Jagan said, "I do not know, but all our sages advice us so." The listener's question and the answer of Jagan shows western and eastern ideology respectively. The occidental always thinks logically. They never blindly bow's to blind faith. Jagan has surrendered his ideas to sages and never thinks to investigate the truth in their statements. Through this swami's and the clergy exploit the common people in the east in the words of Barry Argyle:

To the western ear this hugely comic because the idea of doing anything without being able to produce a reason stronger than tradition runs counter to our notions of ourselves. Those who do we mean to think foolish. Even when demonstrably false, our reasons have to sound at least reasonable. Our listener's question, "Why"? Is the foundation of modern western civilization:, and to know that and Indian will also ask the question confirms us in our rightness.⁵

There are various verbal encounters between Jagan and Mali, Mali and Grace and Jagan and Grace. The dialogue which throws light on Jagan's Gandhian principles is, "I have discontinued sugar as you know. I find twenty drops of water quite adequate and that is the natural way of taking in the sugar we need?"⁶

Jagan felt disappointed when he reads the letter. The sacred book of Hindus have presented the five deadly sins and in the first is the killing of the cows Jagan was an orthodox Hindu, a pure vegetarian and a staunch follower of Gandhian philosophy, who believed in ahimsa. This ideology of Jagan stems up as his profession is selling sweets; running his business without the help of, machines. Jagan is assumed to be against all types of machinery, In other words against the advent of industrialization. Jagan's faith in Gandhian theory is pronounced when R.K.Narayan describes his quest for "truth" and "simplicity" "in the key areas which is the exhibition of eastern culture and ideas.

The encounter between Jagan and his son arises in the third chapter. When Mali goes against the system of education and wants to travel to America. Mali's arrogance and his audacity towards his father shows his character and nature to life. Even though after his mother's death, his father nourishes him but all his hard work to attire good values in Mali goes in vain. Mali is an amalgamation of all western values. He abhors whatever, is traditional so he formulates "I cannot study anymore" (23) which once again revokes his anti-traditional attitude. He has complete antitheses of 'east' and 'west', thus repeats the force of binary opposition. He believes in extravagant elaborateness and acknowledges western culture, tradition, and their way of living. The flamboyance of his spirit is due to the impact of westernization. Mali's statement "I can look after myself." (24) clearly evokes his change and his struggle as a modern man to get an individual identity.

An American girl, grace, wanted to be a pure Indian daughter-in-law to Jagan. Thus she dressed herself with saris and does all the work in the house. She started clean the Jagan's room and washed the vessels in his kitchen. Jagan's protests were unheeded. "She clashes the broom raked every corner of the floor saying "father ,you think I mind it? I do not. I must not forget that I am Indian daughter in- law" (62). Jagan wanted to the whereabouts of Grace. Hence he told her, "it is a custom in this country to inquire where one was born and bred and is who generally, then we go on to other things." (64). The encounter of East and modern West is expressed in this conversation. The use of socks by Mali in India can be treated as a western influence. The eastern do not use socks and they have their own reason for not using it. Jagan, a Gandhian, dislikes this act of Mali in his house. But he dares not to speak it out Mali. To quote from the text:

He noticed that Mali wore socks under his sandals and wanted to cry out, "socks should never be worn because they are certain to heat the blood through inference with natural radiation which occurs through ones soles, and also because you insulate yourself against beneficial magnetic charges of the earth's surface. I have argued in my book that this is one of the reasons, a possible reason for heart attacks in European countries. (68)

R. K. Narayan has made deliberately Jagan speak such unreasonable things. The author wants to

speak the truth through comic situations and dialogue.

The gap between Jagan and Mali starts expanding more when his son communicates about different gadgets like Gramophone, Polaroid camera etc. He discloses his knowledge about, "The Grand Canyon and Niagara and the statue of liberty and the traffic Jams in New York." (61) Mali's character, nature, attitude and self-conceit everything affects the innocent continent of Jagan. Hence it is clear Mali believes in westernization. His interest in western goods and techniques exhibits his transformation.

At evening when grace was not with Mali, Jagan asked him where she was. Mali answered that she had gone out.

Where, at this time of night?

She can go where she pleases. Why should anyone question her?

Where does she go? why does she go? Is she unhappy here?

Mali rose to his feet and said, "Who are you to stop her from going where she pleases? She is a free person, not like the daughters in law in our miserable country." (126-127)

There is a clear conflict between east and west. Jagan, a pure Indian does not think a woman going out alone at night. Whereas Mali, a modern man who spend some years in west thinks that women are as free as men and they can go anywhere at any time as men do.

The Vendor of Sweets contains the test of a relationship and the generation gap between the father and his son. It is the story of the East versus the West. When one goes through, these obvious contrasts, he should not fail to notice the similarities. In the words of Barry Argyle:

Nayaran is interested in the similarities in states and feelings that might have been the same; but by using a modish vehicle he not only disguises his true concern ... but also creates a tension between the apparent and the real. This tension duplicates the novels theme, which is the search the search for real values among many that are spurious or outworn.⁷

In Jagan, the reader may note of an autographical element. He can be called an alter ego of Nayaran in some aspects. At last, we can come to the point that the novel contains multifaceted ideas ranging from Indian women in their post-marital life to Nayaran's emphatic consideration of east and west conflict.

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