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## Editorial...

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

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### **CONTENTS**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Title &amp; Author</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
1.	<b>Religion and Myth as Poetic Resources: A Study of Christopher Okigbo's <i>Labyrinths with Path of Thunder</i> and Bate Besong's <i>Disgrace: Autobiographical Narcissus</i></b> - <i>Tem Edwin</i>	01-07
2.	<b>Three Women One Voice: A Critique on the Poetry of Mamta Kalia, Gauri Deshpande and Kamala Das</b> - <i>Supriya and Sweta Singh</i>	08-15
3.	<b>William Wordsworth's 'Ruined Cottage': An Eco-critical Study</b> - <i>R. Saravanan and Dr. G. Somasundaram</i>	16-19
4.	<b>The Sexual and the Spiritual in John Donne's Poetry: Exploring "The Extasie" and its Analogues</b> - <i>Shantanu Siuli</i>	20-23
5.	<b>The Metaphysical Poets</b> - <i>Ashok Heeru Chavan</i>	24-26
6.	<b>Genesis Myth and the Seventeenth Century English Literature</b> - <i>Ashok Heeru Chavan</i>	27-30
7.	<b>Anita Nair's <i>Lessons in Forgetting</i>: An Efficient Representation of Intricate Nature of Parent-Child Relationship</b> - <i>Supriya Mohan Patil and Tripti Karekatti</i>	31-37
8.	<b>Portrayal of Sexual Violence in Anita Nair's <i>Lessons in Forgetting</i></b> - <i>C. Chellappan and Dr. V. Nagarajan</i>	38-40
9.	<b>The Politics of Empire Building: A Review of Arundhati Roy's <i>Power Politics</i></b> - <i>Avishek Chaudhury</i>	41-43

10. **Creating Self through Othering: The Cycle of Colonisation in *A Little Princess*** 44-56  
- *Reeba Sara Koshy and Dr. Asha Susan Jacob*
11. **Subversion of Motherhood: A Study of Select Novels of Shashi Deshpande and Yvonne Vera** 57-60  
- *Amogh A. M.*
12. **Locating the Dispersed: Portrayal of the Women in New Generation Malayalam Films** 61-64  
- *Anjitha S Kurup*
13. **Salman Rushdie's Major Novels** 65-67  
- *Raju T. Malagimani*
14. **U. R. Ananthmurthy's *Samskara*: A Duel Between Carnal Desire and Elite Culture** 68-72  
- *Dr. Jagdish S. Patil and Mr. Kiran N. Khetta*
15. **T. M. Aluko's *One Man, One Wife*: A Confrontation Between Traditional Religion and Christianity** 73-77  
- *Dr. S. B. Bhambar*
16. **Political History Through Inverted Gaze: A Critical Study of Kamila Shamsie's *in The City By The Sea*** 78-86  
- *Romil Preet Kaur*
17. ***Salman Rushdie's The Satanic Verses*** 87-89  
- *Raju T. Malagimani*
18. **Interrelated Ways of Social Hierarchy and Historical Developments of Jane Austen's Time** 90-93  
- *Ms. A. Sowmiya and Dr. S. Valliammai*
19. **Nayantara Sahgal as a Non- Conformist Writer with Special Reference to *Storm in Chandigarh* and *The Day in Shadow*** 94-97  
- *Mrs. C. Sujatha and Dr. V. Ramakrishnan*
20. **Tradition and Modernity in Shashi Deshpande's *Roots and Shadows*** 98-101  
- *Mr. M. Pandiarajan and Dr. V. Ramakrishnan*
21. **The Portrayal of Women in the Selected Novels of Shashi Deshpande** 102-104  
- *Prof. Pandurang Rupnar and Dr. R. B. Chougule*
22. **Assertion of Self in Maya Angelou's Autobiography *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings*** 105-107  
- *D. K. Kamble*

23. **Quest for Cultural Identity in Immigrant Land in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Mistress of Spices* and *The Queen of Dreams*** 108-111  
- A. Xavier and Dr. V. Ramakrishnan
24. **Human Encounters with Wild Creatures in the Select Short Stories of Ruskin Bond** 112-119  
- M. Richard Enrico and Dr. V. Nagarajan
25. **Symbolism, Irony and Humour in Girish Karnad's Play *Tughlaq*** 120-124  
- T. Gnanasekaran
26. **Effectiveness of Multimedia Tools on Second Language Learners at College Level** 125-128  
- A. Ramar and Dr. V. Ramakrishnan
27. **Stylistic Analysis of Select Works of William Shakespeare** 129-131  
- Adel Saleh Naji Muthanna
28. **The Effectiveness of Computer Assisted Language Teaching and Learning in Developing Reading Skills of ESL Learners At Tertiary Level: A Study** 132-134  
- S. Saravanan and Dr. G. Somasundaram
29. **Mohare Hanumantharaya's Contribution to Hyderabad-Karnataka's Liberation** 135-139  
- Dr. J. M. Chandunavara
30. **Mary, A Schizophrenic Character in Lessing's *The Grass is Singing*** 140-142  
- Dr. Mrs. Shaikh Ajaz Perveen Mohd. Khaleeluddin
31. **A Critique on Ecofeminism** 143-147  
- Dr. Vasant G. Sanap and Mr. Manik Subhash Bhatane
32. **Jhumpa Lahiri's Story: *Interpretation of Maladies: An Analysis*** 148-150  
- Dr. Khan Ansarullah Shafiullah
33. **New Woman in Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*** 151-152  
- Dr. Vijaykumar Bandal
34. **Multiple Voices of Futurist Society in Kim Robinson's *Mars Trilogy*** 153-155  
- Banasode R. S.
35. **Namita Gokhle's *Paro: Dreams of Passion* A Symbol of Deliverance, Self Quest and Anguish** 156-159  
- Tabassum M. Inamdar
36. **The Indian Diaspora: Searching for Uprooted Roots** 160-164  
- Dr. Pramod Ambadasrao Pawar

37. **Feminine Fire in the Novels of Anita Nair** 165-169  
- *A. Sundari* and *Dr. J. Mary Jeyanthi*
38. **A Critique on Realism and Existentialism in the Novels of Anita Desai** 170-177  
- *Mrs. Archana B.* and *Dr. Ramesh Rathod*
39. **The Locale: A Narrative Device in the Fiction of Vikram Seth** 178-182  
- *Dr. Manisha F. Shah*
40. **The American Transcendentalists' Social Reforms** 183-185  
- *Mr. C. S. Biradar*
41. **A Critique on Poverty and Village Life in Anita Desai's  
*The Village by The Sea*** 186-193  
- *Mrs. Archana B.* and *Dr. Ramesh Rathod*
42. **Identity Crisis in Meena Alexander's *Nampally Road*: An Exploration** 194-199  
- *Ms. Vijayalaxmi Patil* and *Dr. Ramesh Rathod*
43. **Jane Austen's *Emma* as a Representative Novel: An Overview** 200-204  
- *Ms. Vijayalaxmi Patil* and *Dr. Ramesh Rathod*
44. **Cultural Recalibration into the Host Society: A Study of Diasporic  
Dimensions in *Sour Sweet* by Timothy Mo and *The Nowhere Man* by  
Kamala Markandaya** 205-207  
- *MS. J. Madhumidha Stri*
45. **Using Comparison and Contrast in Teaching Plays** 208-210  
- *Dr. M. Solayan*
46. **The Contradictions and Hypocrisy in the Western Ideas of Civilization  
with Reference to Aime Cesaire's *Discourse on Colonialism*** 211-214  
- *Dr. Deepak Nanaware*
47. **Beyond The Threshold: Finding 'Life' and A Voice in Sabita Goswami  
Along The Red River** 215-218  
- *Baishali Baruah*
48. **Strategies for Writing Skills in English** 219-223  
- *Dr. Bineeta Agrawal*

01

**RELIGION AND MYTH AS POETIC RESOURCES: A STUDY OF CHRISTOPHER OKIGBO'S *LABYRINTHS WITH PATH OF THUNDER* AND BATE BESONG'S *DISGRACE: AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NARCISSUS***

*Tem Edwin, NJI, University of Buea, Cameroon, Central Africa*

**Abstract:**

*This article studies the selected poetry of Christopher Okigbo and Bate Besong by focusing on their exploration of religion and myth as creative resource. The paper argues that Okigbo and Besong, highly gifted poets, were able to blend these aspects from both domestic and foreign backgrounds in a manner that rendered their poetry provocative and sublime. They were revolutionary not only from the ideological standpoint, but in their ability to switch abruptly to distant cultures that rendered their poetry conceptually dense.*

**Keywords:** Religion, Myth, Aesthetics, Sublime.

**Introduction**

Christopher Ifekandu Okigbo (1932-1967) and Bate Besong (1953-2007) are two precocious African poets who defiled and established poetic conventions and built for themselves a poetic firmament which displayed an unusual mix of religion and myth in a way that made their poetry terse, provocative and sublime. Widely acclaimed as a “poet of destiny”, Okigbo, a young Nigerian poet whose talent blossomed in the 60s, was an adept in his vast experimentation with wide ranging poetic traditions as well as the cultural and political evolution of his country and Continent-Africa. Often finding it difficult to examine his own identity in isolation, he enlisted in the Biafra war of secession in July of 1967 and was killed in action in August of the same year.

Bate Besong's talent was prodigious and in many ways radiated a similar creative sensibility like Christopher Okigbo whose poetry he studied in Nigerian Universities and whose personal life, like Wole Soyinka, he deeply admired having come into personal contact with the latter. An Anglophone Cameroonian poet whose writings blossomed in the 90s and 2000s, Besong wrote poetry that was quite fierce, modernist in outlook and experimented with various religions and myths.

For both poets, the scholarly reception of their poetry was quite similar. D. S. Isevbaye observed in his study of Okigbo's *Heavensgate* that “this view of the poems as an impenetrable territory has been encouraged by reports of Okigbo's early view of poetry as a type of cult from which the uninitiated is excluded...and by cautious critical implications in which the critic and reader are unmasked as intruders” (1). This statement was further amplified by the poet himself when he remarked that “I don't write my poetry for non-poets” (4). Isevbaye observed that Okigbo's rather obscurantist mode of poetic discourse owe partly to his ability to creatively blend domestic and foreign myths as well as a certain religious eclecticism. Similarly, Shadrach Ambanasom asked: “Bate Besong: Is his Poetry too Difficult for Cameroonians?” The scholar observed that “Bate Besong is the most paradoxical Anglophone Cameroon writer today in the sense that his work attracts and repels at the same time. While his themes entice readers, his style alienates them, an erudite iconoclast with an exceptional range of vocabulary power” (92). While observing that Besong's poetry remains highly enchanting yet abstruse, the poet himself observed: “I am an inveterate experimenter with language. I will always deal with the internal conflict between the forces of good and evil borrowed from history and myth” (2).

In the light of the views raised above, this paper operates on the premise that Okigbo and Besong's

poetry draw from the complexity of religion and myth from both domestic and foreign backgrounds rendering their poetry occasionally sophisticated yet sublime.

### Discussion and Analysis

Okigbo's poetry demonstrates the presence of a vast intellectual culture. His poetry often displays the influence of traditional African, Christian and classical myths with inspiration drawn from poets like T. S. Eliot, Gerald Manley Hopkins and Ezra Pound. Like Eliot, Okigbo showed a spiritual quest, taking his readers into the realm of spiritual myths and spiritual self, combining this with Christian ritual language, a thing that earned him this fascinating critical appraisal by Chinua Achebe: "for while other poets wrote good poems, Okigbo conjured up for us an amazing, haunting poetic firmament of a wild and violent beauty" (4). Commenting about the way myths formed the foundation of modern poetry, John Nkemngong Nkengasong writes:

William Burtler Yeats (1865-1939) and Thomas Stearns Eliot (1885-1965) are two giants of the 20<sup>th</sup> century whose quest for ideal reality culminated in poetry which could be described as highly complex and allusive...they make allusions to a great variety of primitive, occidental and oriental myths and symbols using abrupt contrasts and counter suggestions. (10)

There is much evidence to argue that like Yeats and Eliot above, whom Okigbo highly admired, that he borrowed from varied mythical backgrounds that made his work conceptually dense. Okigbo believed that he was the reincarnation of his maternal grandfather, Ijejiofor of the Oto family who provided the priesthood to the shrine of the deity, Idoto. Yet, a son of a Christian convert, he was later to fuse his poetry with the mythical touch of Christian ritual practice.

From the outset, in *Heavensgate*, he takes the reader into the mythical universe of the traditional goddess Idoto. He writes: "Before you mother Idoto/naked I stand, before your watery presence, a prodigal" (6). At this level, he surrenders himself to the legendary power of the goddess whom he eulogizes as the "oil bean", "tortoise" and "python", all totems for her worship. Firm in his opinion that he was powered by forces in the supernatural realm, Okigbo began to wound his way into a local mythological journey in the form of a traditional pilgrimage which also became symbolic of the continent's much needed return to her cultural roots after the wanton cultural imperialism visited on the continent at Colonialism. Having established the central importance of the idoto goddess at *Heavensgate*, the poet then uses incantatory language of a local praise singer variously referring to the goddess as the "oblong-headed Lioness" (*Siren Limits*), "Anna at the knobs of the panel oblong" (*The Passage*) and finally invoking the spirit of the goddess to protect him:

Time for worship  
Anna of the panel oblongs  
Protect me  
From them fucking angels. (Newcomer, 17)

In using the goddess as a personal god, the idoto myth emerges as a personal symbol which he elevates to a savior, representing the protection of indigenous cultures. *Heavensgate* thus marked his return to the African part of his heritage and self-renewal before the goddess of the earth, Idoto. To demonstrate just how versatile his poetry is, Okigbo switches swiftly from the powerful influence of the local marine goddess Idoto to ancient Egyptian myths, folklore and civilization. He writes: "on an empty Sarcophagus, hewn out of alabaster/a branch of fennel on an empty sarcophagus" (28). Using a footnote, he remarks that the sarcophagus represents the "body of one of the Egyptian Pharaohs which is said to have metamorphosed into fennel branch" (28). This instance, like many others, demonstrates the vast intellectual presence of his poetry. As a mark of honor for him, he was awarded first prize in poetry at a Conference in African writing in Senegal in 1966 which he rejected on grounds that no such thing existed as Negro Art, "there is no African Literature, there is good writing and bad writing, that's all" (70) he argued.

Later in his poetry, particularly in *Path of Thunder*, poems principally concerned with the Nigerian post-independence trauma, he abandons the local myths from his immediate Igbo cosmology and opts for a more militant approach. He explores the thunder motif in almost the same manner like T. S. Eliot. Nkengasong submits that “Eliot uses oriental myths in “What the thunder said”, using Hindu concepts of “Da, Datta, Dayadvam”, which means “give”, “sympathize” and “control” (23). This mythical concept of thunder to sort out perpetrators of evil and punish them is deeply explored in Okigbo's poetry. It is believed, in most cultures across Africa that thunder possesses the mythical power of justice and has been used to good effect to rid society of those who visit injustice on others. *The Path of Thunder* poems are poems prophesying war. He starts by reenacting the horrifying power of thunder. Thunder does not break innocents, it breaks the looters of the nation whose obituary he writes in the following words: “bring them out we say, bring them out/faces and hands and feet-lo your hostages/Thunder can break, bind me fast” (63).

The nation's looters, the “elephants”, have all been taken hostage by thunder and lumped together in the same cage, waiting for the people's jungle power to be unleashed. In “Hurrah for Thunder”, he celebrates the coming of thunder but also shows his impatience with the darksome political events of his country. He is militant and defiant, but conscious of his own mortality when he writes:

Today for tomorrow, today becomes yesterday  
How many million promises can ever fill a basket?  
If I don't learn to shut my mouth, I'll soon go to hell  
I, Okigbo, town-crier, together with my iron bell. (67)

A self-proclaimed “town crier”, he warned reckless political leaders of his day that the time of reckoning for the nation was at hand. In “Elegy for Alto”, the poet issues his last testament: “oh mother earth, unbind me, let this be my last testament let this be/the ram's hidden wish to the sword's/ secret prayer to the scabbard” (72).

Opinion is divided about the essence of Christian myths in Okigbo's poetry. He had observed that “a poet writes poetry and once a work is published, it becomes public property. It is left to whoever reads it to decide whether it's African poetry or English” (4). While some scholars argue that Okigbo's use of traditional religious myths suggest a disdain for Christian myths and rituals, others think otherwise. Two of such scholars are Romanus Egudu and Wole Ogundele. In “The Defense of Culture in the Poetry of Christopher Okigbo”, Egudu writes: “Christopher Okigbo's reaction to the Christianity that has suppressed his home religion and its gods is that of contempt and sharp criticism” (17). By contrast, Ogundele writes that

Okigbo's poetry demonstrates in the process that all religions, indigenous or foreign, collective or personal, have a common structure or experience, that religious experience can be synonymous with aesthetic experience and too that the language of religion can also be the language of poetry. (58)

Ogundele recognizes that the mythical language of religion can indeed be the language of poetry. Okigbo is adept at often twisting this aspect of Christian mythology with the language of local Igbo myths. He observes from the outset that his poetry is like telling the beats of a rosary as the poet persona seeks union with his roots. The rosary is a Christian concept of repentance. When the poet writes that “Anna of the Panel oblongs, Protect me from them fucking angels”, after previously just indicating that “softly sing the bells of exile/ the angelus, softly sing my guardian angel” (16), one finds the poet's ability to blend in on different religious backgrounds and concepts. The angelus quoted above, is a typical Catholic Christian prayer usually said at mid-day or midnight to remind faithful of the mystique of the annunciation and conception of the Holy Virgin Mary. Yet the poet immediately “contradicts” the redemptive power of the angelus, the guardian angel, dismissing them as “fucking angels, preferring “Ana of the Panel Oblongs”, which lends credit to the view he held that a writer is free to draw images from varied sources to avoid

being tagged with a single canon of judgment.

Elsewhere, after establishing the concomitant presence of an alien religion spreading very fast as seen in “John the Baptist/preaching the gambit” (*Limits VI*), the poet then falls back on the Babylonian captivity to underscore the frightful fate that awaits his community. He writes: For we sense with dog nose a Babylonian capture/the martyrdom, blended into the chaliced vintage” (46). Okigbo is actually in the process of myth making, blending the abstract and the real, creating order through disorder, mixing the language of Catholicism as inherited from his family in Ojoto with the occult language of the Idoto priesthood. Towards the end of *Labyrinths*, the Pilgrims are in progress and whether or not they are traditional or Christian pilgrims is exactly one of the sources of controversy and obscurity. He writes:

In the scattered line of pilgrims bound for shibboleth

In the scattered line of pilgrims from Dan to Beersheba

Prophets martyrs and lunatics

Like the long stride of the evening. (22)

The personalities that mix in this pilgrimage are prophets, lunatics and martyrs. These Christian symbols are so intricately linked with traditional myths that they become dominant rites akin to traditional African religious practice. The scattered sources that inform Okigbo's poetry are summed up in the following statement by Ali Mazrui:

Okigbo himself acknowledged his debt to a variety of literatures and cultures, from classical times to the present day, in English, Latin, Greek...if these sources have become assimilated into an integral whole, and it is difficult to sort them out, to know where the Babylonian influence ends and the classical starts. (71)

This statement speaks much about the divided allegiance in his poetry, validating the point he often claimed that he was a “universalist”, not merely an Igbo or an African poet but a modern writer experimenting with all cultures and mythologies.

Bate Besong would subsequently get fascinated by Okigbo's (and Wole Soyinka) craft, his love for the abstract and the real, his blend of pagan and Christian myths and language. His intellectual, cultural and scholarly experience prepared him for a versatile experimentation with different forms of folklore and myth. Born of the Kenyang ethnic group in Cameroon, but educated in Nigerian Universities where he fell under the huge influence of Nobel Laureate, Wole Soyinka, he received enough intellectual fortification that saw him blend gracefully, in his poetry, warrior gods and traditions like *Obassinjom*, *Mfam*, *Emanya Nkpe* and *Ogun* in a mythical perspective, no doubt he captioned one of his poetry collections: *Obassinjom Warrior with Poems after Detention* (19??). In his book, *Myth, Literature and the African World*, Wole Soyinka indicates that “myths arise from man's attempt to externalize and communicate his inner intuitions” (3). In what he refers to as “Morality and Aesthetics in the ritual Archetype”, Soyinka praises “the gods for their self-sacrifice on the altar of literature and their service on behalf of the human society and the quest for the explication of being” (45). Like Soyinka, Besong's explores the vast universe of gods in a mythological quest for their power of redemption of society.

Besong uses the *Obassinjom* traditional cult as a mythological force that can bring order and justice to the deprived and persecuted. Thought to have originated from the Cross River area in Nigeria and Cameroon, the Obsinjom is reputed to identify witches and wizards and strip them of evil. In *Disgrace: Autobiographical Narcissus* launched just hours to the poet's violent death in a car crash, on March 7<sup>th</sup> 2007, the poet veers into the mythical universe of gods to curse an authoritarian leadership whom he suggests stifles creativity, suppresses dissent and glories in the evil worship of tribal gods. The poem, “The Foolishness of Trusting in Tribal gods”, reads in part as follows:

How can you say you have not defiled yourself?

They are not Obasinjom warriors who

Clothe themselves with the strong

Desire to set things right  
 And to punish and avenge the wrongs  
 That the people suffer. (5)

The poem is an attack, a recrimination against an evil genius at the corridors of power who had “hired a goldsmith to make a god of a murderer.” The tribal gods, he argues, will never attain the sublimity of Obasinjom, the warrior god whose sublime quality lies in avenging the “wrongs the people suffer.” Himself a lecturer at the University of Buea from the late 90s to 2007, Besong always felt persecuted in the academy because of his fierce scholarly views and uncompromising stance against injustice in all forms. Tagged as a radical and subversive by the repressive regime in place and its minions personified in the University leadership, Besong would argue that a University, a place of research and learning, had been reduced to a political battleground where anyone who as much as dared to reason contrary to dictated state views, would be persecuted.

In “The Mouths of Liars will be shut”, Besong adopts a style of cursing that reminds one of Soyinka's “Maledictions.” Accusing his immediate bosses to have found fortification in the “worship of fortune tellers and excelled in necromancy to control events”, he warns:

You are doomed  
 And you have brought this upon yourself  
 What you have done to others will be done to your  
 Children, and  
 Grand children to the third and fourth  
 Generations. (9)

This is a dark prophecy. Feeling marginalized, the poet is filled with a sense of foreboding. He is confident that Obsinjom will stand up for the weak and oppressed. Kikefomo Mbulai has observed that Besong “became very versatile in his last days as he sensed his own closed world collapsing, going berserk under mammonite pressures, so his vision to bring sanity to society wallowing in obscurity, one gets the echoes of Yoruba Mythology, of the spell of Ogun, the Promethean hero in Yoruba pantheon one of whose attributes is the shielding of orphans” (141).

Some of the poems in the collection, apart from the autobiographical poems (the latter of which center largely with his experiences in the University of Buea), had earlier been published under the cryptic title *Just Above Cameroon*. The poems move from the personal to the general but one sees in the poet “a prophet, philosopher and patriot” (44). He draws from the mythology of the Emania- Nkpe cult to do battle against the political oppressor class. Believed to be a Leopard-like Secret Society and open only to men, the cult is charged with law and order in society. With this kind of spiritual fortification, the poet engages in poetic/ intellectual battle against the “free mason” class of politicians in his country whom he indicts of corruption, oppression and neglect. In “Their Champagne Party will End”, for instance, he writes:

Indeed they have sworn fealty to their Masonic lodges

And to each to bankrupt our national coffers  
 So they'll take upon themselves, for reasons  
 Best known to themselves to speak the folklore of their free-masonry  
 (they barricade themselves on the coast)  
 Their champagne party will end. (89)

The speaker is angry, prophetic and defiant. His consciousness is best captured in his attack of the apparent occultist mentality of the political class of his country whom Mbulai remarks are “insensitive, sadistic and corrupt” (134).

Notwithstanding the fluid presence of traditional pagan concepts, the poet also gracefully blends Christian myths in his poetry. Like his muse Okgbo, Besong at times found succor in scripture so strong that he would assume the aura of ancient biblical prophets speaking in the wilderness against their society's

apathy, torpor and neglect. Bernard Fonlon remarked in the *Genuine Intellectual* that a maker of great literature thanks to his scientific and philosophical bent of mind becomes a seer into the illusive future, a light in the darkness of his days urging men towards right and rewarding achievement and rich fulfillment, or warning society should the need arise against impending cataclysm. (132-133)

One finds the observation above an apt description of Besong's artistic vision in *Disgrace*. He is warning his society in much the same tone as Jeremiah, the ancient Hebrew Prophet, who, powered by God, warned his society against the tragedy that lay in ignoring their creator. It is an opinion Mbulai articulates when he writes that "...towards the closing days of his life, (Besong's prophecy), developed into a mature, profounder trait, even coloring his work in terms of the apocalyptic vision and his debt to the gnomic idiom and imagery of the grand tradition of Hebrew Prophecy" (133). Like Jeremiah, Besong speaks with much bewilderment about the "Foolishness of trusting in Tribal gods." Jeremiah 2: 23-24 reads: "how can you say, 'I have not defiled myself after the Baals'". Besong poses a similar question when he writes:

When I look among your revelers, Pontiff  
Sovereign;  
None of them has a thing to say;  
Not one can open the eyes of  
The blind and set free those who sit in dark prisons  
-----  
How can you say you have not defiled yourself?  
They are not *Obsinjom warriors* who  
Clothe themselves with the strong  
Desire to set things right

And to punish and avenge the wrongs that the people suffer (5)

These are lines that manifest frustration and disillusionment. The speaker mocks an administrative set up that glory in the heavy handed attack of dissent. But in articulating his despair, the speaker does not maintain solely the cadence of Biblical language but lapses into the self-righteous Obsinjom cult as an ultimate path to fulfillment. The style of cursing he adopts in "The Mouths of Liars will be Shut" radiates aspects of ancient Hebrew myths and cultures. The poet writes:

Your prejudices will be held against you. Just  
As the mountain straw is set on fire by sparks, so  
You will be destroyed by your evil deeds, and no  
Presidential decrees will stop your destruction  
You will be sorry that you ever worshipped fortune tellers  
And excelled in necromancy to control events  
You are doomed and you have brought this upon yourself  
What you have done to others will be done to your children, and  
Grand children to the third and fourth generation. (9)

While it is true that the poet had sensed his close world collapsing around him and found succor in Biblical cursing mode of expression, it is equally true that the allusions and expressions are contemporaneous to the time and moment of composition. Having found himself in an environment where his character and person were heavily maligned, the poet toned his aesthetic sensibility to capture the frustration and trauma which, while being personal to him, spoke of a larger picture of his Cameroonian society.

### Conclusion

When Besong died suddenly in the morning of March 8<sup>th</sup>, having been crushed in a car crash, the tributes were fast and furious. Innocent Futchu captioned his "Bate Besong: Jeremiah in Cameroon", observing the obscure power of his expression and his mix of Christian and pagan mode of expression as

well as his chilling ability to predict his imminent death. Myths have the power of taking one into the metaphysical, the supernatural so that the ordinary reader usually stands in awe. Okigbo's African myths speak of his touch with traditional Igbo cults, yet his mix of Christian language established his reputation as one of the leading voices of his time. Besong would fall into this mystique, resorting to the mythical power of Mfam, Obansinjom and Emania Nkpe, but at the close of life, found succor in the expressive mode of Hebrew seers.

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02

### THREE WOMEN ONE VOICE: A CRITIQUE ON THE POETRY OF MAMTA KALIA, GAURI DESHPANDE AND KAMALA DAS

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#### **Abstract:**

*Indians have been writing verse in English at least since the 1820s. It made its beginning under adverse circumstances and after an initial struggle for a place in the world of English literature has achieved a distinct identity of its own. Indian women poets also write on a variety of themes with multiple layers of meanings. It will be true to say that the most important dimension and variety to Indian English poetry was impacted by the female writers starting with Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu, and Kamala Das, Imtiaz Dharkar, Mamta Kalia, etc. till date. Indian poetry in English by women has undergone several phases of experimentations in terms of themes and expressions in the last sixty years. The confessional mode of Kamala Das in which she expresses the trials and tribulations of modern Indian women has forced the shocked the traditional 'male world' to listen to her protest. Her poetry has influenced several other contemporary poets who are writing multiple issues from a woman's point of view.*

*The present paper is a general study of the poetry by Mamta Kalia, Gauri Deshpande and Kamala Das. Though these three woman poets wrote during different periods of time and having different social backgrounds, they give voice to the concerns of women in general and Indian women in particular in their own individual style.*

**Key words:** *Identity, dimension, experimentation, confessional, articulate, résistance.*

Kamala Das is indisputably the first Indian woman poet who shocked and mesmerized readers with her highly original, uninhibited and severely introspective mode of confessional poetic expression. Many other poets derived inspiration from Das and started questioning the male-domination and patriarchal system and began to articulate resistance and self-confidence through their writing. Kamala Das presents the most touching theme of the difficulties of being a woman in a patriarchal society and find love and appreciation in a typical Indian family. She attempts to explore the quest for self-identity and stark reality within and around her. In “An Introduction” she writes,

...why not let me speak in any language I  
Like, the language I speak, its distortion  
Its queers all mine and mine alone...

(“An Introduction”, 9-11)

Given the monumental achievement of Kamala Das, it is apt to look for women's voices that possibly carried forward the feministic tradition which she started and developed. Amongst her contemporaries Gauri Deshpande and Mamta Kalia are prominent in carrying forward the poetic legacy of Das. It is true that Kamala Das created a climate for the female “I” to participate in the representation of Indian women writing poetry in English, for poets like Gauri Deshpande and Kalia in particular, rejecting masculine mediation. These poets celebrate the “difference” that separates Man and Woman. The dominant theme of the quest of self and search for a true identity in the society gets fresh inputs from these poets who portrayed the conflicts between traditional structure and an emerging social order where women are demanding respect and identity. The individualistic demands of these women poets have led to the

establishment of a well-defined female aesthetics in modern Indian poetry. All the three women poets taken up for study are masters in creative expressions, versification, syntax and other poetic devices.

Modern Indian women poets, influenced by feminist trends, give voice to feminine desires, hopes, fears and frustrations of Indian women in their journey from tradition to modernity. Poets like Kamala Das, Imtiaz Dharker, Gauri Deshpande and Mamta Kalia, etc. revolt against the restraints in the patriarchal society and express the pathos of a woman emerging from a passive role to the point of discovering and asserting her individuality, identity and freedom. These poets with the help of their creative imagination clamor for dignity, status and equal treatment for women on both individual and social fronts. Male writers like Sharat Chandra, Tagore and amongst the contemporary poets Nissim Ezekiel, A.K. Ramanujan etc. have also powerfully portrayed various aspects of Indian women but Kamala Das being herself the subject of womanly experiences effectively gives voice to aspirations, frustrations and emotional upheavals of a woman conscious of her individuality in the Indian social milieu. Kamala Das broke free from the metaphysical and romantic traditions of Indian English poetry written by women poets like Toru Dutt or Sarojini Naidu and created a poetry that centered round her own feelings and desires which in the context of Indian milieu were often outrageous and shockingly bold. In *My Poetry* she says: A poet's *raw material* is not stone or clay, it is her *personality*. (Italics mine) (Das: p. 124)

The picture of Indian women that emerges in Kamala Das's poetry is entirely different from those presented by her predecessors like Toru Dutt and Sarojini Naidu who do express concern about the pitiable condition of women with the constricted social mores but in their poetry the voice of revolt is seldom heard. Kamala Das wrote poetry in the confessional mode to give voice to the awakened consciousness of contemporary educated Indian women who protested against the subaltern status of women in the patriarchal society. Their clamour for individual identity found expression in Das's bold assertions of female physicality and sexuality as well as her need for emotional fulfillment. The following rebellious lines call for the redefinition of the term "happiness" extending beyond the confines of domesticity and wifehood. "There is a desire to extricate from this soul killing subjugation" (Iyer; 371):

Women is this happiness, this lying buried  
Beneath a man? It is time again to come alive,  
The world extends a lot beyond his six foot frame.  
(“Conflagrations”)

Kamala Das was herself a middle class woman struggler who had to face a lot of atrocities in the Indian patriarchal setup. In her poem “An Introduction” she presents herself as a woman who expresses her sensibility and also revolts against the society in a confessional mode. The poem articulates the anguish of the victims of the gender bias who are denied their need of emotional and intellectual fulfillment. A woman too has an equal right to see, learn and enjoy what the world offers to human beings.

I have no joys that are not yours,  
No aches which are not yours I too call myself “I”  
(“An Introduction” ll-58, 59)

Many other poets of her era tried their hands in presenting the feminine psyche and the condition of women in the patriarchal society. In the crew the one who are nearer to her are Mamta Kalia and Gauri Deshpande.

Mamta Kalia is a significant post Kamala Das voice. Although as subjective as Kamala Das in her frequent use of 'I' the assertive self in her transcends the romantic agony of Das in favour of a more ironic mode. Mamta Kalia has published two volumes of English poems so far namely, *Tribute to Papa and other poems* and *Poems '78*. For her writing has a cathartic effect as she herself explicitly expresses in one of her poems:

In my hours of discontent  
I neither shout nor rant

I simply fill ink in my pen  
And spill it with intent....

(“My hours of discontent”, *Poems 78*, 17)

If we look into the title poem of her debut verse collection we will find the intense sense of revolt and disgust towards the domination of male in the society. It begins with set of interrogative questions on her father's idealism. She speaks with tangy irreverence about many 'sacred cows' of the Indian culture, patriarchy, parenthood, patriotism, to name a few. She figures out an opposition not only towards the male dominance but other things as well.

Who cares for you, papa?  
Who cares for your clean thoughts, clean?  
Words, clean teeth?  
Who wants to be an angel like you?  
Who wants it?

(“Tribute to Papa”, *TPOP*, 8)

This conversation is just a normal conversation between a father and a daughter but actually it is a shocking and hair raising criticism of life of changing ideologies, changed priorities, changed mind sets, newly acquired life styles and above all, modern life and living. She is disheartened to find that her father could not acquire wealth and riches all through his life and led a poor and wretched life just because of his traditional values and principles. She finds it hard not to defy the sacraments of her tradition ridden father. She quite shamelessly defends the craving of sexual liberty of the young generations:

Everything about you  
Clashes  
With nearly everything  
About me  
You suspect I'm having  
a love affair these days  
But you are too shy to  
Have it confirmed....

(“Tribute to Papa”, *TPOP*, 8)

The style of Mamta Kalia is direct and confessional similar to that of Das. Her poetic expressions are candid as well as conversational. Her poems flow like a river during floods which aggressively transgresses its banks but after a brief upheaval, calms down and regains its normalcy. Similarly, she is aggressive at one point and emotional at the same time. There is a ruthless exposure of the oppressed existence of Indian middle class women in the male dominated society. She suffers in her family and in her married life. The socio-cultural factors lead to psychological reactions and responses. The thematic variety stretches from different aspects of love, marriage, culture, tradition, idealism, and from politics to modernity in society and more, everything which demands immediate attention. She typifies an awakened and audacious twenty first century woman who has the guts to question, judge and finally reject the patriarchal norms imposed on the females down the ages. She represents a modern woman who has the bravado to raise voice against the set patterns of patriarchy and the other traditional norms against women.

What differentiates the poetry of Kalia from Das is the fair amount of wit she uses in her poetry. While Kamala Das takes up the discussion of women especially with reference to their personal being, Mamta Kalia raises her voice on the various issues and concerns regarding women in general in the society. Her tone is highly sarcastic, when she presents the life of an urban middle class woman and her predicament in society, her responsibilities as mother and wife, her tedium, boredom and sufferings in a

male dominated world. Her main pre-occupation is the killing boredom of various human (personal) relationships, failures and frustrations of married life. She brings out the indifference faced by the woman both inside and outside her home. Irony is the main weapon used by her.

In the poem “Feel like Crying”, Mamta Kalia voices her disgust with a husband who scowls at every word she speaks. In “Love Made a Housewife out of Me”, she posturizes the drudgery of daily household work.

Love made a housewife out of me  
I came with a degree in textile designing  
I skill in debates, dramatics and games  
You don't realize  
You don't sympathize  
(Poems-78, 20)

But nothing ever happened to me  
except two children  
and two miscarriages...  
 (“Sheer Good Luck”, *TPOP* 11)

I feel all disjointed inside,  
But the moment I hear your footsteps  
I put all of me together  
And give you my best smile  
(*TPOP*, 30)

In her poem “After Eight Years of Marriage”, she expresses her frustration when she visits her parents for the first time and they ask her if she is happy. At this ridiculous question she cries a lot but nods 'yes'. She ably understands the feelings and sentiments of women and represents commonalty in the women folk in the poem “Anonymous”

I no longer feel I'm Mamta Kalia  
I'm Kamala  
Or Vimla  
Or Kanta,  
Or Shanta  
I cook, I wash  
I Bear I Rear  
I nag, I Wag,  
I Sulk I sag.

(*Nine Indian Women Poets*, P.29)

As Kamala Das has powerfully presented the suffocating life of an unhappy and forced marriage similarly Mamta Kalia focuses on the traditional Indian society and raises her voice against the oppression of women with a sense of vigor and involvement. “Her poems deal with woman's life in and outside house, boredom of married life and chaos of values in society”. (Bajaj, p.19) She is against the discrimination that a woman has to face in the society. She struggles to establish women's identity in the contemporary world. “Mamta Kalia is no strident, feminist activist... yet her poetry shares a vital concern with the basic proposition of women's demands for an equitable life. She has not only the passion for individuality but also support the feminist agenda for liberation from patriarchal oppression, and other limitations. (Vashisth, p.149)

While Kamala Das primarily explores the inner feelings and desires of a woman, Mamta Kalia depicts through her poetry the experiences of a woman in different roles as mother, daughter, beloved, housewife, woman, and as an employer, etc. with a touch of realism. Kalia expresses her dissatisfaction with the present Indian tradition which is full of social and political corruption. Kalia believes that the general values are largely responsible for the deterioration in the status of women in society. Her poems reveal the conflict of dualism in her personality. She applauds traditional values and at the same time advocates for modernity. In a simple style and colloquial manner she exposes the discrimination against woman by using poetry as a medium.

I can't bear to read Robert Frost  
 why should he talk of apple picking  
 when most of us can't afford to eat one?  
 I haven't even seen an apple for many months....  
 whatever we save we keep for beer  
 and contraceptives...

(“Against Robert Frost”, *TPOP*, 2)

Both Kamala Das and Mamta Kalia have the spirit of Indian woman inside them who values the feelings and sensibilities of personal relationships. Kamala Das in her poem, “My Grandmother's House” and Kalia in her poem, “Tribute to Papa” depicts the beauty and strength of relationships and bondages other than man-woman sexual relationships.

However, Kamala Das mourns the loss of her grandmother and celebrates her memories; Kalia objects to the ways and manners of her father and rejects his didacticism. She says;

I wish you had guts, papa  
 To smuggle eighty thousands  
 Watch at a stroke.

(*TPOP*, p. 9)

This collection of poems questions the patriarchal values of our society and she sounds defiant even towards his father. This kind of attitude in her poems makes her even harsher than Sylvia Plath who has also dealt with her experiences with her father in her poem “Daddy”,

Daddy, I have had to kill you,  
 You died before I had time  
 Marble Heavy a bag full of God,  
 Ghastly statue with one great toe  
 Big as a fresco seal...

(*Collected Poems*, p. 6-10)

Like Kamala Das and Mamta Kalia, Gauri Deshpande has also enriched the Indian literary scene by giving her valuable and outstanding contribution. She writes about love and relationships in her three books, *Between Births* (1968), *Poem on a Lost Love* (1970) and *Beyond Slaughter Home* (1972). She is one of the most popular figures in the post-modern era who deals with modern women's rebellion against the rule of her male dictators of the society. Her poetry is full of apparent sensuality. What make her poetry different from the contemporary poets are her conventions, experimentations, spirit, value and sensibility. Her major concerns in poetry are man-woman relationships, concept of death, sense of alienation and frustration, identity crisis, recognition and urge for feminine sensibilities.

Like Kamala Das and Gauri Deshpande Kalia also shoves the readers with the stark realities of life. Her Poem 'Sheer Good Luck' voices crime against women that is very much prominent in modern times. She mesmerises the readers by giving it an unexpected and sudden start. She voices the kidnappings,

abductions, rapes, etc. of innocent women and questions the safety of women in our society.

Gauri Deshpande is regarded as the champion of introducing a new trend in Indian English poetry by breaking shackles of conventional attitude dominated by men and women. Like Kamala Das and Mamta Kalia, she also feels that a common woman is always deprived of the contentment of life, love and peace. A woman has to compromise at an early stage of life even if she is economically independent. Gauri sees her women not as types but as an individual. Her style of writing is not aggressive but certainly very strong, frank and true. The portrayal of characters in her poetry and their interpersonal relationship are so realistic and sensitive that every reader identifies him/her with it. There is always an impression that the author has been writing from her own experience. Keki N Daruwalla, an eminent contemporary Indian English writer, opines, "Gauri Deshpande's poetry deals with the situation of everyday life, the coming of lover, the death of a puppy dog, ingratitude of children; from cities to harsh endearments to a tree cape...." (Daruwalla p. 44) She writes:

Sometimes you want to talk  
About love and despair  
And the ungratefulness of children.  
A man is no use whatever then.

(“The Female of the Species”)

Gauri Deshpande expresses exhausting unrest from which there seems to be no retreat, because it is pre-ordained for the human world. In the poem “Integrations” she remarks;

This gnawing unrest that was sent  
From far away mysteriously  
By thoughts that randomly found their mark  
Destroying to elemental everything  
All that I call me

(“Lost Love”, p.14)

While love emerges as a multi-dimensional experience in case of Kamala Das, Gauri Deshpande's exploration of love and search for individualism in the society has certain limitations. However, in her poem “Beyond the slaughter house” Gauri Deshpande is successful in freeing herself from the obsession of love and turns to wider fields of experience. The poet presents the role of a scientific observer, while the red flower symbolizes her bleeding and unsurpassed passion of love:

This thing which sets up the image  
Of a shadow flower in my mind  
I hold away from me in my hands and examine

(Poems, p.8)

While Mamta Kalia has taken up irony, ordinariness and confessional mode in her poetry, Gauri Deshpande has written poems frankly discussing love and sexuality. Her love poetry is different from the love poetry of other Indian poets. She has remunerated the tradition of love poetry by a contemporary voice. Though love is considered to be the occasion of eternal pleasure in some of her poems, she seems to be quite aware of the dreams and desires which shatter because of love.

Slightly unwelcome,  
Taciturn, you moved in  
Silently the green came into trees,  
Your harsh eyes at into the decay of my dreams  
And the sound of your right pacing

Grew in my blood stream.

(“The Guest”, 3-7)

While the persona of Kamala Das is ready to break the social sanctity of marriage and explores extra-marital relationships in search of true love, for Gauri Deshpande the very intensity of love sometimes becomes painful because it involves almost slavish attachments.

And attachment by the same painful  
Devotion and self-loss to the feel of  
God I'd be canonized.

(“December”, 7-10)

Such feelings are also present in Kamala Das's poetry but she expresses her revolt against the slavery of loveless marriage.

Gauri Deshpande expresses her contempt and distaste for sexual pleasure which reveals her mystification and puzzlement in this patriarchal world. She finds modern love-making devoid of intensity as men do not “plunge into the plunging depth and bodies”. Gauri Deshpande's focus is mainly on the crucial struggle of the psyche to conquer the pressures at various stages of her affiliations with men. She is always torn between fulfilment and frustrations. She feels desolate in her mind and body substantially and intellectually. In the poem “The Eclipse” she admits her identity as a lonely woman and discusses the pain:

When from the good for tune  
Of smiles and caresses  
We move into the inexplicable  
An intelligent darkness  
Of sorrow, delay, departure, suspicion.

(“Lost love”, p.19)

Her treatment of love and sexuality shows how much she is dissatisfied with the society which demands silent acceptance from a woman. Though the poet doesn't become a strident like Mamta Kaliya and Eunice de Souza who adopt an aggressive tone yet she is aware of the 'growing unrest' of her life that gives her pain. She longs for a haven of peace.

I'm affected by a  
Prowling unrest  
And know now what to do  
With my fist that clench  
And unclench  
Thoughts come powering in my eyes  
And drain away leaving  
A whorl of dirt  
If only it would rain  
If only I'd die...

(“Integrations”, 1-7)

All the three poets under study jolt the readers with the ground realities of life. The reader is startled by an unexpected and a sudden start. Even today Kalia's poetry has not lost its sheen and relevance. Following the tradition set by Das and Kalia the contemporary women poets reflect the undercurrent of violence in women's lives in their poetry. Eunice de Souza comments; "Nearly thirty years after they were first published, the poem remains fresh". (de Souza, (1999), 58-59) Bruce King has rightly remarked that

“the directness of expression and natural, idiomatic colloquial vigour is more often found in the verse of Das, Kalia, de Souza and Silgado than in the male Indian English Poets” (King, 161).

Kamala Das, Gauri Deshpande and Mamta Kalia write with the same pen and common thoughts in mind, the thing that differentiates them is the tool through which they present their feelings and frustrations against the society and their concern for the Indian middle class women. They depict, through their poetry, a modern, sensitive and intellectual woman's predicament in relation to her personal and professional life and the social role in a patriarchal setup. They represent the temperament of women who are tortured, demolished and forced to shut their selves within the four walls of the house and are never allowed to speaking out their heart. These poets act as stimulators in presenting the true condition of women in society and thereby sensitize the people towards the genuine problems faced by the women whose defined roles in a patriarchal social setup is taken for granted. The frankness with which these poets articulate the psychic frustrations and compulsions of love or loveless marriage in confessional tone has forced the dominant male world to listen to their voice.

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**WILLIAM WORDSWORTH'S 'RUINED COTTAGE': AN ECO-CRITICAL STUDY**

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Poets, writers and critics have great affinity on nature. Indeed, poet, writers and critics expatiate on social, economic, political, historical, scientific and current events of the day. The fact is that the nature creates man comes to an end and vice versa. Emerson says nature exist every creatures of the world. But the poor condition of the nature is written a lot, spoken in least and activated an iota. This make clarion call to critics to wake up and create new ism is called as Ecocriticism or Green studies.

Ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and physical environment. Both terms are used to denote a critical approach which began in the USA in the late 1980s and in the UK in the early 1990s. In the USA the acknowledged founder is Cheryl Glotfelty co-editor with Harold Fromm. In the 1992 she was also the co-founder of Association for the Study of Literature and Environment. It has journal called-Interdisciplinary studies in literature and Environment. Today Ecocriticism becomes an emergence movement. Since ecocriticism in the USA seems to be strongest in the universities of the east and the west. The Tamil of the Sangam period lived on the lab of value. The five fold classification of the landscape (Krunji, Mullai, Marutham, Naithal, Palai ) as described classical Tamil literature bears testimony to the fact that the style of life they led. The roll of aches and ecstasies of love they experience, the flora and fauna, they lived amidst the crops and plants they cultivated, the nature of the soil they lived on and the occupation they professed.

But today nature has been ill-treated by man of industrialization and pollution etc... the gradual ruin of the creatures which affects literary genre. This biocidal problem has widely spoken in Ecocriticism.

This earth-centered movement pays its attention to nature and man. Nature is always superior to man is exemplarily evidenced by the nature's apocalypses as earthquake, cyclone, famine, flood, drought etc. Today we completely disconnect the cord of the environment and the indisciplinary acts of an individual makes environment dusty and nasty. But since end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century some group poets loves nature very much and preserve its fertility by their green poetry.

Ecocriticism is not ended by explaining the environmental crisis. In future sense, it will become a full-fledged movement when it resolves the environmental problems

Problem in ecology into a widely perceived ecological problem that was then contested politically, legally and in the media and popular culture. Thus Ecocriticism cannot contribute much to debates about problem in ecology, but it can help to define, explore and even resolve ecological problems in this wider sense. (Garrad-6)

Man is always in the circle of ecosystem, in the wider sense, it is an implied mother of him but he often cuts down the umbilical cord of her; wants to live in a synthetical world of life. But in Romanticism especially Return to Nature becomes a clarion call for environmentalism; some of the nature poets as well as environmentalist like (William Wordsworth, John Clare, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley and Keats) make devotional affinity on nature. Indeed, Wordsworth's poems always prioritize to superiority of nature. But into his poems itself the superiority of man over nature is being prevailed under currently. In result, man could understand environmental apocalypse in latter.

This poem 'Ruined Cottage' is highly an ecocritical rhapsody. There is a perpetual dualism caused

by condemn the nature. Nature becomes a serial killer in this poem. Human destiny is affirmed by nature. In this sense we could deploy broadly the two terms 'genocide', and 'ecocide' to explain the problem of environment. The passive form of macrocosmic earth puts to death into the two biocidal terms. Ecocide (human centric, caused by war, pollution, etc...) is made by homicide and ecocide ends with every suicide. Genocide (ecocentric) is hysteria of nature. The controversial enmity among countries, deforestation, pollution, proliferation make environment worst. Humans' unbearable effect on nature is not encouraged by nature. It will retaliate in a big way.

Literature is a photocopy of nature, if nature is affected directly, it will affect literature indirectly. The two ecocidal terms vehemently affects the genre of literature. An area of ecology has been died, it means, even, genre of literature has been died, i.e. pastoral and idyll. Pastoral and idyll bear the sense of nostalgia; our forerunners' eco-cultural tradition and human emotions are filled with the eco-human cultural society is precautioned by the history of genre of literature.

Pastoral often suggests that nature responds to human emotion, a poetic conceit called 'pathetic fallacy' Pastoral has always been characterized by nostalgia I will call 'classical pastoral', which I take to conclude all pastoral literature up until the eighteenth century. Classical pastoral precedes the perception of a general Crisis in human ecology by thousands of years, but it provides the Pre-existing set of literary conventions and cultural assumptions that have been crucially transformed to provide a way for Europeans and Euro-Americans to construct their landscapes.(Garrard-38,40,41)

The perpetual retaliation between man and nature might be a recycle part which affects literature very much. In the end elegy only remains in it. In this way literature intertwined with nature.

The ecosystem is determined by the cyclic seasons which make an immortal weight on nature and itself have its own specialty. Spring and winter are considered to be a better environments rather than summer and autumn. The title and beginning of the poetry line have overtly set out that this poem has being affected by internal ecological problems. The poem begins with the hot summer, unbearable environmental weather; seemingly bright environmental landscape but itself which intuitively affected by outburst of war and mysterious covert malady. There is a dry- landscape and inhabitations have to be brought into view. The anthropocentric view of nature has been completely totaled.

Wordsworth deploys both 'ecocide' and 'genocide' in this poem. Man suffers when he opposes the nature is the Wordsworthian concept; wherever the human superiority is over nature, there nature incarnates to trample down man's power. The homicidal war not only affects every human but also nature is implied. The radioactive fallout and proliferation of nuclear war destroys every Common and even human itself

Other lot was mine .  
 Across a bare wide Common I had toiled  
 With languid feet which by the slipp'ry ground  
 Were baffled still, and when I stretched myself  
 On the brown earth my limbs from very heat  
 Could find no rest nor weak arm disperse  
 The insect host which gathered round my face  
 And joined their murmurs to the tedious noise  
 Of seeds of bursting gorse that crackled round. (18-26)

Today's environment is in the state of apocalyptic rhetoric. Humankind forgets nature's ideology and value of history but nature has passed through the past. It erects its roots from the bygone nostalgic memory. The things which are given by his forefathers are dilapidated by his disinterested reverence. About being deconstructed past, man is passive. The ruined wall of the cottage and bomb blasted ecology have yet to be reinstated. The cottage is not only a sign of individuals' inhabitation but it is a sign of pastoral and history of dilapidated ecology. On the ecocritical point of view, it indicates individuals' disinterestedness and

carelessness over nature by anthropocentrism which is overtly set out here.

The [ ] wall were that same gaudy flowers  
 Looked out upon the road, it was a plot  
 Of garden-ground, now wild, its matted weeds  
 Marked with the steps of those whom as they passed,  
 The goose-berry that shot in long lank slips,  
 Or currents hanging from their leafless stems  
 In scanty strings, had tempted to o'erleap  
 The broken wall. (53-60)

This poem makes a tight link between literature and environment. Literature expresses its sympathetic consolation on every creature in this world and sets out everything. Literature and literary writers only can sympathize when ecology is suffered. There is nothing around the old man. Every area of ecology involves in insidious death. No one is to console nature but poets only take part in nature's lost and suffer by lamenting elegiac song.

I see around me here  
 Things which you cannot see: we die, my Friend,  
 Nor we alone, but that which each man loved  
 And prized in his peculiar nook of earth  
 Dies with him or is changed, and very soon  
 Even of good is no memorial left.  
 The Poets in their elegies and songs  
 Lamenting the departed call the groves,  
 They call upon the hills and steams to mourn,  
 And senseless rocks, nor idly; for they speak (67-76)

The poem goes with both ecocide and the family grief alongside. Lady Margaret consecutively lost his family members and surrounding ecology by internal war and mysterious, insidious diseases. She is stricken by the grief of death of her children, husband, ruined cottage, property, half harvest, debt and poverty etc...

In peace and comfort, and two pretty babes  
 Were their best hope next to the God in Heaven.  
 --You may remember, now some ten years gone,  
 Two blighting seasons when the fields were left  
 With half a harvest, it pleased heaven to add  
 A worse affliction in the plague of war:  
 A happy land was stricken to the heart;  
 'T was a sad time of sorrow and distress:  
 A wanderer among the cottages, (131-139)

Poverty declines the internal structure of the poem of the ecology. There is a transformation in old man's life from country to town. The apocalyptic war displaces the people here and there. Anthropocentric attempt on nature, then, is stepped down.

And poverty brought on a petted mood  
 And a sore temper; day by day he drooped,  
 And he would leave his home, and to the town  
 Without an errand would he turn his steps  
 Or wander here and there among the fields. (174-178)

Lady Margaret is ecologically deprived. The vulgar anger of the nature makes her destitute. She doesn't have any place in the ecology but the five elements of nature helped her indirectly. The deprivation

of ecology gives her 'weary load' and 'heat and cold'.

I roved o'er many a hill and many a dale  
 With this my weary load, in heat and cold,  
 Through many a wood, and many an open ground,  
 In the sunshine or in shade, in wet or fair,  
 Now blithe, now drooping, as it might befall,  
 My best companions now the driving winds  
 And now the 'trotting brooks' and whispering trees  
 And now the music of my own sad steps,  
 With many a short-lived thought that passed between  
 And disappeared. (289-298)

Wordsworth is a great environmentalist and believes in animism. He wants to protect the habitat of biodiversity. He has sympathetic nature on nature but modern world involves into animal husbandry. Animals are heater, eater and taster but not being seen an animalistic concern. The lack concern on animals, productivity, current speed of population and lover of pure non-vegetarian control the birth rates of animals. The recent trend of bio-hybridity creates unauthenticated animal world. Here, in the ruined cottage wolfs and sheep are sacrificed for food or involve in natural disaster.

for food or And, I looking round, I saw the corner-stones,  
 Till then unmarked, on either side the door  
 With dull red strains discoloured and stuck o'er  
 With tufts and hairs of wool, as if the sheep  
 That feed upon the commons thither came  
 Familiarly and found a couching-place  
 Even at her threshold. (330-336)

Margaret's grief, almost ironically, affects the ecology. The earth, flower, weeds, greenness are all withered and involved in it. She curses the nature indirectly. The environment becomes diametrically opposite to her. The seasonal changes change her differently. She has over frost in winter, over rain in October and over hot in summer. There is no plain weather prevailed around her.

Meanwhile her poor hut  
 Sunk to decay, for he was gone whose hand  
 At first nipping of October frost  
 Closed up each chink and with fresh bands of strew  
 Chequered the green-grown thatch. And so lived  
 Through long winter, reckless and alone,  
 Till this reft house by frost, and thaw, and rain  
 Was sapped; and when she slept the nightly damps  
 Did chill her breast, and in the stormy day  
 Her tattered clothes were ruffled by the wind  
 Even at the side of her own fire. (476-486)

Finally Lady Margaret has died 'she sleeps in the calm earth'. That she leaves the story for history is certain but literature loses ecology. Therefore, today man is in the urgent need for taking precautionary measures against the non-environmentalist and mysterious pollution.

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## THE SEXUAL AND THE SPIRITUAL IN JOHN DONNE'S POETRY: EXPLORING "THE EXTASIE" AND ITS ANALOGUES

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### **Abstract:**

*The main features of Donne's technique arise from his notion of ecstasy. Donne's ecstasy describes how the souls of two lovers leave their bodies during their physical union and mix together before returning to their original bodies. This experience purifies each of the lovers and grants them spiritual fulfillment. Writers such as Marsilio Ficino, St. Teresa of Avila, and others have proposed similar ideas regarding the transformative experience that sex has on the soul. These ideas directly collide with the beliefs of some schools of thought, like Stoicism, where sensual experiences are disfavoured compared to the power of order and reason in discovering spiritual truth. A discussion of the various perspectives on ecstasy is followed by a brief examination of how the notion especially pervades three of Donne's works: "The Extasie," "Holy Sonnet XIV," and "The Good-Morrow." This paper looks at the poet John Donne's method of incorporating sexual imagery into religious and spiritual contexts. The aim of this paper is to examine how did Donne depict the unification of soul (spiritual) and body (sexual taboo) to idealize and make us realise to the supreme creation of god through his verses.*

### **Introduction:**

As a metaphysical poet, John Donne uses imaginative and ironic conceits in his poetry which often address topics like love and religion. David Edwards's recent biography has titled him a man of "Flesh and Spirit." Horace Eaton calls him a figure of "extraordinary variety a scholar of civil and canon law, a wit, a poet, a preacher". The entirety of tone in Donne's works from the erotic poetry to the highest sermons can be condensed to these 19 sonnets, written at an intensely personal time of questioning and growth in Donne's life. R. V. Young identifies these sonnets as "an expression of the final crisis in the poet's conversion from Catholic recusancy to a Calvinist orientation consistent with Anglican orthodoxy". Bozanich (1975) explains how Donne as an expert metaphysical poet frequently treated themes such as the union of binaries: In what may now be regarded as the classic era in the study of the Metaphysicals, it was concluded that the distinguishing mark of that school and, above all, of its master Donne was a concern with the problem of the-one-and-the-many, an obsession with unity, a preoccupation with 'the relatedness of things.' Donne's poetry, in this view, is characterized by a search for the means by which such Donne's "Exstasie" / 2 seemingly opposed elements as body and soul, male and female, the earthly and the divine may be subsumed into unity. (p. 274) Donne has a habit of combining sexual and spiritual imagery, as can be seen in a few of his Holy Sonnets and other poems like "The Extasie." The juxtaposition of both sexual and spiritual language may seem strange at first, but this pairing actually makes sense once the reader is familiar with Donne's concept of ecstasy. "Art is the most passionate orgy within man's grasp." John Donne While some may consider John Donne's technique of pairing sexual language with spiritual subject matter as paradoxical, one may argue that this technique serves a logical purpose in illustrating Donne's notion of ecstasy, which describes sexual gratification and spiritual fulfillment as two concurring phenomena.

John Donne (1572 - 1631) was an English poet of the metaphysical school, much of whose now highly regarded poetry was published posthumously. Interest and admiration of Donne's work was

especially reignited by later poets such as T.S. Eliot and William Butler Yeats. Donne's "Exstasie" / 3 This paper not only explores Donne's ideas, but also the ideas of other figures who share similar thoughts on the concept of ecstasy. After discussing Donne's notion of ecstasy, I show how these ideas are conveyed in Donne's poetry by looking at three examples: "The Extasie," "Holy Sonnet XIV," and "The Good-Morrow." Mitchell (1968) gives a concise overview of Donne's notion of ecstasy: The inward union of the body and soul of man is achieved through the outward union of man and woman. Body and soul remain at odds within a person until he loves another person, for the reason that his soul realizes and knows itself through the experience of love, love being a state in which flesh, become subordinate or servant to the psyche, terminates its suppression of soul. During love, the soul is ecstatically freed from the body, transplanted into a richer soil, which is the soul of the other person, and thereby gains new strength and knowledge about itself in relation to its body. When at the termination of love's ecstasy, the soul repairs to its body, the self is no longer a merely carnal or physical being, but a synthesis permitted by love's potentiation of the soul. (p. 91) Donne's notion of ecstasy may prove to be morally troublesome for traditional philosophies such as Stoicism. The Stoics believe the highest virtues are attained through self-control and avoidance of purely sensual experiences. They believe truth and beauty can be found through reason alone. To suggest to the Stoics that the pleasure of sexual experience can lead to spiritual truth would be to undermine their view of virtue. (Donne's "Exstasie" 4).

### **Discussion:**

Donne's life and works show a distinct internal struggle, and this struggle is no more clearly seen than in his Holy Sonnets. The tension found within Donne's Holy Sonnets is a direct result of the religious climate in England during his life, his own life story and choice to become a preacher, and the constant pull he felt between his flesh and his spirit. According to Huntington (1977), the scholar Marsilio Ficino discusses a theory of virtue that greatly resembles Donne's concept of ecstasy and challenges Stoic values: "The central requirement of the theory, that one give oneself up to the attraction of beauty rather than remain under the strict control of reason, involves a crucial violation of the Stoic moral ideal" (p. 41). Ficino's theory permits "forms of sensual love which, however much they alarm the Stoic moralist, if pursued with the proper spirit and with the proper preparation have philosophic value" (Huntington, 1977, p. 42). Cirillo (1969) supports the notion that both Donne and Ficino share a theory where a realm of spiritual possibilities exists within the experience of sexual union: Through mutual love, two lovers achieve that perfect fusion of souls that makes them oneneither he nor she, but both he and she in one spiritual union. This theory is propounded in the writings of Ficino . . . and it suggests that the moment of union is preceded by ecstasy, or a love-death in which the two lovers are said to be dead, to die to life that they may live to love . . . This concept of union may be seen as the basis of many of Donne's Songs and Sonnets. (p. 81) Donne's concept of ecstasy also pervades his poem, "The Good-Morrow." The first two lines of the poem indicate how the love that the speaker and his partner share is so great that it erases all memory of the meaningless and ignorant past they lived before they met each other (1-2).

An examination of the two works . . . reveals not only some of the differences one would expect, but a surprising amount of agreement about the position of bodies and the movements of souls during a contorted ecstasy. That Teresa was famous for the violence of her ecstasies is evidenced by Bernini's statue of her in the throes of a spasm. There is no evidence in Donne's poem, or in his other works, that he himself had experienced an ecstasy. Yet there is a pronounced similarity in the reactions of two strong-minded individuals separated by sex, history, and national culture but curiously alike in temperament to a single startling experience. (p. 125) The remarkable correspondence between Donne's ideas and Teresa's writings is interesting as both of them had significant relationships with the Church and Christianity throughout their lives. After discussing Donne's as well as others' notion of ecstasy, one may briefly explicate his poem, "The Extasie" to demonstrate how these ideas are conveyed in his poetry. The poem begins with two lovers who lay together physically (lines 1-12). Their physical union lays the foundation for the

subsequent bonding of their souls which have left their bodies and “negotiate” in the ether around the lovers' bodies (15-20). The description of the elevation and mixing of their souls demonstrates a view that what is taking place should be considered more than mere sex: We see by this it was not sex, We see we saw not what did move; Donne's “Exstasie” / 6 . Although some look upon Donne's signature technique of juxtaposing sexual and spiritual language with disapproval, the poet employs this method as it stems from his belief in ecstasy. The fact that several other writers and historical figures have developed strikingly similar theories seems to indicate that there might be a deeper truth behind such an experience.

But as all several souls contain Mixture of things, they know not what, Love these mix'd souls doth mix again And makes both one, each this and that (31-36). The mixing of the souls repairs each individual soul's defects and creates a fuller awareness for each soul (37-48). The pairing of spiritual and sexual language parallels the mutual dependence of the body and the soul (49-60). Donne's technique is present in his other poems like “Holy Sonnet XIV.” In this poem, the ecstasy is pondered not between two human lovers, but between the human speaker and God as the speaker begs, “Batter my heart, three-person'd God” (line 1). For the recreational reader of poetry, John Donne's works, both secular and divine, will always offer a unique perspective on the inner man and his struggle between flesh and spirit. But for the studious individual the tension runs much deeper. It is not confined to his poetry, but actually occurs chiefly in his life and then overflows into his work. As Courthope summarizes, “he who examines historically the movement of imagination will find in Donne's subtle analysis and refined paradoxes much that helps to throw light on the contradictions of human nature”.

In fact, in Donne's hands, it even becomes orthodox, an ideal of devotion worthy of emulation. (p. 211) The implications of this thought-process are somewhat radical. Donne essentially turns rape into an act that would not only be permissible, but perhaps even desirable or praise-worthy since the perpetrator is God. This renovation of the act of love-making is supported by Clements (1961) Donne's “Exstasie” / 7 who says that “the poem's theme of love and courtship . . . has been characteristically transformed by Donne to a violent love and courtship” (p. 485). God is perfectly good and cannot be questioned; therefore, if God were to rape someone, that person would be made better as a consequence. Newman (2004) mentions how the poem hints at this idea with its use of the word “ravish:” Here the speaker, impersonating a captive bride, begs to be freed by imprisonment and purified by rape. For that, of course, is the implication of 'ravish,' a word with a long and telling history. The verb derives from Latin rapere via Old French ravir: its root meaning is 'to abduct, rape, carry away by force,' but metaphorically it can mean 'to exalt or transport with joy.' By the thirteenth century, raptus and ravisement could denote either the crime of rape or the experience of mystical ecstasy. (p. 86)

The second stanza gets into more detail about how the ecstasy of the lovers affects each of their souls: And now good-morrow to our waking souls, Which watch not one another out of fear; For love, all love of other sights controls, And makes one little room an everywhere. Donne's “Exstasie” / 8 “Let sea-discoverers to new worlds have gone, Let maps to other, worlds on worlds have shown, Let us possess one world, each hath one, and is one”. (8-14) The lines describe how the ecstasy of the lovers “makes one little room an everywhere” which means that their souls leave their bodies in the bedroom and are transported to a realm of omnipresence or eternity. The final stanza describes how if their love for each other is equally strong, then the mixture of their souls will allow them to transcend death, “If our two loves be one, or, thou and I / Love so alike, that none do slacken, none can die” (20-21). This representation of love overcoming death marks the power of the ecstasy to make the lovers feel infinite and immortal during their union. Sexual union is seen as a path to spiritual harmony because of the relationship dynamic that has been established between the body and the soul. Along with Donne and Ficino, another historical figure who has been known to promote similar ideas regarding the ecstasy of the body/soul is Saint Teresa of Avila. McCann (1954) describes the similarities between the saint's writings and Donne's writings: Donne's “Exstasie” / 5. Payne (1996) notes that: The strategy of the poem appears to be that of a dangerous,

blasphemous anthropomorphism in the heat of devotion, but deflecting that danger, just in time, by the equation of sensual passion to spiritual virtue; for the concluding couplet declares that true freedom comes when one is imprisoned by God, and that purity of heart comes with God's ravishment . . . By the poem's conclusion the conceit of the rape which ensures chastity no longer skirts blasphemy.

### Conclusion:

The tension between the sins of man and his desire for God do not begin and end with Donne. Instead Donne is merely an acutely specified example of the human condition. Several new critics like F. R. Leavis, Cleanth Brooks and many others took their interest in the metaphysical poets especially John Donne. Brooks in his collection of critical essays *The Well-Wrought Urn* (1947) the title taken from Donne's poem "The Canonization" upholds the view that paradox is the most fundamental to a great work of art or poetry. He asserts that the language of poetry should be the language of paradox which is an extension of the language, never a deterrent or limitation to it. Flesh struggles with spirit not only in Donne, but in all mankind. Augustine himself, whose philosophies according to Grant, Donne echoes in his Holy Sonnets (545), said "Thou [God] awakes us to delight in Thy praise; for Thou madest us for Thyself, and our heart is restless until it repose in Thee".

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## THE METAPHYSICAL POETS

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English literature is simply world's greatest literature. English literature is great not necessarily because of William Shakespeare alone, but also because of such rich Anglo-Saxon heritage, Chaucer, humanism, Elizabethan writers, Restoration writing, Metaphysical poets, Pope and Johnson, Romantic and Victorian ages and finally T. S. Eliot. Both English language and literature are of standard; and they are pervasive in shaping the cultural parameters all over the world.

The present chapter is called "The Metaphysical Poets" providing the details of the poets. The Cambridge Guide to Literature in English writes of these metaphysical poets as follows:

'Metaphysical poets,' a term used to group together certain 17th-century poets, usually Donne, Herbert, Marvell, *Vaughan* and Traherne, though other figures like Abraham Cowley are sometimes included in the list. Although in no sense a school or movement proper, they share common characteristics of wit, inventiveness and a love of elaborate stylistic manoeuvres (*Cambridge Guide to Literature in English* 737).

Metaphysical concerns are the common subject of their poetry, which investigates the world by rational discussion of its phenomena rather than by intuition or mysticism. Dryden was the first to apply the term to 17th-century poetry when, in 1693, he criticized Donne: 'He affects the Metaphysics... in his amorous verses, where nature only should reign; and perplexes the minds of the fair sex with nice speculations of philosophy when he should engage their hearts.'

He disapproved of Donne's stylistic excesses, particularly his extravagant conceits and his tendency towards hyperbolic abstractions. Johnson consolidated the argument in *The Lives of the Poets*, where he noted that about the beginning of the 17th century appeared a race of writers that may be termed the metaphysical poets. He went on to describe the far-fetched nature of their comparisons as 'a kind of *Discordia Concors*, a combination of dissimilar images, or discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike. Examples of the practice Johnson condemned would include the extended comparison of love with astrology and of the soul with a drop of dew.

Reacting against the deliberately smooth and sweet tones of much 16th-century verse, the metaphysical poets adopted a style that is energetic, uneven and vigorous. Johnson decried its roughness and violation of decorum, the deliberate mixture of different styles. It has been labeled the 'poetry of strong lines'. In his important essay, "The Metaphysical Poets" (1921), which helped bring the poetry of Donne and his contemporaries back into favor, T. S. Eliot argued that their work fuses reason with passion; it shows a unification of thought and feeling which later became separated into a 'dissociation of sensibility.' S. Ramaswami writes,

*Metaphysical* is truly an odd term to describe the kind of poetry which Donne, Crashaw and Marvell wrote. And by convention *Vaughan* and his master, George Herbert, are also grouped with them. The term 'Metaphysical' is thus used to cover at least two recognizably different kinds of poets: one, gay, witty, analytic and frank; the other, awesomely earnest and devout (Ramaswami vii).

Dr. Samuel Johnson called these poets as 'metaphysical poets' maybe by way of derogatory criticism. Dr. Ben Jonson was too unhappy about Donne's lacking in prosody. Donne used not only conceits, but also obscenity. Dr. Johnson said,

'Whatever is improper or vicious (among them) is produced by a voluntary deviation from nature in pursuit of something new and strange.' He spoke of the basis of the Metaphysical imagery as 'a kind of *Discordia concors*, a yoking together, by violence, of the most heterogeneous ideas, a combination of dissimilar images or discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike. Nature and art are ransacked for illustrations, comparisons and allusions; their learning instructs, their subtlety surprises, but the reader commonly thinks his improvement dearly bought and, though he sometimes admires, is seldom pleased' (Johnson, qt Ramaswami vii).

Dr Johnson spoke of metaphysical poetry as if a modern or postmodern poetry which is full of eccentricity of form and theme. It is too natural; such metaphysical poetry was not loved nor read until its revival in modern times.

This revival, paradoxically enough, owes much to Professor H. J. C. Grierson's publication of the *Poetical Works of Donne* and the *Anthology of Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems of the Seventeenth Century* and the review by T. S. Eliot in the *Times Literary Supplement* of the latter volume. No one seems to have quarreled with Grierson's title which impliedly sets lyrics in a class apart from poems. There is hardly a piece in the anthology which can be regarded as a lyric in the limited sense of something to be sung. And the imagery of the pieces is hardly such as would be apt for musical rendering. There is a radicalism of style and substance, a deliberate, insistent defiance of convention, a revolt against traditional imagery and traditional attitudes to love and faith. 'Realism' often coarse and crude and sensual is their forte.

The metaphysical poets are confessional, personal, and experimental. There is gaiety and obscenity as much as piety and holiness in its emotional make-up. There is poetical frankness.

S. Ramaswami thinks Herbert, Crashaw and Vaughan reveal an intensity of religious emotion which breaks through their odd and rather unfamiliar imagery. All of them deal with central human problems: love, death, God and human foibles and frailty. The explosive, exuberant frankness of their communication is not altogether new. Shakespeare's sonnets had set this tone unmistakably. The rejection of Petrarchan adoration of the unfair sex had already taken place. But Shakespeare was by no means the only one of his day in this regard. He is, however, *hors de combat*. He was unique and a law unto himself. But his intellectual stimulus is pervasive and unmistakable in these poets. They however deal with metaphysical ideas and scholastic quiddities these terms were used by Drummond of Hawthornden of these poets which however were not part of Shakespeare's normal technique. Shakespeare could conduct a metaphysical argument in verse when he wanted with a lively and impressive originality.

Critics think but who among the poets who took their vocation seriously was not intensely 'Metaphysical'? Lucretius and Dante, Milton, Keats in his odes, Wordsworth, Browning, Hopkins, Tennyson, Bridges, Lascelles Abercrombie, why even T. S. Eliot himself, were, in their various ways, great Metaphysicals. The poets specifically designated Metaphysical by literary historians, are not distinguished, as they should be, by any large, comprehensive, coherent, philosophical view of the universe.

The Metaphysical poets were rebels if not revolutionaries. They are disenchanted with conventional love with institutionalized religion and with a political system which made not for the happiness of the people but of a coterie. Traditionalists might dismiss them as 'the late Fantastics' but they 'sowed the wind' all right. The whirlwind was raging, not very far away, in time or distance.

Eliot would say 'a thought was an experience for Donne'. Eliot's own poetry was of that nature the modern verse. *Mr. T.S. Eliot's Mahavakya* is a mere psychological truism, hardly fit to bear the burden of its current high reputation as a Copernican breakthrough in literary criticism. Except in 'Peter Bells,' rigorous mutual isolation between thought and feeling is impossible. It may, however, be admitted that metaphysical poetry requires, more than the poetry of lush sentiment and the poetry of 'brave' rhetoric an alert intelligence and some learning for its inclusive and total comprehension. Unusual comparisons such as that of two lovers in Donne's *A Valediction*, to a pair of compasses, or Cowley's of the world to a chess

board must have had a touch of novelty once and arrested attention. More often still, some of these comparisons are viciously obscure and the meaning is not easy to get at. But this is characteristic of poetry in general, whether it is 'oblique' or not, as an art of language. If poets *must* speak as most other men do, they will cease to be poets. *Vakrokti* as the Indian *alankarika* Kuntaka said is central to poetry. Shakespearian drama has been described as an expanded metaphor. A metaphysical poem on the contrary may be called a compressed riddle challenging your intelligence rather than an expanded epigram. Meaning thus squeezed and compressed into the fewest words could remain utterly inaccessible.

The Metaphysicals were sufficiently distinct in their general character as poets to be regarded by the great Dr. Johnson himself, as 'a race of writers.' But they were continuators rather than originators of a school of poetry unorthodox in their attitude to women and values. It was Shakespeare and not he alone, who exclaimed 'Frailty, thy name is woman!' They were indeed more given to debunking traditional enthusiasms with a Lytton Stracheyan skill in frankness concealed behind a deadly elegance of style, than those who sonneted so relentlessly and pathetically to the idealized phantoms they loved. They set a fashion which influenced the eighteenth-century mock-heroic poetry like Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* and jumping over the hump of early Victorian sentimentality set 'the moderns' a-singing vigorously, adding to their themes, war and the conventional hypocrisies linked with it. Siegfried Sassoon's bitter mockery of the Bishop, who thought that war brought out the best in men, is an exercise in the temper so dear to the Metaphysicals, articulating with grace a growing disenchantment with mere appearances.

The metaphysical poetry speaks of metaphysicals as the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century American Transcendentalism spoke of man-God's relationship.

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## GENESIS MYTH AND THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY ENGLISH LITERATURE

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The present article covers a critical survey of English literature of the 17<sup>th</sup> century that relates to the genesis myth, the Christianity, the Bible, the Church of England and Puritanism.

The 17<sup>th</sup> century English literature may best be described as the age from Donne to Dryden, covering such great writers as Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Pope, the Metaphysical Poets, Banyan and finally Milton.

While playwrights of the early seventeenth century were fashioning language into a supreme theatrical medium, other poets were submitting lyric, satire and elegy to a searching re-examination. The most brilliant of these figures was John Donne (1572-1631). They even questioned the church dogmas.

Donne's was a life of passionate intellectual and personal drama. Reared as a Roman Catholic in a Protestant nation state, aware of being part of a group often summoned to suffering and martyrdom, Donne called the basis of his creed in doubt and read and questioned his way towards a hard-won, restless Anglicanism

Donne was not just a bookish recluse, but a great sermonist, theologian, (catholic in taste and a critic of Protestantism) and metaphysician. He was a popular preacher and mighty poets of salvation. It is said, "Wit as ingenuity - the creation of far-fetched arguments or conceits - was a prized rhetorical achievement, and Donne's skill earned him the highest praise from his contemporaries." (Penguin History 162)

Donne's elegies and satires are simply great. A lyric like 'To his Mistress Going to Bed' explores man's discovering of his self with women. In the *Satires*, Donne was concerned to develop what some contemporaries thought they had discovered in Latin satire: the harsh tones of classical moral outrage.

With 'Satire III', such skepticism becomes a matter of intense personal seriousness, for this is the work in which Donne criticized the aberrations of all Christian sects in his search for 'true religion'. Donne's essays *The Progress of the Soul* and *Anniversaries* speak of his Christian themes.

Donne's sermons are the greatest of his prose works, but were preceded by a number of pieces which show Donne involved in both the personal quest for religious experience and the worldly pursuit of profitable employment.

It is this belief that underlies the most famous passage in Donne's prose as Andrew Sanders writes: No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friends, or of thine own were; any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee (Donne, qt Sanders. 198)

The courtiers addressed by Donne in many of his sermons were also the recipients of verses by Ben Jonson (1572-1637), and it is a measure of Jonson's stature that, in addition to being one of the leading playwrights of the age, he was also its most influential court poet.

Jonson's royalist vision is, along with his distinctive reworking of classical sources, an element in the work of Robert Herrick (1591-1633). Yet Herrick's voice is his own, as is his belatedly Elizabethan Arcadia 'of Maypoles, hock-carts, wassails, wakes' to which, in *Hesperides* (1633), he brought the refining contrivance of wit and sensuality

In 'Ask me no more' by Thomas Carew (1594/51640), beauty's fading roses are enshrined in his mistress's cheek, yet compared to Herrick there is a coldly fastidious and urbane contrivance in many of Carew's lyrics. His 'Elegy on the Death of Dr Donne, Dean of St Paul's' nonetheless remains the most judicious critique of the master the age produced.

The religious lyrics of George Herbert (1593-1633), first published posthumously in *The Temple* (1633) and frequently reprinted, are 'a picture of the many spiritual Conflicts that have past betwixt God and my Soul, before I could subject mine to the will of Jesus my Master: in whose service I have now found perfect freedom'. Herbert's lyrics are thus the fruit of a profound engagement with the rites, beliefs and personal demands of the national church as the believer, deeply influenced by the High Anglican community established by Nicholas Ferrar at Little Gidding, discovers the unworldly depths of his vocation.

It was widely recognized by contemporaries that in so wholly dedicating his muse to Christ, Herbert had fashioned a body of poetry which, in its power and scope, deserved an honorable place beside the Scriptures themselves. *The Temple* was hugely influential and widely imitated. None took its substance more to heart than Henry Vaughan (1621). In 1650, Vaughan issued one of the most intense accounts of spiritual awakening in 17th-century poetry: his *Silex Scintillans* ('The Flashing Flintstone'), republished in a revised form in 1655. Sustaining all these lyrics is a tremulous intimation of supernatural joy, the rapture of a man who, having glimpsed the radiance of eternity amid spiritual darkness, is inspired to speak in tongues.

To another poet Eden remained open, a shining field of 'Orient and Immortal Wheat'. The poems of Thomas Traherne (1637/74), along with his finer prose work *Centuries of Meditation*, were rediscovered at the start of this century and present an image of the mystic's recovery of childhood innocence and light, the felicity of a man who has shunned the baits of the world and recaptured 'the Highest Reason' in a blissful union with God in nature. If Traherne's verse is sometimes undisciplined in its enthusiasm, it remains extraordinarily potent in its joy. Nonetheless, in 'Solitude' he wrote a moving study of mystic vision occluded.

The spiritual career of Richard Crashaw (1612/1349) return to childhood but a pilgrimage that took him from High Anglican circles in Cambridge through to a conversion to Roman Catholicism and eventual death at Loretto. His *Steps to the Temple* (1646, 1648) reveals the 'influence of both Spanish mysticism and the intensely artificial rhetoric of the continental baroque style. Paradox, wit and a sensuousness allied to spirituality characterize poems like 'The Weeper.'

An altogether greater poet the finest late flowering indeed of 'metaphysical' wit - is Andrew Marvell (1621-78). His erotic poems show particular aspects of his excellence. 'The Definition of Love', for example, derives its power from the dramatic contrast between the poet's frustrated ardour and the geometrical imagery, rational to the point of ruthlessness, with which he proves the impossibility of sexual fulfillment. A second love poem, the exquisite 'To his Coy Mistress', again shows Marvell juxtaposing passion and logic while bringing to its apogee one of the great themes of Renaissance classicism: the seizing of erotic pleasure before the onset of inevitable death. In what is perhaps the best-known 17th-century image of the triumph of time, the delicacy of Marvell's octosyllabic couplets juxtaposes immensity and the specific, life and love, the macabre certainty of death and a power at once visionary and quietly ironic.

John Milton is the greatest of the 17<sup>th</sup> century English poets. At the centre of Milton's life and art lay an ineradicable sense of vocation, the commitment of a mighty Protestant and humanist scholar to his God, his nation and the national voice through which that God might speak. Perhaps no great poet ever prepared himself more arduously for his task. An autobiographical passage from his Latin *Second Defense of the English People* (1654) tells how at home and later at St Paul's School Milton began that study of the classical and Christian inheritance by which, as he wrote in his pamphlet *Of Education* (1644), he hoped

the scholar might take his place in the civic community and 'repair the ruins of our first parents by regaining to know God aright'. These social and religious principles shaped his entire career.

Debarred from founding a heaven on earth, Milton sought the paradise within. In defeat, the poet was reborn. Between 1658 and 1663 he dictated his epic *Paradise Lost*, publishing it first as ten books in 1667 and then in a revised edition of twelve books in 1674. It is insufficient however to read *Paradise Lost* simply as a personal response to private circumstances. Though Milton could present himself as blind and persecuted in a bad world and do so with all the heart-rending power of the lines that open his seventh book it is proper to view the poem itself as a magnificently comprehensive answer to the range of demands which created the possibility of writing a vernacular epic in the first place.

In 1671 there appeared *Paradise Regain'd. A Poem. In IV Books. To which is added Samson Agonistes. Paradise Regained* is a brief biblical epic, much influenced by commentaries on the Book of Job. It is a slighter and more didactic work than *Paradise Lost* and more austere in style. It portrays Satan's tempting Christ in the wilderness in order to test the paradoxical nature of the second Adam, the God made man. Christ is portrayed as a figure that should conquer such temptations even as the first Adam succumbed to them. In this Christ succeeds, but the conflict has little of the emotional power of the ninth book of *Paradise Lost*.

Bacon's *Essays or Counsels, Civil and Moral* (1625), first issued as ten sequences of aphorisms in 1597, were finally enlarged to fifty-eight pieces. In the later editions, the style is more digressive, but an anti-Ciceronian brevity, a cold ruthlessness and even cynicism characterize these attempts at what, in *The Advancement of Learning* (1605), Bacon had seen as the necessity for an empirical enquiry into the 'culture of the mind'

Biography and didactic character writing combine with satire and good counsel in the works of Thomas Fuller (1608-61) who, in addition to being a biographer, was a preacher, essayist, wit and antiquary.

For another great prose stylist of the age, the Norwich doctor Sir Thomas Browne (1605-82), truth lay partly in the ideas of Bacon. Browne's *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* ('Vulgar Errors') of 1646 is in some degree a response to Bacon's call for a 'calendar' of common misunderstandings. Browne paid formal tribute to the Baconian ideal when he wrote he wished the book might have been the work of 'some co-operating advancers'. Fortunately, it is entirely his own - a collocation of massive erudition and curiosity which works through a critical use of authority, reason and experience. As Browne discusses if there are griffins in nature or whether 'Lampries have nine eies', so he reveals, as Coleridge wrote, 'the Humorist constantly mingling and flashing across the Philosopher'.

Such enquiries of Browne's were not purely materialistic since science, he believed, could work to the glory of God. 'Those highly magnify him, whose judicious enquiry into his Acts, and deliberate research into his Creation; return the duty of a devout and learned admiration.' This is 'The Religion of a Doctor' embodied in Browne's *Religio Medici* (first authorized edn 1643). The book is one of the supreme achievements of 17th-century English prose, and what animates the carefully contrived biblical parallelism and wide-ranging vocabulary is a soaring yet quizzical fideism that is in some respects comparable to Donne's. The resulting statement of faith is a portrait of a mind enamored of paradox.

In Browne's *Christian Morals* (published 1716), the imaginative reach of the earlier works has been subdued by the influence of Christian stoicism and the maxims of the copybook. For Jeremy Taylor (1613-67), the author of *Holy Living* (1650) and *Holy Dying* (1651), 'Contentedness in all estates is a duty of religion'

Some contemporary poets attempted the epic. Cowley's biblical *Davideis* (1656) however, lacking in narrative tension, is unfinished. Sir William Davenant's *Gondibert* (1651) tried to found epic on the drama, but any real interest the work might have is in his *Discourse upon Gondibert and Hobbes's Answer of 1650*.

Early in his career Dryden had written his *Heroique Stanzas* (1659) the death of Cromwell but,

changing with the nation, in 1660 he composed his *Astraea Redux*. The most considerable early statement of Dryden's beliefs however is *Annus Mirabilis* of 1666. This poem uses the stanza form of Davenant's *Gondibert*, and celebrates the English victory in the First Dutch War, seeing this as the-work of a strong and newly united nation guided by Providence.

Marvell offered his praise to another Restoration satirist: Samuel Butler (1612-80), the author of *Hudibras* (1662). Butler's is an immensely long and intermittently brilliant three-part burlesque of heroic romance in which he satirizes those Puritan dogmatists whose abuse of language is a cover for minds working furiously to their own squalid advantage. The range of experiment in Restoration satire can be seen again in the work of John Oldham (1655-83). His best-known work, the *Satyrs on the Jesuits* (1679), is historically important as a miscellany combining Elizabethan and Cleverlandesque styles with classical imitation and mock-encomium.

This is a genre chiefly associated in the Restoration period with Aphra Behn (? 1640-89), the first professional woman of letters in England. *Oroonoko* (1688) forms the basis of Behn's reputation. As a woman living by her pen in a licentious age, Behn provided the market with what it would buy. A narrative such as *The Nun, or The Fair Vow-Breaker* (undated), for example, is a neatly contrived sensational tale embracing the hypocrisy of convent life, passion, bigamy and murder. The Restoration drama of Dryden, Congreve, Wycherley and others briefly touched the issue of religion and ethics.

The Restoration was an important period of experimentation in the styles of continuous prose. Evelyn's immense *Diary* is a dignified reflection of his multifarious interests and was written partly for his descendants, but it is Samuel Pepys (1633-1703), writing in shorthand and for his own purposes, who is the supreme English diarist.

John Bunyan's (1628-88) use of a plain style is a measure of his spiritual integrity. 'God did not play in convincing of me,' he wrote in the Preface to *Grace Abounding*; 'the Devil did not play in tempting of me; neither did I play when I sunk into the bottomless pit, when *the pangs of hell caught hold upon me*: wherefore I may not play in my relating of them, but be plain and simple, and lay down the thing as it was.' The passionate simplicity of such prose is the vehicle of a man unshakeable in his conviction that he has been called from sin to grace and that God has summoned him to a spiritual mission. As *Grace Abounding* unfolds, so Bunyan's absolute and comprehensive understanding of the spiritual fever played along his pulses makes us aware that his is the voice of the central Puritan experience, of religious crisis set in an ordinary world of exact and truthful images:

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07

## ANITA NAIR'S *LESSONS IN FORGETTING*: AN EFFICIENT REPRESENTATION OF INTRICATE NATURE OF PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

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### **Abstract:**

*Anita Nair has been labeled as a writer preoccupied with only women's issues though she touches and boldly reflects varied aspects of individuals. Nair writes rigorously about human relationships in their soft and intense shades. Lessons in Forgetting (2010) slaps back all critical accusations that she shouts out women's issues in her literary works excluding men's issues. The novel is about two different parents and their children. The central question of the novel is: "Am I a good parent?" regardless of their gender. The novel focuses on the problems parents face while raising children, especially with teenagers in complex, perplexed, modern families. The writer is considerably successful in weaving a complex web of parent-child relationship and a narrative that travels back and forth among three to four generations. The present research article tries to explore the writer's skill of presenting parent-child relationship to serve the prophecy of the novel that a human relationship especially parent-child relationship goes through critical ups and downs and is seasoned with the exchange of second chances, forgiveness and acceptance.*

**Key words:** *parent-child relationship, attachment, engrossment, reciprocal, bidirectional, cyclic, forgiveness, parenting, motherhood.*

**"Children are our second chance to have a great parent-child relationship."**

**- Laura Schlesinger**

### **Introduction**

Human beings grow up in groups. They are dependent on one another. The relationship between an individual and the group, whether small like a family or large like society, is always reciprocal and dynamic. Children cannot become truly grown up persons on their own. They need to be related. They need relationships, families, societies in order to function effectively. The most important relation in an individual's life is parent-child relationship. One of the leading Indian English novelists, Anita Nair has been assertively exposing the different angles to ruminate over the ironies of the Indian society. Though she has mostly been discussed as a feminist writer, there are many other facets to her writing, which are largely ignored by the critics and readers. The central element of Nair's sixth novel, *Lessons in Forgetting* (2010) is parent-child relationship. Moving around the upheavals in the families of Meera and Jak, it brings almost all colours of parent-child relationship onto the canvas. While also presenting many shades of this relationship, it also etches out a perfect reflection of critical, bidirectional, mature and cyclic parent-child relationship.

*Lessons in Forgetting* is Anita Nair's seventh novel published in 2010. It is about a father and a mother who are striving hard to be better parents. Prof. J. A. Krishnamurthy, Jak is a forty five year old cyclone study expert and a professor at the University of Florida. He has two daughters and has got separated from his wife Nina. His elder daughter, Smriti, is nineteen year old. She has had a mysterious and terrible accident which has sent her to a comatose condition. Nina has stayed back in America with their younger daughter Shruti; while Jak has come to India to find out the truth behind the accident. Meera is a

forty four year old perfect wife of a corporate man and a famous cook book writer. Meera's husband Giri is an overambitious and shallow person. One fine day he leaves Meera without any serious concern about their two children, Meera's mother and grandmother. Meera is initially baffled while running the lavish house called Lilac House with four members of her family belonging to four different generations. Nair brings these two central characters, Jak and Meera together while forming the narrative in imitation of different stages of a cyclone

Among all human relationships parent-child is the most fundamental one. All theorists may disagree regarding its nature or the dimensions along which it develops but they all agree upon the crucial role it plays in the survival and well-being of the society. According to Carol Mooney (2010), the bond between parents and children begins from the time of pregnancy. The birth actualizes it. Skin to skin contact with the child during the sensitive period creates an attachment which forms the safe base from which the child explores the world around and within. If children are deprived of such contact, then they are likely to fail in other relationships in their adult life. Now-a-days, it has been well acknowledged that not only mother but father too creates such emotional bonding with child during the sensitive period. Richard Reed (2001) in his article, "Fathers: Those Engrossing First Minutes" describes the state of mind of fathers when they first see and cuddle their child:

Fathers become filled by the image and idea of their new child. Most fathers feel elation at the sight of their newborn. The feeling comes over them in the first few minutes of seeing their child and remains for several days. (2001: n.p.)

As every other phenomenon in life, Jak takes fatherhood with the same sincerity and sensitivity. The decision of having a child was not at all easy for him. But once he becomes a father, he tries his best to be a good one. Kala Chithi, Jak's aunt who accompanies Jak after the departure of his father and mother describes the alluring moments of Jak's engrossment with Smriti:

When Smriti was born you spent all that first night gazing at the child. You had never known anything like it before. This liquification, this sagging of your heart when her tiny fist clutched at a finger of yours... when she woke in the night, you would wrap her in an old blue denim shirt soft with many washings. In those dark solitary osmosis you knew yourself to be one with the universe and your child. If her eyelid fluttered you felt it in the beat of your heart. (50)

What shines the most in the relationship between Jak and Smriti is their strong bonding. This high level of involvement has not left their relationship earthly. When the novel opens, nineteen year old Smriti is raped and paralyzed. She is in coma, 'dead-to-the-world'. Still, Kala Chithi observes, whenever Jak is not home she screams. The security that Jak's assuring presence has on her accompanies her even in her 'abyss' and 'abjection'. Jak is tormented by realizing the pain Smriti must be going through in her present state.

Carl Jung while discussing father archetype states that the father archetype performs two roles: the harsh role of setting rule in order to prohibit the child from anti-social (or incestuous) behaviour and the good role of providing care and warmth. Jak, who sees himself as a product of the new era, wants to be a liberal father and so never sets rules for his daughters. He is responsive to their material as well as emotional needs. However, he is not of all demanding at them. He confesses, "He never laid down the law; never played the heavy father. He never said, no dating, no doing this, no doing that... it's your life. If you screw it up, you'll have no one to blame but yourself" (116). He plays the good role in the best possible way. His concern for Smriti and its impact on their relationship has already been discussed. There are plenty of instances in the novel of Jak playing or having warm communication with Smriti. The best one will be when Jak tries to remove the fear of water from seven year old Smriti's mind. He shares his own experience of fighting the terror of water while swimming in the sea of Minjikapuram. He tells Smriti, "You see that is why Minjikapuram has a very important place in my life. I learnt a lesson there. You don't run away from things that terrify you" (66). Initially, Jak seems like an over-indulging father but eventually we come to

know how successful Jak has been in performing the legislative function, attributed to the father. It is revealed to the fullest at the end of investigation of the accident. Jak discovers that Smriti has been gang raped by the local mafias. They were fetching a big money from the racket of mass female foeticide and wanted Smriti to keep mum and not to raise her voice against it. But it did not terrify her. She chose to fight the evil and so was martyred. Jak has had an incredible impact on her. Jak has integrity and strength of character that creates a strong belief in him in Smriti's mind. She believes that as far as her Papa Jak is there nothing terrible can happen to her. Maybe, failure to maintain that trust haunts Jak more than the actual incident. Perhaps, that is the genesis of Smriti's frequent scream.

Jak agrees to every whim and expedition of Smriti just to see her happy. He does not want to see the grief, the 'shadow' in her eyes which was once in his eyes after the departure of his father. He sends Smriti to India alone as he believes in her capabilities and his own training. Seeing her in her terrible condition, however, he feels he is responsible.

Jak keeps on asking Meera, how she could draw the line and could decide where to stop while interfering in their life. But Meera knows there are no general ways. She does not have any strategies. She parents not as she wants but as how it is meant to be. It is a critical task and she could cope somehow. Giri, her husband never wanted children. It is Meera who thought that children will make her life complete. Giri fulfills all material needs of his children but fails to perform other parental functions. He keeps pushing the legislative functions on Meera:

Children were hers to worry about, while Giri was the one to laugh and frolic with. He knew how to be the tyrant father too but mostly he played along with their dreams and desires. Fatherhood for Giri is how he had shaped it and not what it meant to be. (180)

In Jak's words, Meera has the ability to give all and nothing. She has the ability to attune and still be utterly honest with her inner urge to find herself. She is the best in giving care and warmth to her children. It is so much evident through her frequent haptic communications with them. However, she does not fail to perform the legislative function despite the possibility of hatred from her children. While reacting to Freud's opinion that women want child to resolve 'penis envy', Julia Kristeva, a well-known psychoanalytic feminist, says that not as penis envy but women wish for a child as an antidote to 'feminine fatigue'. Kelly Oliver (2006) explains its meaning:

Feminine fatigue... comes from women's "extraneousness" to and "extravagance" within the phallic order. (Oliver, 2006: 1)

According to Kristeva, women are bisexual since birth and continuous fight with bisexuality results in feminine fatigue. Motherhood is the only cure for this. Meera again and again stresses how Nikhil is more affectionate and kind to her than Giri and how Nayantara has always been a daddy's girl. The difficulties parents face while dealing with adult children have been very well represented by the writer, especially the episode of dispute between Meera and Nayantara. Here is the description of what happens between them

Ever since Nayantara became a young woman, Meera has known what it is to keep burning coals in her heart. A piercing consuming heat as she waits for Nayantara to come home. Waiting by the phone for her to call, ears cocked for the doorbell to ring... The squabbling, the heated arguments, the left hook and the right jab in places where it hurts as a once angelic child turned into a cruel monster if she didn't have her way. (255)

During their transition period, there occur many changes in children which are usually shocking for the parents too. One day, Meera finds out that Nayantara has started smoking and as a genuine reaction she fulminates at her with the language she had been thinking she would never use for her children. Meera always thinks why mothers have to bear the burns when it comes to the parenting of daughters. It reminds us about the feminine fatigue proposed by Kristeva. It gives a fair explanation about the love-hate relationship between Meera and Nayantara. But eventually with her extravagant love she wins over her children's hatred. No matter how they react, Meera does not fail to play the harsh parental role that Giri has

been avoiding. Despite the detestation of her children, she tries to set rule as a precaution. Nayantara is academically brilliant. Suddenly, in the middle of her engineering at IIT Chennai, she decides to leave her studies and do modeling. Giri says he is okay with it but Meera will not allow her to do this. Initially, Meera is worried about Nayantara's safety and is not sure about the practicality of her idea of giving up engineering and pursuing modelling career. Finally, Meera allows her to try modelling only if she achieves the balance between her IIT education and modelling. She even gives her some correct contacts where her safety is assured.

Why does Meera mesmerise us as a charming mother? It is because of her ability to balance between laying down ground rules and ensuring that her children develop a sense of autonomy too. According to Kristeva, the true charm of motherhood is “miracle of Love”. Kelly Oliver (2006) simplifies it as a series of repetitions of psychic passion and dispassion towards the child. It is this miracle of love that allows a woman to love her child and then, eventually, wean it to become a separate being. It is not the passion but the dispassion that a successful mothering consists in. Meera herself articulates the need to wean a child to be a separate and accepted part of the society despite the possibility of several harms involve in it. She is also aware of the turmoil parents go through while doing so. Jak thinks that Smriti was in trouble because he was not there to protect her. He regrets for letting her go to India on her own. Meera tries to make Jak understand that despite the negative possibilities, parents have to let go their children in the world to be independent beings. She tells Jak, “There is no knowing Kitcha {Jak's childhood name}. We do our best for our children, we want the best for them, you can't blame yourself for what happened with Smriti... No matter how old our children grow, we do not relinquish them easily to the world” (254).

Another motif that links all flashbacks and flashforwards in the narrative is the cyclic nature of parent-child relationship. It is in accordance with the continuous lineage of human beings. Children are a kind of continuation of parents' existence into the future. A complete parent-child relationship is a web of influences from three generations. Meera and Jak even overtly express that throughout their parenthood they tried not to be like their parents but eventually repeated their parents' mistakes. The novel starts with an episode at a wine launch party from where Giri departs and never returns into Meera's life. The host of the party insists Jak to drop Meera and Nikhil home. Jak easily gets connected with Nikhil at a subtle level as he himself has gone through the same experience at that age due to a ran away father. The novel clearly travels through three generations. The two central characters, Jak and Meera belong to the middle generation which is crushed between the influence of the earlier generation and the expectations of the later generation. Jak's father is a recluse and not at all interested in domestic life. He tries to leave the house immediately after Kitcha's birth. But he gets increasingly involved in Kitcha and finds it difficult to leave him. When Jak becomes thirteen, he leaves the house to join an *ashram*. Sarada, Jak's mother keeps waiting for him for few years until he declares his final decision that he will never return to domestic life. Few years later Sarada decides to marry another man and start her life anew. Jak does not accept his parents' decisions. He finds them selfish. When he thinks of becoming a father, these bad examples of parenting keep scaring him. He thinks that he will not be able to do justice to the commitment and responsibility expected of a father. His experiences influence the decisions he takes as a father. The narrator describes his state of mind thus:

You never wanted a child. It frightened you, the thought of being a father. We bring to our adult lives what we learnt from the adults we knew as children. How could you be a proper father? It terrified you that you will be unable to keep the commitment a child would demand of you. That you would fail the child somehow. Just as your father did. Who knew, when the time came, how you would be? Would an innate selfishness emerge? (49)

Parent-child relationship goes through many stages. In addition, it is also a bidirectional phenomenon. It is a joint product of parent effect and child effect. If it is not reciprocal, it is not a true relationship. Both parents and children influence each other. The difference is that the parents had once been children and

children are yet to be parents. Parents had many conflicts with their parents when they were children. Some of them were resolved and some were not. Now they have their own children and have conflicts with them. While dealing with their children they repeatedly introspect on their relationship with their parents and eventually the unresolved conflicts get settled down.

Derek Hook, while discussing Jacques Lacan's concept of the-name-of-the-father, brings into light the cyclic nature of parent-child relationship. He elaborates how mother, through her discourse, mediates the law of the father. Her relation with her own symbolic father actualizes the paternal function. Kristeva states that motherhood, besides other aspects like menstruation, gives women the capacity to interrupt the linear time and adds to their ability of experiencing 'cyclical and monumental temporality'. In her book *Knock me Up, Knock Me Down* Kelly Oliver underlines the cyclic nature of mother-child relationship put forth by Kristeva in "Women's Time" (1982):

The experience of pregnancy and motherhood puts a woman back in touch with her own relationship to her mother, not only in terms of an identification with her experience as a mother but also in terms of her repressed or bodily memories of her own intimate relationship with her mother's body. In other words there is erotic or at least sensuous dimension to the bond between daughter and mother that is reawakened in pregnancy, birth and motherhood. (Oliver, 2012:52)

Erik Erikson while discussing the eighth stage of child's development elaborates the cyclic nature of parent-child relationship. At the last stage an individual meditates over the whole life cycle and realizes the integrity of life. They revisit their relationship with their parents. Maier quotes Erikson:

Integrity rests upon an acceptance of mankind's collective and individual life cycle as something that has to be and by necessity permitted no substitutions. It thus means a new, different love of one's parents. It is a comradeship with the ordering ways of distant times and different pursuits. (72)

Anantraman, Jak's father leaves home when Jak is just thirteen. He tries to explain to Kitcha (Jak) how it is essential for him to seek the ultimate truth but being just a child Kitcha hardly understands anything of it. His parents were demanding acceptance and forgiveness from him. But Kitcha is just a teen and it is utterly not sensible to expect such mature emotions from him.

Anantraman's departure makes Kitcha an anti-social being and fills him with unexplainable and inexpressible rage. Sarada keeps hoping for Anantraman's return for some more years and one day receives a letter from him declaring his final decision of giving up *Grihasthashram* and never to return. Sarada too moves ahead in her life. She decides to marry another man and start her life anew. Otherwise sensible and mature, Jak does not bear the idea of her mother marrying another man and has an outburst on her. This breaks their relationship forever. Jak neither accepts his parents nor does he forgive them. After marriage Sarada goes to Tanzania. Jak never goes to meet her not even when Sarada dies of Cancer. She keeps burning with a regret of having failed her son but Jak's rage for her remains unflinching. It was but obvious. Forgiveness is a very mature emotion. It comes later in life after experiencing different colours of life. When Meera later expects the same from Nikhil, Jak thinks:

No one knows this better than he does, children cope but not without being marked. Children learn to understand but not without losing an element of hope. How can adults expect forgiveness of children? It is an adult emotion. It is not a child's natural Instinct to make compromises on behalf of parent. An exemplary rare child, perhaps he wasn't one. All he knew was a black rage at what was expected of him. (231)

Many years later, when Jak realizes that Nina and he are not happy together, instead of clinging to her the way his mother did to his father, he decides to separate from her. He tries to explain his decision to Smriti with the help of various theories but he fails. Later, Jak speculates that besides being interested in pursuing Women's Studies in India, Smriti was actually after one more thing- a faux family, a family which Jak and Nina failed to give her. In one of her letters to Shruti, Smriti requests her to join her in India because here,

family is everything.

After getting divorced from Nina, Jak wants to start a new life with multi-talented and multi-lingual Monique but Smriti takes her as a usurper. She makes every effort to spoil their relationship. Jak has no other option but to forgive Smriti because she is just doing the same that he did many years back when dealing with his mother's remarriage. The narrator voices his thoughts thus:

Perhaps, we start learning to forgive only when our sins come back to visit us. It was when Smriti became sulky, fractious, recalcitrant fifteen-year-old that Jak began to understand the torment he had subjected his mother to. It was when Smriti refused to accept that he could have a life of his own that his own bristling, unyielding stance at his mother's attempt to rebuild her life seemed childish and unjustified. (238)

The most difficult period of parenting is children's transition from childhood to teenage and teenage to adulthood. Children themselves are baffled due to all emotional, sexual and physical changes happening inside them. Parents too are shocked with these changes. They start losing their children's dependency on them. Nayantara and Smriti belong to this period of delayed adulthood. It is always on Meera's mind that she will never shout at her the way her mother did but she does when she discovers that Nayantara has started smoking. Meera wants Nayantara to understand her fear. But she knows it very well that she will not until she has a child of her own.

*Lessons in Forgetting* is no doubt a journey of a father and a mother who have learnt to forgive after repeating the same mistakes of their parents. It represents almost all qualities of a true parent-child relationship. Two central families in the novel are children-centered families.

“Am I a good parent” or “am I disappointing my children” are the questions the protagonists are preoccupied with. The novel portrays three to four generations so give a full view of all stages parent-child relationship goes through. Besides being reciprocal and bidirectional, the writer successfully incorporates all conflicts between parents and their children. The novel shows the complete cycle of parent-child relationship. For example Jak's parents fail him due to their respective priorities. He does not accept their decisions nor does he forgive them until he himself gets into the same dilemma when his daughter refuses to accept and understand his decision of getting separated from his wife and starting a new life of his own. This complete cycle helps the characters in the novel to achieve credibility and convincing transformations.

### **Conclusion**

Thus the novel highlights the comradeship involved in parent-child relationship. The narrative techniques Nair employs helps to explore the fundamental and crucial features of parent-child relationship like, reciprocity, bidirectionality, complexities, and, very importantly, the cyclic direction of influences of parents on the child and the child on parents. If these features are missing, it is not really a relationship but immature and incomplete bonds. While building the narrative in the form of different stages of cyclone Nair brings Jak, a father in trouble and Meera, a mother lost in mess together. Both while settling conflicts with their beloved children revisit their relationship with their respective parents. This journey backward helps them not only to rejuvenate their relationship with their children but also to understand and accept their parents' decisions and forgive them. Nair portrays not only one sided bonds like those shown between Giri and children but also mature and critical parent-child relationship, fascinating and charming in all their successes and failures. She, very clearly, shows how parents bring something from their experience as a child to their parenthood and send something from their parenthood to their children to carry it forward. Now, what do they bring from past and what do they pass further in future creates the whole difference.

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**PORTRAYAL OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN ANITA NAIR'S  
LESSONS IN FORGETTING**

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**Abstract**

*Sexual violence is oriented to the sexual abuse of the female child, rape, gang rape, intimate-partner-violence, lesbianism and female feticide. Being cultural and traditional bound, many women hesitate to talk on sexual rights in Anita Nair's novels. Anita Nair writes what she sees and what she hears through her characters that bring forth the suffocated environment of the corrupted modern society. It causes untold misery, cutting short lives and leaving countless women living in pangs of pain and fear in every country of the world. Violence against women is one of the commonest crimes in the world, which most often goes unnoticed and unpunished. Men use violence to dominate and subjugates women. They forces women to toe the line and accept her inferior position in life. Wife battering, rape and other forms of violence bring home to us the terrifying conviction of male power in its unquestioned right to control woman or child, vulnerable to it. The present paper focuses on Anita Nair's Lessons in Forgetting to elucidate the theme of sexual violence in it. It provides a brief view on the phenomenon of violence, and then it deals with one of its particular areas, namely violence against women.*

**Key Words:** *Sexual violence, Rape, Women feticide, Lessons in Forgetting.*

Sexual violence explores with great objectivity the complication in human life. The stubborn male patriarchs of the Indian society oppress the female by eschewing the desires of her unconscious state and label her as a sexual puppet for man. As an outcome of this desire, sexual harassment, rape and violence are more popped out in the society, where women are used as a prey to men's desire.

Sex is ordinarily a pleasurable experience, and it turns out to be an ordeal for her. This is the case in every instance where woman is considered as an object of gratification for man, where her feelings and urges are not catered to, where she has no freedom to express herself and her feelings. Instead of being a uniting force, sex acts as an instrument of revenge and thus instead of bringing the couple closer to it, estranges them more and more. As an adolescent, sex is a shame to her, an embarrassment, and a matter of pride and after marriage a source of enjoyment. So, her later withdrawal cannot be interpreted as frigidity, but one caused by the incompatibility that exists in matters of sex. Hence, sexual violence explores with great objectivity the complication in human nature, the two necessary components of which are sex and violence.

Anita Nair encroaches upon a piece of hallowed ground; the untouched subject of rape in her novel *lessons in forgetting*. Sexual violation of Smriti in the novel is an *unbearable incident in the novel*.

The central theme of the novel *Lessons in forgetting* is sexual violence. Her fourth novel *Lessons in Forgetting* is about the plight and predicament of a girl who is raped by a gang of selfish men. The story revolves around Smriti and her father Professor J.A.Krishnamoorthy often called as JAK, a cyclone studies expert. He has two daughters. Smriti is his first daughter and the second daughter is Sruthi. Due to some inconveniences, JAK divorced his wife. The ego clash takes on the children and now they are paying the price. Smriti liked to study in India so she came to India for the purpose of studying. Smriti desired to

becomes a social Volunteer. Her friend says:

You would be truly seeing India. Here is your chance to do something. To talk to these women who kill their daughters in their wombs without a qualm. It is not awareness that is needed here. It is able to stoke up guilt, regret, remorse; the works. Shiva said you were tireless at the forum Street Shakti organized (LF- 152).

She went to Madurai with Soman. There she met with an accident, it was a police case and in the hospital too. Now, She is a paralyzed girl in the bed. The doctor says:

That there was evidence of sexual activity before the accident. With more than one man. That my daughter, my Smriti was....The accident happened on the beach. Do you think she would.... 'His voice broke, unable to continue the thought fuck on the beach like a bitch on heat with more than one man (LF-57).

The act of sexual violence and the pathetic situation of the girl is shown in these lines.

Soman and Smriti went to Madurai as service volunteers. Both of them went to the beach; there she was running in the sail; she got wounded in her knee and was bleeding on her knee; so he tried to go to the hospital. In the hospital, she came to know that the doctors are checking the pregnant ladies and telling that whether the child is male or female and they do abortion to them. Soman explained:

Smriti was very excited about going on the trip. Despite the laws and regulations, women still find a way of discovering sex of their unborn babies. If not the women, their families. They abort the fetus if it's a girl. Soon they may come a day when there are no women left', she said, laying out her clothes on the bed (LF-285).

After knowing these both of them went to the lodge room and both took rest. Smriti got up earlier and went to the hospital to make an enquiry about the female killing in the womb itself. Smriti knows everything. Then the doctors and the hospital nurses all are re-searching Smriti to catch and kill her. The doctor enquired to Chinnathayi. Finally, the local goons caught Smriti and raped her.

Domestic violence may involve physical, emotional, and psychological forms of abuse. Physical violence can include pushing, kicking, slapping, pinching, and choking of women. It may include the use of objects to inflict pain upon other person. Individuals may inflict sexual violence upon their partners by forcing them to have sex against their will, using sexual acts to degrade them, inflicting physical pain during sexual intercourse, calling their partners sexually degrading. Here, Anita Nair portrays the psychological violence, through the mental tortures suffered by the character of her novel.

There are some three men. The swagger as they walked towards Smriti. One of them gestured with his hands. Another lit a cigarette. And the third, he stood there with his arms crossed, his head cocked at an angle. They tore her dress. The third man, the mutton shop man, he was the one who moved suddenly and pushed her down. They loomed over her as Smriti tried to get back into her feet. The scream of terror that turned in to a catena of howls as thyme One by one, quickly and methodically entered her, that wasn't enough, one of them turned her on her back with his foot. The others laughed aloud. A murder of crows in the twilight sky. As the others watched and urged, he entered her there as well. The girl tried to shake him off, sought to pull away, finding the strength to sprawl on her hands and feet through the sand. Painting, Heaving, Sobbing, Seeking to escape. The booming treacherous, sea waited, but anything was better than what these predatory beasts could do to her. And then the muster king of the rubbish the giant twisted log that lay on its side rose with the wave and came to slam against her head (318).

There are some three men around her. They tore Smriti's dress. The third man, the butcher man, he was the one who moved suddenly and pushed her down. They loomed over her as Smriti tried to get back into her feet. The above lines narrate the sexual violation, employed upon a girl who wanted to save the fetus. Chinnathayi was a mute witness to the case with which they held Smriti down and slapped her. In the

end, all that Chinnathayi could do was to watch it and muffling her horror by scuffing the end of her sari into her mouth and pressing her granddaughter.

When JAK comes to meet Chinnathayi, she moves deeper into the house. When he introduces and stays resolutely on it. "I am Smriti's father. Do you remember Smriti? She takes a deep breath. "How is she?" she asks quietly":

His expression doesn't change. It would have been better if she had died', he says in a voice devoid of all emotion. Yes, it would have been better if she had died, Chinnathayi agrees, turning away. Her face is in the shadows (LF.308).

At one point JAK's search for truth reaches a dead end. Here JAK realizes that it was not just another teenage relationship but a much larger issue, a social malaise that touched Smriti in life and has made her dormant. Later, she dies.

However, the female protagonist fails to carry out the expectations of a conventional community, she finds with enough strength to fight against the dirty conventions. Hence, she seeks revenge by acting on the mission to struggle to prove in front of a legal commission that she has been raped and that her aggressors should be punished. Many of the feminist writers have focused their attention on the violence against women and tried to protect women from sexual abuse and harassment. Different laws have been enacted by the Govt. of India to protect them from domestic or social violence but only the enactment of laws and women's resort to feminism can bring complete change and equate them to men. Laws simply cannot solve women's problem in the present times until the conservative attitude of the society changes. Our assumption that law imparts equality and freedom has proved wrong in modern minds. But it extends. Despite the extraordinary proliferation of laws violence against women including rape, sexual abuse, female feticide and sexual exploitation still occurs on a staggering scale. Thus, the portrayal of sexual violence on innocent women and feticide is shown through Nair's writings.

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## THE POLITICS OF EMPIRE BUILDING: A REVIEW OF ARUNDHATI ROY'S *POWER POLITICS*

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**Abstract:**

*Arundhati Roy is a passionate writer about the wrongs of the world. Since the publication of *The God of Small Things* (1997) she has fused her 'artistic purpose' with the 'political purpose' to expose the injustice done towards the poor people in the name of progress and development. As a conscious writer Roy has, time and again, through her polemical essays, lectures, articles tried to spill the beans of the insidious means and methods by which the center appropriates the margin. Besides, Roy as an anti-globalization writer has repeatedly criticized and dissected the US foreign policies which in many ways have brought disastrous consequences on the lives of the numerous non-American people.*

*The present study attempts to understand the bitter effect of privatization and commodification of the essential infrastructure like water and electricity which are presently pursued at present by the Indian government in the name of greater common good with particular reference to Roy's *Power Politics*.*

**Key Words:** *Privatization, corporatization, dissent.*

Since the publication of her remarkable novel *The God of Small Things* (1997) Arundhati Roy has channelized all her might and energy to transform herself into an author-activist whose primary concern is to spill the beans of the insidious means and methods of appropriation and exploitation by which the center appropriates the margin. Her intention gets clearly manifested in her maiden non-fictional endeavor *The End of Imagination* where she makes an angry impassioned critique about India's acquisition of nuclear weapons. Then again in her second attempt *The Greater Common Good* she renounces the fetish for building big dams at the cost of millions of human lives and also of nature.

Since then there has never been a silence from Roy. In her next political attempt *Power Politics* that grows out of her previous one, once again she digs at the privatization and corporatization of essential infrastructure like water and electricity.

The context of the essay is the Memorandum of Intent signed between the Ogden Energy Group, a company that specializes in operating garbage incinerators in the United States, and the S. Kumars, an Indian textile company for the construction of the 400-megawatt Shri Maheshwar Hydel Project on the river Narmada. However, at this point it must be noted that Narmada is one of the biggest rivers of India. It has a huge water resource potential, as much as 33,210,000 acres feet.<sup>1</sup> So to utilize this huge water resource in a fruitful manner the Narmada Water Disputes Tribunal (NWDP) in the year 1969 set out a comprehensive plan for the Narmada Valley Development Project (NVDP). This macro project aimed to construct 30 major dams, some 135 medium dams and more than 3,000 minor dams.<sup>2</sup> The constitution of the Maheshwar dam is actually part of this NVDP.

At this point one may wonder that since independence India has built more than 3,000 dams and this NVDP itself envisages to construct more than 3,000 dams then where lies the worth or significance of this Maheshwar dam? There is specialty; and the specialty is:

“The dams that have been built on the river so far are all government projects. The Maheshwar dam is slated to be India's first major private hydro-electric power project.” (P.149)

The rationale behind the construction of big dams has an apparent innocence. Big dams can serve multiple purposes like provide water for irrigation, store water for use in dry seasons for the water-scarce areas, generate electricity etc.

In the post-independence period as the Indian leadership was pushing for the development projects to build 'modern' India 'shining' India so they soon got enamored by the apparent innocence of the benefits of constructing big dams. The then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru regarded dams as the 'Temples of Modern India'<sup>3</sup> and while visiting the Bhakra dam site he stated, 'What a stupendous, magnificent work, a work which only that nation can take up which has faith and boldness.'<sup>4</sup> The remarks of Nehru amply testify how the fetish of building big dams has gripped the psyche of the then policy makers how it has become a part of romantic valorization.

International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank which is but the tools of western invasion was also ready to provide financial assistance to carry out these projects. Why were they so keen? Again Roy answers:

“Between 1947 and 1994, the World Bank's management submitted 6,000 projects to the Executive Board. The Board did not turn down a single one. Not a single one. Terms like 'Moving money' and 'Meeting loan targets' suddenly begin to make sense.” (p.76)

Actually the truth is the adverse impacts of big dams are greater than its benefits. Construction of big dam would displace tens of thousands of people. From the ecological point of view they are but artificial human intervention on nature and hence involve a lot of hazardous risk. A lot of public money is also wasted as the dam would automatically lose its storage capacity say after 30 or 40 years. They also increase seismic activity. Because of these lurking dangers the lucrative business of building big dams is not going well in the first world countries. So what to do? Import it to the third world countries. Roy writes:

“In the first world, they're being decommissioned, blown up. The fact that they do more harm than good is no longer just conjecture. Big Dams are obsolete. They're uncool. They're undemocratic. They're a Government's way of accumulating authority (deciding who will get how much water and who will grow what where). They're a guaranteed way of taking a farmer's wisdom away from him. They're a brazen means of taking water, land and irrigation away from the poor and gifting it to the rich. Their reservoirs displace huge populations of people, leaving them homeless and destitute.

Ecologically too, they're in the doghouse. They lay the earth to waste. They cause floods, water logging, salinity, they spread disease. There is mounting evidence that links Big Dams to earthquakes.” (pp.57-58)

Vandana Shiva another major voice of dissent of the present time also succinctly points out this brazen business of commodification of the basic human rights particularly of water. She writes:

“Water privatization projects are a major World Bank-mediated political and financial scam, locking public utilities and citizens into a system where the public pays a global corporation super-high tariffs for water that has been provided through the services to our public utilities. First, the World Bank uses its loans as a conditionality for privatization. Second, it reduces the universal access system of public utilities to a privileged access to industry and 24 x 7 supply to rich urban areas. Third, it diverts limited and scarce groundwater from rural areas to urban areas ... Fourth, it is forcing governments and public utilities to increase water tariffs and to commodity water, subverting people's fundamental right to water as part of the right to life. Fifth, since World Bank Projects are based on non-sustainable water use, they are failing, as is clear in

the case of the Sonia Vihar plant in Delhi and the Veeranam project in Tamil Nadu. World Bank loans are failing to bring water to people; they are successful only in guaranteeing contracts and profits for water corporations like Suez, Vivendi, Bechtel”<sup>5</sup>

It must be noted at this point that even Jawaharlal Nehru who was once the staunch supporter of building big dams in his later life got disillusioned with this ideology. In a speech given before the 29th Annual Meeting of the Central Board of Irrigation and Power (17 November 1958) Nehru said:

“For some time past, however, I have been beginning to think that we are suffering from what we may call “the disease of gigantism”. We want to show that we can build big dams and do big things. This is a dangerous outlook developing in India ... And It is the... small irrigation projects, the small industries and the small plants for electric power, which will change the face of the country far more than half-a-dozen big projects in half-a-dozen places.”<sup>6</sup>

Among the English spy movies the movies of James Bond are particularly hot favorite among the people. The blockbuster movie *Quantum of Solace* is particularly relevant here. The basic theme of this movie is how 'Quantum' a corporate organization is damming Bolivia's supply of fresh water to create a monopoly. It also shows the powerful underhand configuration of these corporate giants which are used to topple down any legitimate government by coup or by conspiracy.

Leaving aside the reel life, in real life too in the year 1999 when the government of Bolivia privatized the public water supply system in the city Cochabamba and signed a forty-year lease with Bechtel, a giant US engineering firm 'the first thing Bechtel did was to triple the price of water' (p.153).

Roy's *Power Politics* becomes symbolic in the sense that it gives us a clarion call to resist this shady conspiracy hatched by the US corporate giants. Roy cautions us that wars in the 21st century have become wars against the natural resources like water, minerals, soil, forests, and seeds. Corporate control is blind and is based on the ideology of limitless growth. It violates all ethical and ecological limits. So we need to rebuff it by globalizing dissent and by putting forward alternative models of all-inclusive growth synchronizing with mother earth.

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## CREATING SELF THROUGH OTHERING: THE CYCLE OF COLONISATION IN A LITTLE PRINCESS

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**Abstract:**

*The work titled “Creating Self through Othering: The Cycle of Colonization in A Little Princess” mainly deals with the problem of colonization, which is not just economic or political, but psychological and emotional as well. In the process of colonization the concept of the Other plays an important role as it alone determines who the colonizer and the colonized are. Othering as a social concept was at first brought to the forefront by Hegel in his “Master-Slave Dialectics” where he argues that the whole purpose of human life is the formation of self-consciousness. This self-consciousness is formed when one individual compares him/herself with another and finds out what all aspects present in him/her are wanting in the latter.*

*When the categorization of superior-inferior comes into existence the process of Othering starts. This allows the so-called superior group to make the inferior one its foil, which is the process of labeling the latter as the Other; that is, what the superior is not in the negative sense. When this process continues the inferior group gets the feeling that in order for it to create a self-consciousness it has to become completely servile to the superior, which becomes the first step to colonization. Later there comes into being mimic men, who are mere reflections of the colonizer, though they think of themselves as same as the colonizer. With the passage of time decolonization finds success, and the former mimic men become the new colonizers, which turns out to be the start of neo-colonialism.*

*When the arena of literature is taken into consideration the various works indirectly deals with the contemporary social issues, of which children's literature is no exception. When Frances Hodgson Burnett's A Little Princess is taken into consideration one of its intended meanings can be the issue of colonialism in its cyclic movement. Most of the characters in the story are in one way or the other engaged in colonization.*

*In the paper the concept of colonization, its history, and Othering as one of its major functions are discussed. It also deals with A Little Princess as a work where the characters are engaged in Othering and getting Othered. The paper also throws light on how the author has accommodated the concept of Othering in the story of the little girl Sara and those related to her along with discussing how the once-Othered group will get acceptance at some point of time which leads to the categorization of another group as the Other. “Creating Self through Othering: The Cycle of Colonization in A Little Princess” gives stance to the hypothesis that colonization is a continuous process and will take a cyclic movement all throughout human history by engaging in the process of Othering and accepting the same at different points of time as proposed by Foucault in his study on Nietzsche.*

**Key words:** *Colonization, Crude and Sophisticated Othering, Neo-colonialism, Other, Othering, Self-consciousness, Self-distantiation,*

No text is innocent; even the one belonging to the genre of children's literature. Same is the case

with Frances Burnett's *A Little Princess*, especially since it was written during the latter part of the nineteenth century when colonialism was at its pinnacle. At the surface level the work seems to be one which is child-oriented, taking as its protagonist Sara Crewe, a little girl who is put in a problematic situation. This is the narrated history or the open story in the work by the author. But a contrapuntal reading of the same will allow one to look into the deeper or inner most meanings referred to in the work. Such a re-reading paves the way to a postcolonial reading of *A Little Princess* where power and colonialism work in a cyclic manner. The later years of the nineteenth and the early to the half of the twentieth century can be considered as a period which marked an end to the process of colonialism.

A later view on colonialism, especially with the emergence of postcolonial literature, made clear the relationship between colonialism and, capitalism and imperialism. Colonialism's relationship with capitalism is appropriately studied by Denis Judd in his book *Empire: The British Imperial Experience from 1765 to the Present*, when he says, “[n]o one can doubt that the desire for profitable trade, plunder and enrichment was the primary force that led to the establishment of the imperial structure. . . Judd argues that colonialism was first and foremost part of the commercial venture of the western nations that developed from the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries . . .” (McLeod 7)

With the seizure of foreign lands, the West got control over the world market where they sold goods at a monopoly price. Thus it can be said of colonialism as a commercial process whereby wealth and riches seeped from the different lands like Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Kenya, India, Jamaica and Ireland to the West. In the process those lands which were exploited by the West came to be called the “colonized nations” or “colonies,” and the West which was the ruling power came to be known as the “colonizer.”

The relationship between colonialism and imperialism is such that, sometimes the two are used interchangeably while in actuality colonialism is just a part of imperialism. Colonialism involves the settlement of the colonizers in the colonies, while in imperialism settlement is not necessary; what is needed is the presence of a controlling agency outside the nation. Thus it could be argued that, while colonialism is considered completely over today, imperialism still continues. All these aspects get reflected in the literary works that appear in the particular time periods, the same which is the case of *A Little Princess*, which gets evident when one sees Elleke Boehmer's definition of colonialism gelling with the events in the novel. Boehmer defined colonialism in her *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature*, as the “settlement of territory, the exploitation or development of resources, and the attempt to govern the indigenous inhabitants of occupied lands” (McLeod 8). McLeod gives greater emphasis to the phrase “the attempt to govern,” and says that the same makes it evident that Britain herself had problems regarding attaining her desired goals for she had to face the acts of resistance not only from the part of the native inhabitants, but also her own representatives who became unwilling to hand over power to the imperial “motherland.” The echo of the same is heard through Sara's fight with Miss Minchin. Again after becoming powerful Sara wishes not to lose her control over Becky, at the same time she does not want to be under the control of another colonizer other than her father. This is the same with every literary work seemingly innocent and harmless.

In the wide arena of postcolonial theory, Edward W. Said, Homi K. Bhabha, and Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak form the “holy trinity,” having contributed a lot for its growth. For a thriving postcolonial re-reading of *A Little Princess* and especially in knowing how Othering and power play work, an overall knowledge of how the colonizer views the colonized seems necessary. Said's *Orientalism* mainly takes into consideration the West's notion of the East, which can be translated as the colonizer's notion of the colonized.

The Orient is viewed as the alter ego of the Occident, all that the Occident is not. In order to always remain superior, the Orient is attributed with negative adjectives, which presents the latter as a stranger to the Occident. Orient is presented as a foil to the Occident upholding the superiority and strength of the

West. “Said stresses in the introduction to *Orientalism* that the Orient has been fundamental in defining the West 'as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience'. . . The West comes to know itself *by proclaiming via Orientalism everything it believes it is not*” (McLeod 41). Similarly, the “Orient” is a mere imaginative construction by the West. What they describe as the Orient is not something observed, instead it is their imagination or fantasy which they consider, and force others to consider as reality.

*Orientalism* also describes what is it that makes the Orient “different” from the Occident, especially in the negative sense of the term. First and foremost, the Orient was considered primitive, moving backward in time, with no historical change taking place over time, while the West is enlightened. In such a situation, it is the West's duty to bring development to the primitive men, which came to be called the “white man's burden,” or civilizing mission. For the West, the Orient was a spectacle, where all sorts of “strange” things could be seen and experienced. Every possession of the Orient came to be called eccentric, irrational, extraordinary and abnormal. Apart from this, the attitude of the West was one reason why racism gained greater attention everywhere. “Assumptions were often made about the inherent 'racial' characteristics of Orientals: stock-figures included the murderous and violent Arab, the lazy Indian and the inscrutable Chinaman” (McLeod 44). Likewise, along with regarding the Oriental as feminine, almost all weaknesses such as cowardliness, laziness, and untrustworthiness and so on, were attributed to them. On the other hand the West came to be regarded as the epitome of all goodness and manliness. In short, the West was engaged in the process of Othering the Orientals. The West put up an aura that it was their mission to spread civilization throughout the universe and for the purpose they started dominating over the weaker nations, while in actuality there were ulterior motives behind each of their activity.

Even before the rise of various nationalist movements striving hard for gaining independence from the colonizer, there was the wish to somehow escape from the suffocating rule which was destroying the unique cultures of the colonized regions. But, the colonizers were powerful enough to suppress such uprisings, by engaging themselves in the creation of mimic men who were natives in blood and color but had the colonial influence in moral and intellect. This paved the way to colonial “ambivalence” and the formation of “mimic men,” the terms coined in the colonial context by Homi K. Bhabha.

Ambivalence simply means the simultaneous attraction and repulsion towards the culture and attitude of the colonizer. This is a characteristic feature of the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized because the colonized is not completely against the colonizer. But this is a feature not encouraged by the colonizer because it is capable of disrupting the existing rapport between the two. What the colonizer wants is men who are like them, but ambivalence destroys such a ground. At the same time the absence of ambivalence too is a threat to the colonizer. This is because, if the colonized becomes completely like the colonizer then there will arise a fight for power between the two which may cause damage to the superior position held by the colonizer. Thus ambivalence has the capacity to decenter power.

In the attempt at creating men like the colonizer, what comes as the end product is mimic men, who are merely the vague reflections of the colonizer. Till the beginning of the attempt, the colonized was the “Other” of the colonizer, and thus outside the Western culture. Later, “. . . the discourse of colonialism attempts to domesticate colonized subjects and abolish their radical 'otherness', bringing them *inside* Western understanding through the Orientalist project of constructing knowledge about them” (McLeod 52-53). Thus the colonized is in a position in-between inside and outside western culture, which makes him/her neither a native inhabitant of his/her nation, nor a westerner. In such a situation, the person acts according to the will of the colonizer, but is never considered one among them thus becoming a mimic man engaged in mockery. For such people, the natives become “Others”, due to the wrong notion that they have become superior to the other natives since they have started following the colonizer's orders. Soon after the process of decolonization it will be such mimic men who will emerge as the power holders, giving form to neo-colonialism.

Inside every human being there is the simultaneous existence of the colonizer and the colonized. Man himself is thus a hybrid being. It is the conflict taking place between the two that results in resistance because there occurs a crisis where man makes an evaluation of his present existence. This crisis becomes the emerging point of a different ideology which turns the present colonized into a new colonizer and vice versa. Thus the only argument that a colonizer can put forth as his right to be the colonizer is that he too was once a colonized. This is a cyclic process that continues as long as man exists in the universe. In this manner it can be said that human life and development themselves are a series of dominations and subjections.

In certain situations it becomes difficult for the colonized to identify the colonizer because the latter has become very familiar to the former that, he considers the colonizer as a part of his own psyche. There then occurs a confusion as to which the real self of the colonized is. In the process of solving this puzzle the colonizer seeks the help of those who share his own troubles. Self-awareness compels the colonized to go in search of his own and unique self. When such a situation arises the colonized starts a process of accepting those groups whom earlier he had marked as the “Others.” In this manner the “Other” starts its travel on the way to acceptance. In certain other situations the colonized and the colonizer become mutual helpers or supporters, a situation where the destruction of one group destroys the other. Then the colonizer starts accepting the colonized as a result of which the position of the colonized as mere “Other” is taken away thus the colonized getting an elevated position. These processes of “Othering” and the acceptance of the same take place endlessly.

In the usual sense of the term, colonization takes place only at the political and geographical levels; but it can be seen on close analysis that it takes place even at the psychological, economic, cultural as well as at the social levels. In short, in every aspect and level of human life colonization takes place in one way or the other. In short, power and unquestioned acceptance are solely needed for colonization to come into practice, the same being arising from the parts of the colonizer and the colonized respectively. The process of colonization is not restricted to the relationship between man and man, but it can also come in the relationship between human and non-human beings or objects.

In the re-reading of *A Little Princess*, one of the key concepts to be given special prominence is the concept of the “Other” or “Othering.” In simple words, it is the process in which one group is distinguished from another and given the place as “Other” and not “same”; “othering is the process of casting a group, an individual or an object into the role of the “other” and establishing one's own identity through opposition to and...verification of this Other” (Gabriel). This process can take place between two or more familiar as well as unfamiliar groups, and it can be seen that most usually it will be the non-dominating group that will be marked as the “Other,” taking away from it the qualities of reason or dignity. The existence of such two groups in the society is confusing. Levi-Strauss opined that there are two ways to deal with the “Other,” “one is to incorporate them...eliminating any boundaries between the same and the other; the second strategy is to expel them and exclude them...by erecting strong boundaries and special institutions in which they are kept in isolation” (Gabriel). When the colonial situation is taken into consideration it can be seen that it is the colonized who becomes the “Other.” As far as the colonizer is concerned this particular group has no “perfect” identity or culture. The reflection of this feature of colonialism can be viewed in the various literary works, and *A Little Princess* is no exception.

The whole history of mankind is that of domination and identity formation. In a later period, this process got the name “colonization,” when the domination came to be based on politics and economy. When the desire to establish power arises, the concept of the Other makes its appearance for it helps in the formation of identity by categorizing people as inferior and superior. The former class came to be called the Other by the latter, as it exhibits everything that the superior class is not. In the colonial context, the superior class got the name, “colonizer.” In the process, there often happens the reversal of roles, which is made clear by the famous postcolonial theorist, Homi K. Bhabha who argues in his *The Location of Culture*

that, identities change according to contexts and time (McLeod 34). It “moves between positions, displacing others and being displaced in turn” (Nayar 27). It is through repetition that, just like identity, stereotypes get established. Taken thus, it can be proved that only if there is the stereotype of the Other, can there be the construction of the colonizer's identity. “That is, the identity of the colonial master is dependent upon the relationship with the oppositional native/Other. The stereotypes thus help the formation of the colonizer's identity while simultaneously rendering it unstable and dependent” (Nayar 27).

Inspired by Hegel's “Master-slave Dialectics,” it was Simon De Beauvoir who gave rise to the concept of Other, which, in a sense, is the process of constructing the self. “In the words of the cultural geographer Crang Othering 'is a process (. . .) through which identities are set up in an unequal relationship’” (Brons). In this process, there is both the construction of the self, alias the in-group, and the other or the out-group. The construction is based on observing both the self and the other, and finding out some desirable and undesirable characteristic features lacking in both. In this manner, Othering brands the self as superior, and the Other as inferior, though not consciously.

Othering is of two types, crude othering and sophisticated othering, the former being more direct, and the latter more indirect. In crude othering, Othering is done by distributing all the undesirable characteristics on the opposing Other, while on the other hand in sophisticated othering, characteristics are attributed following an argument. There is the probability of sophisticated othering taking the form of crude othering if the original argument is lost. Sometimes with the addition of arguments crude othering turns out to be sophisticated othering. Thus the conclusion is that there is no clear distinction between crude and sophisticated othering. Viewed from another point, “the concept of “the other” has been used . . . to designate a range of rather different but interrelated ideas that are not always . . . distinguished” (Brons). Other plays a significant role in the creation of identity according to Cahoon:

. . . A phenomenon maintains its identity in semiotic systems only if other units are represented as foreign or “other” through a hierarchical dualism in which the first is *privileged* or favoured while the other is *deprivileged* or devalued in some way. This process must itself be hidden or covered up, so that the hierarchy can be *assumed inherent* in the nature of the phenomena, rather than a motivated construction. (Brons)

This assumption of inherent hierarchy is clearly visible in colonization. Without the awareness of the natives they are colonized. The process takes place in such a way that the natives start considering themselves as inferior to the colonizer, and thus the “Other.” The amiable relation with the colonized at first makes it someone equivalent to the colonizer. There seems no hierarchical relationship between them. But without even the slightest awareness of the colonized, a hierarchy takes shape when the colonizer begins to see himself as the self and the colonized as the Other. There comes the invisible self-distantiation, and to the colonized the colonizer becomes someone superior, or the subject, while they become the objects. There seeps in colonization, Othering, and self-distantiation in such a way that there is nothing abnormal in the process.

The case of Sara Crewe of Burnett's *A Little Princess* too is that of the colonizer and the colonized, without her being aware of it. Sara has great admiration for her father, Captain Crewe, but without her awareness she is being colonized by him in such a way that the child is completely dependent on him. Here the colonizer has become very familiar to the child that she finds the colonizer not as someone capable of destroying herself, but as her saviour. With the constant interaction with Captain Crewe, Sara gets the notion that she is someone similar to her father, and that all the rest of the people around are her inferior; in this way she engages herself in the process of Othering.

On the other hand Captain Crewe is creating a hierarchy. For him, though Sara is his daughter, being a minor she is inferior, hence an Other. He attempts to transform herself into something similar to his own, but not entirely. Captain Crewe does not want Sara to be exactly like him, but only his vague

reflection. It is his attempt at creating a mimic being out of Sara, which lets him find not much difference between Sara and the inanimate doll Emily, “her black hair was spread out on the pillow and Emily's golden-brown hair mingled with it; both of them had lace-ruffled nightgowns, and both had long eyelashes which lay and curled upon their cheeks” (Burnett 13). This proves that Sara shares the mind of the colonized because, when she first gets the doll, she decides to exert her power over it, which is an attempt at becoming like Captain Crewe. But for Captain Crewe, both Sara and Emily are the same.

Captain Crewe sometimes considers Sara as his representative, just as the colonizer chooses the representatives from among the natives for his purpose of expanding the empire.

Captain Crewe . . . wanted his little girl to have everything she admired and everything he admired himself, so between them they collected a wardrobe much too grand for a child of seven . . . the polite young women behind the counters whispered to each other that the odd little girl with the big solemn eyes must be at least some foreign princess- perhaps the daughter of an Indian rajah. (Burnett 10-11)

Sara gets the admiration of many people around her which hints at the probability of her becoming the colonizer.

Sara's first attempt at becoming a colonizer can be seen in her craving for a doll that does not look like a doll, but a human being, who is not capable of thinking on her own. That is why she says, “I should like her always to look as if she was a child with a good mother . . . I'm her mother, though I am going to make a companion of her” (Burnett 13). Sara's step by step plan of colonizing the people around her gets explicit here. As the first step, she wants to make Emily a companion, just as the white man tries to make the native civilized; and later she wants to become Emily's mother, which is a process of silencing the latter and turning her out to be a child, unable to think on her own, which is the same process of a colonizer. Just like the colonizers Sara considers Emily as her Other and wishes the latter to only obey her commands and not say a word against her wish. Thus, she is trying to get engaged in the process of colonization, which is “infantilizing” the native, “rendering him/her helpless, vulnerable and dependent on the white master” (Nayar 40).

Sara's life at Miss Minchin's proves that the latter is afraid of the former and also she is suspicious that Sara may become more powerful than her. This feeling of insecurity forces her to transform Miss Amelia into her spy at the boarding. As far as Miss Minchin is concerned, her sister Amelia is her companion, and more than anything, a person who collects news for her. Miss Minchin's insecure feeling rises up when Miss Amelia says Sara “has been provided for as if she were a little princess” (Burnett 16). Maybe in Minchin's inner psyche she knows about colonization as one power replacing another as a result of which the latter is completely erased from the minds of the colonized. To a great extent Miss Minchin thinks of Sara as a threat, as a result of which she tries her level best to please the child. Her willingness in providing Sara with every luxury hints at the fact that Miss Minchin has become Sara's colonized unconsciously.

On her part, Sara considers everyone around her, including Miss Minchin, her inferior or the Other. She thinks like any other colonizer that everything and everyone belongs to her and that she can reshape them whenever she wants to, just as she tries to make Emily her ditto by placing her on a chair and giving her a book to read. This makes Miss Minchin behave rudely to her and tell, “. . . you have been a spoiled little girl and always imagine that things are done because you like them . . .” (Burnett 21).

Miss Minchin's insecurity prompts her to overpower Sara and make her the colonized. She orders Sara not to say “but” when she is told to do things, which is the same attitude of Sara to those around her. Sara's proficiency in speaking French, which makes the students of Miss Minchin admire her, creates fear in the latter of losing her superior position; in actuality the same happened. Slowly, Sara started getting more powerful than Miss Minchin, for she had many admirers who are the colonized of Miss Minchin, and who wish for decolonization.

The first person to become Sara's colonized is Ermengarde alias Miss St. John, who is surprised at hearing Sara speak French, which she is unable to do. Her inability at learning French can be considered as her unwillingness to obey her father who wants her to excel in the language, for, he is a multilingual person. The attitude of Ermengarde proves her to be unwilling to be submissive to the colonizer, be it her father or the teachers at Miss Minchin's. But her admiration of Sara makes her think of the latter as her superior and wishes to become her friend. This is the first step towards her getting colonized. Ermengarde's admiration and her willingness to accept Sara's ideologies end up in Sara considering her as the Other, whatever she is not, which gives Sara herself a superior air, which is complimented by the teachers who look at her with great awe.

Though Ermengarde wishes for friendship, it is respect that grows in between herself and Sara, a way in which the colonial master is accepted by the colonized. Sara, just like in the case of Emily, attempts to create a mimic being out of Ermengarde, when she tells her to imagine and make stories, just as she does. About herself, she says, “. . . when I play I make up stories and tell them to myself, and I don't like people to hear me. It spoils it if I think people listen” (Burnett 32). When Sara says she does not like others hearing her stories, it is an indirect invitation into taking part in the process of hearing her stories. So, Sara is trying to attract people towards her so as to become the center of attention, though subtly. Moreover, imagining is a process of creating history. When Sara tells stories, she is creating history and trying to impose her version of history into the minds of those surrounding her. Though she encourages others to tell stories, she is subtly not letting them do the same, but silently forces them to believe only her version of history.

In her “friendship” with Ermengarde, Sara finds out what all are lacking in the latter. The one thing that is very much lacking in Ermengarde's self is her knowledge of French, which gives some feeling of superiority to Sara. Thus, Ermengarde is made into a foil to Sara's self to gain a superior position, the act which is done by Sara herself. Her strategy finds complete success when she tells Ermengarde, “. . . I can help you with your French lessons” (Burnett 36), which is in fact an interference into the latter's life with permission, which gives stance to the idea that the colonized gets the status only with his/her own willingness.

In a similar fashion, Sara makes Lottie a standard against whom she can prove her superiority. The criterion for colonizing Lottie is the absence of imagination in her. At the beginning of the process, Sara draws a parallel between herself and Lottie in that both of them feel the absence of a mother figure in reality. But what draws a differentiation between them is Sara's ability to imagine as if she is the most superior being, as she is close to her father in different manners. She is supported by the colonizer and so is superior to others. When Lottie cries out loud that she does not have any mamma in the school, Sara finds out her weak point and says, “. . . I will be your mamma. . . We will play that you are my little girl. And Emily shall be your sister” (Burnett 49). Though previously it was the inanimate Emily who was silenced by Sara, at present she has a human child, who is expected to completely depend upon her. By allowing her to share siblinghood with Emily, Sara is dehumanizing Lottie, without the latter knowing about it.

Sara's indirect domination makes her a leader of the school. Outwardly she is a motherly young girl, and tries her best to help those who suffered, though there are ulterior motives behind her every “innocent” act.

. . . the greatest power Sara possessed, and the one which gained her even more followers than her luxuries and the fact that she was 'the show pupil'. . . was her power of telling stories and of making everything that she talked about seem like a story, whether it was one or not. When she sat or stood in the midst of a circle and began to invent wonderful things, her green eyes grew big and shining, her cheeks flushed, and, without knowing that she was doing it, she began to act, and made what she told lovely or alarming by the raising or dropping of her voice. . . (Burnett 50- 51)

Sara's talent at expanding her empire gets explicit when the servant girl Becky alias Rebecca, who

lives in the attic, too starts admiring her because of the stories. Her attempt at colonizing Becky by raising her voice while telling stories so that she too can hear them, shows how she wishes to overpower Miss Minchin, who is the present colonizer. For Sara, the very appearance of Becky makes her different, for, she appeared “as if she was a creature from another world” (Burnett 58), which is, in a sense, the process of dehumanizing Becky in order for Sara to get a superior position. When Sara enters her luxurious room she finds Becky sleeping like the Sleeping Beauty. All on a sudden her colonizer consciousness pulls her back from giving Becky the status of Sleeping Beauty, and she starts thinking from another perspective that, Becky “did not look. . . like a Sleeping Beauty at all. She looked only like an ugly, stunted, worn-out little scullery drudge” (Burnett 58). The same feeling comes to Sara's mind when she later hears about Becky's life among rats and cockroaches. At a later time her dealings with Becky give hints regarding her wish to gain the latter's acceptance. In many ways she tries to civilize Becky and to make her rebel against the existing colonizer by compelling her to do things which, according to Miss Minchin, are “crimes.”

Sara's close association with Captain Crewe gives her the feeling of superiority and secretly she wishes to rule over all those around her, the fact which comes to light when pupils find out that she imagines herself to be a princess. This ambition of hers creates in her mind the notion of decolonization, which she subtly expresses in her letter to Captain Crewe, where she says not to present her with dolls as she is getting older. This also brings to light her notion that the “white man's burden” has fallen on her shoulders. At the same point of time Captain Crewe, the colonizer, starts accepting Sara who till then was the Other. For Crewe, Sara is a child for in the process of creating a mimic being out of Sara, he never gives her the knowledge and power to exert her opinion; she is dependent on Captain Crewe. But at the present point of time Mr. Crewe turns out to be a child, very much dependent on Sara, “thus reversing the dependency relationship of colonialism” (Nayar 42).

The whole purpose of the classification of the self and the other is the production of self-consciousness. It is possible only if the two interact in a particular balance. As Hegel opines, without the Other, there is no self, and vice versa (Siep). In the case of Captain Crewe and Sara, when the father becomes a child to the latter, it seems as if his self-consciousness is getting destroyed. Still he has the feeling that Sara is the Other and that makes him think of her as old-fashioned, and jokingly calls her “Little Missus.” In one way or the other he wants to hide his weakness. But for Sara who starts the process of colonization, for the creation of a self, decolonization is a necessity. She wants to remove Captain Crewe from the position of the colonizer, and herself to occupy the same. But the sudden death of her father leaves Sara with nothing and she realizes her status as a mimic being, which is made clear by Becky who says, “. . . Miss Sara- she's been such a rich young lady . . . what will she do now, mum, without no maid? If- if, oh please would you let me wait on her after I've done my pots an' kettles? I'd do 'em that quick- if you'd let me wait on her now she's poor . . . poor little Miss Sara, mum- that was called a princess” (Burnett 100). The immediate loss of dependence on Mr. Crewe, the colonizer, leads Sara to completely depend upon his remains, which she finds in Emily. In this manner, the once Othered Emily gets the acceptance for Sara wishes the doll to speak and console her. Sara finds out that both of them share the same status.

To a particular level, the death of Captain Crewe can be regarded as the result of decolonization, though nothing of that sort is done explicitly. The eradication of one colonizer always results in the domination by another. Regarding Sara, the new colonizer is Miss Minchin, who dominates over her rather directly, unlike her father did. She directly tells Sara, “. . . I tell you that you are quite alone in the world, and have no one to do anything for you, unless I choose to keep you here out of charity” (Burnett 104). Harshly but directly she tells Sara that whatever belongs to the latter is hers. Miss Minchin too plays a role in Sara realizing her real status as the former tells her, “'Don't put on grant airs. . . the time for that sort of things is past. You are not a princess any longer . . . you are like Becky . . . you must work for your living. . . If you don't please me, you will be sent away” (Burnett 105-106).

The real issue with Sara is that she is unable to cope up with direct colonization as that of Miss

Minchin. Whatever that Sara owns becomes Miss Minchin's. The rest which she own are completely removed from the luxurious room. Removing them means removing even the minutest memory of the former colonizer and attempting to establish control over Sara, by Miss Minchin.

The loss of her superior position leads to Sara dehumanizing herself, for when she climbs the stairs to the attic she feels as if she is a different creature. At this point of time, since she cannot find solace in Emily, she accepts Becky. She finds both of them as equals and says, "I told you we were just the same-only two little girls- just two little girls. . . There's no difference now. I'm not a princess anymore" (Burnett 109). This hints at Sara's feeling that she is far superior to Becky, and that Becky can never be a princess. But Becky's worship of Sara provides in her the feeling that she still is superior to others and tries to become the colonizer among the colonized. As far as Becky is concerned, whatever happens, Sara is a princess and will remain so. This in fact shows the hierarchical status of the members of the colonized group. That is, there is subalternity or inter-colonization. Within the Othered group, Sara is again Othered by the rest of the servants. As far as they are concerned, there are many things lacking in Sara, and they find out that Sara "could be sent on errands at any time and in all weathers. She could be told to do things other people neglected" (Burnett 112). For the other servants Sara is a tool for them to create their self-consciousness. "The cook and the housemaids took their tone from Miss Minchin, and rather enjoyed ordering about the 'young one' who had been made so much fuss over for so long. They were not servants of the best class, and had neither good manners, nor good tempers, and it was frequently convenient to have at hand someone on whom blame could be laid" (Burnett 112). Thus the servants are able to gain a superior position. But somewhere in her mind Sara still has the feeling that she is superior to all the others. That is why she thinks of reminding herself all that she has learnt because now she has been degraded to the position of a scullery-maid, and if she becomes one such girl who knows nothing, she will turn out to be like Becky. In this sense Sara too, like the other servants, engages in subalternising the subaltern, the group to which she belongs.

To a very great extent, it is Sara's dependents who give her the idea that she can continue with colonizing and Othering them. The servile attitude of Becky stands proof for this: ". . . before daybreak she used to slip into Sara's attic and button her dress and give her such help as she required before she went downstairs to light the kitchen fire. And when night came Sara always heard the humble knock at the door which meant that her handmaid was ready to help her again if she was needed" (Burnett 117). Similar is the case with Ermengarde and Lottie. For Ermengarde, Sara still is her teacher, and Lottie considers her as her mother. That is, Sara has made all these three very much dependent on her such that they cannot live devoid of the colonial power. This again is retaliation against Miss Minchin's reign, which is Sara's the involvement in the process of decolonization.

Colonization is something that is inherently present in Sara, the fact which turns out to be the truth when she becomes friendly with the family of rats living in her room and also the other animals and birds visiting her. The friendship with the rat family brings to light how, through self-distantiation, Sara Others those around her and becomes superior.

In self-distantiation there is a tendency to differentiate self from the Other and protect the former. There is the tendency of positively discriminating the self or the in-group from others or out-groups. ". . . people tend to create a positive self-concept/ self-image by means of a self-affirmative perspective on the world and others. . ." (Brons). There are three phases of self-other distantiation, all of which can be seen between Sara and the rat family. The first phase is ". . . the encounter with the Other and the bare recognition of that Other as not self. . ." (Brons). When Sara first gets to the attic she is afraid of the rats and finally comes to the conclusion that it is not a human being and so lacks many things which Sara possesses. This gives her a sense of awareness of her own self. The second phase of self-other distantiation is ". . . the attribution of otherness to the Other . . . and finally the motivation and/or payoff of that attribution of otherness" (Brons). When Sara gets the knowledge of herself, she decides to control the rat, which is a way

of labeling the animal as the Other. As a first step she names the rat as Melchisedec, which is creating an identity for the being in the manner Sara wants it to be. This process draws a parallel to Adam naming the different creatures as ordered by God. Thus, Sara is trying to become the parent or guardian to all those around her. Sara, keeping the superior air of the colonizer tells Ermengarde, “. . . I am making him tame. He actually knows me and comes out when I call him. . . He's as polite as we are” (Burnett 138- 139). She does the same with the sparrows that come near the attic, and behaves as if all these creatures live on her benevolence, just as Miss Minchin thinks of Sara. The process of colonialism has reached its peak in the attic for all three major features of colonialism, as pointed out by Nayar are seen there: the first being the governance of the native by the colonizer, and the second being the study of the native culture by the colonizer. The third and the most important feature is the process of transforming the native cultures and social activities, thus establishing the colonizer's ideologies.

Sara does the same act of creating an identity for the family who comes to live next door. Sara gives romantic names to the members of the house from the books she reads. But the small boy living there shares the same attitude of Sara. Sara's outward appearance makes him superior to her and in that manner she is Othered. He offers her help with the intention of making her dependent on him, just as Sara used to do; “. . . all at once [she] realized that she looked exactly like poor children she had seen in her better days, waiting on the pavement to watch her as she got out of her brougham. And she had given them pennies many a time” (Burnett 148). Sara too is given a name by the Large Family as “The little-girl-who-is-not-a-beggar.”

What makes Sara very much happy in the attic is the coming of an Indian, Ram Dass, who salutes her and calls her “Misse Sahib.” The reason for her being happy is that she being born in India, is still the colonizer of the place and the Orient is already inferior to her. With the coming of Ram Dass, Becky too puts on superior air because, for her, an Orient is an Other. When Sara sees the man for the first time, she wishes to create friendship with him. But when Ram Dass gives her a superior position, she again starts considering him the Other. In this context language, which is an element that creates identity, too plays a major role. Sara speaking Hindustani to Ram Dass is an attempt at colonizing him for he starts considering her as someone sent by God to help him. Though Ram Dass sees the pathetic condition of Sara, he speaks to her “as if he were speaking to the little daughter of a rajah” (Burnett 167) because, just as Becky Ram Dass too thinks, whatever Sara is, she is much superior to him. His attitude towards her makes Sara think, “whatever comes . . . cannot alter one thing. If I am a princess in rags and tatters, I can be a princess inside” (Burnett 169).

Though a princess, Sara's tendency of getting colonized gets revealed with the coming of Mr. Carrisford. He is an Indian gentleman who looked ill.

He was not an Indian gentleman really, but an Englishman who had lived in India. He had met with great misfortunes which had for a time so impelled his whole fortune that he had thought himself ruined and disgraced forever. The shock had been so great that he had almost died of brain fever; and ever since he had been shattered in health, though his fortunes had changes and all his possessions had been restored to him. His trouble and peril had been connected with mines. (Burnett 175-176)

When Sara comes to know about this, her father's face comes to her mind, and she finds out similarities between him and Mr. Carrisford. The poor condition of the man makes her say, “I should like to be your 'Little Missus' myself, poor dear!” (Burnett 177). It should be remembered that it was her father who used to call her the name. This shows Sara's willingness to get colonized, if the colonizer is Mr. Carrisford, a representative of her father. She wishes a dependent life so that she can mimic the colonizer and make it easier to get more colonized people.

One of Sara's existing colonized, Melchisedec, acts as a spy for her because when Ram Dass and the Englishman's secretary come to the room to arrange for Carrisford's secret plan, it is the rat who sees

them but remains silent as it is afraid that the existing colonizer may get replaced with a new one, for “strange men are dangerous thing to remain near” (Burnett 202). Ram Dass, inside Sara's room, behaves as her guardian, giving her an air of superiority by telling the Englishman who accompanies him, “The child is the little friend of all things, Sahib . . . She is not as other children. I see her when she does not see me . . . By the mistress of the house . . . she is treated like a pariah; but she has the bearing of a child who is the blood of kings!” (Burnett 203-204). Since both Sara and Ram Dass share the same experiences, both of them know about each other's feelings, though it is a bit lacking in Sara. The plan to transform Sara's dirty and poor room into a luxurious one by Mr. Carrisford is in fact an attempt at colonizing her. By doing a favour to the child, he is expecting respect and love in return from her.

The transformation of the room into a luxurious one creates in Sara's mind the feeling that someone still cares for her and that she is superior to others because Becky is not provided with the same fortune. This boosts up her confidence in colonizing others, by pretending to help them, the strategy she uses in colonizing Ermengarde, by teaching her French. In actuality she wishes to read the French books for her own benefit. In the same context she tells Ermengarde, “I don't want you to give me anything” (Burnett 223), which hints at her pride in being a colonizer. Sara has the feeling that only she has the power to colonize others and help them. Accepting something in return, in her perspective, means letting herself be colonized, which she never allows, though in reality she is colonized without her knowledge by Mr. Carrisford.

Sara tries to engage herself in decolonization. She somehow wants to get rid of Miss Minchin's power. Ermengarde, Lottie, and Becky take part in the process but when Miss Minchin gets the hint that soon she may lose her power, she punishes them. It happens when Sara and her friends plan a secret dinner in the room. Miss Minchin is afraid that new ideologies may make their appearance if the colonized are allowed any sort of association. Thus she tries to secure her position as the colonizer, by dispersing the gang with power. Later with the interference of Mr. Carrisford, Sara succeeds in her plan of decolonizing Miss Minchin for she turns out to be the girl whom he has been searching for all these days.

When Sara, who till then was Othered by Mr. Carrisford, reaches his house, “he looked at her with the look she remembered in her father's eyes- that look of loving her and wanting to take her in his arms. It makes her kneel down by him, just as she used to kneel by her father when they were the dearest friends and lovers in the world. 'Then it is you who are my friend,' she said . . . and she dropped her face on his thin hand and kissed it again and again” (Burnett 281). This shows that, willingly, Sara becomes Mr. Carrisford's colonized, just like she used to be that of her father, Captain Crewe.

Now that Mr. Carrisford is in full control of Sara, he decides not to let her go back to Miss Minchin's, and Sara “had in Mr. Carrisford a guardian as well as a friend” (Burnett 285). With the news that Sara has again become a princess, Miss Minchin wants her back in the boarding for which she comes to Mr. Carrisford. But decisions are made against her wishes, and it becomes her first downfall. Following this complete rebellion awaits Miss Minchin at the boarding. Her sister, Miss Amelia, who earlier was silenced starts asserting herself and shouts at her when she becomes angry. When she gets insulted, she backlashes:

I'm not as clever as you, sister . . . and I am always afraid to say things to you for fear of making you angry . . . I must say I've often thought it would have been better if you had been less severe on Sara Crewe, and had seen that she was decently dressed and more comfortable . . . I don't know how I dare [to say such a thing] . . . but now I've begun I may as well finish, whatever happens to me. (Burnett 289)

Her anger makes her a sort of hysteric. This can be considered as the happiness of the colonized in gaining freedom. After Amelia said, “. . . all our pupils would be taken away and it serves you right more than it does me, for you are a hard woman, Maria Minchin- you're a hard, selfish, worldly woman!” (Burnett 289). Miss Minchin is shattered and thus loses her complete power as the colonizer. Now that Amelia is stronger than she was earlier, Minchin becomes very careful in handling her, and never attempts

to rule over her. Like any other colonizer who loses power, Miss Minchin too is suspicious of her sister, for the latter now has the power to gain triumph over her, which is the power for decolonizing.

Becky comes to know about all the events and finds out that there is no longer Miss Minchin's hard rule, but she is used to be a colonized and cannot live without depending upon someone, just as Sara finds it difficult to survive without at least a mere reflection of the colonizer. The only person in whom she could find solace is Sara, but she too is no longer there. A ray of hope comes when Ram Dass says about Sara's wish to let Becky come with her. But now also Sara does not wish Becky to share the same status as her, and so she gets the position as Sara's attendant. This makes explicit the fact that Sara is still searching for her own self, for which she makes Becky a foil to her. This helps her find out what is lacking in her attendant and secure her status as superior to all around her, though she herself is a colonized mimic being.

The final description of Sara and Becky gives a glimpse of the cyclic movement of colonialism:

The next morning, Miss Minchin, in looking out of her window, saw the thing she perhaps least enjoyed seeing. The Indian gentleman's carriage, with its tall horses, drew up before the door of the next house, and its owner and a little figure, warm with soft, rich furs, descended the steps to get into it. The little figure was a familiar one, and reminded Miss Minchin of days in the past. It was followed by another as familiar- the sight of which she found very irritating. It was Becky, who, in the character of a delighted attendant, always accompanied her young mistress to her carriage, carrying wraps and belongings. Already Becky had a pink, round face. (Burnett 301)

The description hints at Miss Minchin losing her position as a great colonizer of Sara and Becky. In the new cycle, Becky is getting ready to be the mimic being of the colonizer, for, she finds out that she is a close companion of Sara and so possesses a superior position to all around her, including Ram Dass, who is the one responsible for Becky being made part of the family. The comforts that she enjoys with the colonizer makes her believe that she too has the power to exercise colonization, though she is unaware of the fact that she is Othered and is made into a mimic being as Sara has now become very familiar to her, to consider her as a colonizer. In short Becky is psychologically colonized by Sara without the awareness of the latter, just as once she had been colonized by her father, Captain Crewe. This cycle rotates until a new mimic being is created by Becky, which creates a new cycle.

A critical or interpretative reading of any work of art brings to the forefront the presence of explicit and implicit meanings. No work of art, even those which outwardly seem innocent, is free from such readings. It should be brought to notice that to a certain extent, it was to hide from the surveillance of the authorities that many works gave stress to the explicit meaning, one category among them being children's literature. An analytical approach towards one such work, *A Little Princess* by Frances Hodgson Burnett, brings out the politics in children's literature. The movement from colonialism to neo-colonialism is portrayed by the author in the work, though indirectly.

Hegel's study in his "Master-Slave Dialectics" proves that the creation of self-consciousness is of prime importance to every human being (Rabinow 23). The politics of presence and absence has a role to play in the establishment of self-consciousness, because as a first step to give form to one men observe all around them and find out what is lacking in the latter, which is present in them. The discovery of the absent aspects gives the observer a kind of superiority, and the group which lacks certain qualities gets categorized as the Other. When the Other acknowledges the opponent's self-consciousness, the same gets established.

Sara establishes her self-consciousness through Othering and colonization. As she is a mimic being, she holds the notion that she is superior to others, and in order to prove it to herself she tries to find out herself by observing those around her. She others not only non-human beings--Emily, Melchisedec and the sparrows--but also human beings who include Becky, Lottie, Ermengarde, and to a certain extent, Miss Minchin. This results in Sara becoming the colonizer, one capable of establishing her self-consciousness

over others. It is in her search for a self of her own that she finds Ram Dass, an Orient. At present she and Ram Dass are hybrid individuals. Sara is hybrid in the sense that she was born and brought up in India, and now is uprooted to London, which is the same in the case of Ram Dass. Similarly there are many behavioural features same in both of them. But from among those similarities, Sara finds out what is lacking in the man. In the first place Ram Dass lacks Occident's mindset, which is a great drawback as far as Sara is concerned, thus Othering him, who in actuality is the one helping her get back the fortune left for her by Captain Crewe. In this manner, she is able to strongly create a self-consciousness of her own and impose it on others around her.

There is the common notion that when decolonization finds success, the division into the self and the other ends. But the theory and practice of colonialism prove that when one colonizer is removed, another takes its place, which gets evident from *A Little Princess*. When Captain Crewe is decolonized, Miss Minchin takes the place, and later when she gets decolonized her position was taken over by Mr. Carrisford. As with the case of Sara, though she acts as a colonizer, the later events give stance to the reality that she can never be a colonizer in the proper sense of the term, but only a mimic being, always dependent upon whoever colonizes her, whether it be Captain Crewe or Mr. Carrisford.

All these point to the conclusion that the whole of human life engages itself in the process of decolonization, colonization, and sometimes neo-colonization, where indirect colonization takes form. As pointed out by Foucault in his study on Nietzsche's idea of history (Siep), the whole of human history is that of domination and subjugation. It is always a fight between the dominated and the dominating that starts a new era of power and history. Thus, as long as human beings exist in the world and as long as there comes to the forefront new ideologies and norms, the process of colonization takes place, in a circular motion, wherein the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized takes a reverse motion with each new age.

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## SUBVERSION OF MOTHERHOOD: A STUDY OF SELECT NOVELS OF SHASHI DESHPANDE AND YVONNE VERA

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Adrienne Rich expressed strong opinions against romanticizing the concept of 'motherhood'. In her opinion 'motherhood' always leads woman into trouble. In her opinion motherhood brings in least power for women over their children and motherhood provides opportunity for patriarchal society to gain its control over woman.

In Rich's opinion motherhood connotes two meanings. i.e. potential relationship and institution. It should be noted that potential relationship is related to reproductive power and children. On the other hand, motherhood as an institution that serves as the substitute to patriarchy as the institution of motherhood looks to keep women under check. Hence, it could be noted that potential relationship and motherhood as an institution are always at the opposite ends.

In Rich's opinion motherhood as an institution that restricts the freedom of women. It is an invisible entity. Rich believes that this invisible entity is called as law of nature. Rich believes that motherhood as an institution is a perfect foil for patriarchal set up. For, the institution of motherhood forces women to conceive and bring forth men on the earth, and to be subservient to them. Patriarchy wishes to subjugate women and keep her under its control. Hence, both institution of motherhood and patriarchy join hands to denigrate women.

At this juncture it is worth to look at the opinions of Firestone on motherhood. In Firestone's view motherhood is the root cause of women's pathetic situation in social set up. Firestone's theory of motherhood rests on four key points. i.e., Engle's views on division of labor.

- Freud's theory of psychoanalysis
- The concept of family
- Technology of artificial reproduction

It should be noted that Engles declared that the concept of division of labour came upon as a means to segregate men and women. Engle opines that reproduction is determined by biological need but by economic implications.

For Firestone, Freud's psychoanalysis serves as an indicative of power. She looks into the concepts of Oedipus complex, and Electra complex, penis envy and equates these terms to power. For Firestone,

- Oedipus complex identification of male child with mother.
- Electra complex showcases the penis envy of girl child.

Firestone argues that the girl child wants to be an integral part of father's power structure. But she is denied of that opportunity. Hence, she envies the penis. It could be noted that Firestone uses the term penis to indicate power. Firestone further opines that mother looks at her male child as a 'penis substitute' to find comfort in him which is denied to her by her husband.

In Firestone's opinion the concept of family was introduced by the patriarchal set up to increase its stronghold on women. She observes that the concept of family came into existence in the seventeenth century, with the advent of bourgeois family --the popular theme of 'holy' family represented in family portraits. These portraits comprised of St. Mary and Jesus or Adam or Eve. Thus the concept of holy family has to emulate and as a result the responsibilities of mother have been doubled.

Firestone looked at the technology of artificial reproduction as an opportunity to get rid of the

practice of child birth. Firestone stressed on the sexual liberation for women. But she believed that sexual freedom with the burden of childbirth is useless. Hence, she stressed on the need to use technology of artificial reproduction.

In the Indian context 'motherhood' has a very special status. In fact, women are ascribed as mothers and are being worshipped. But in reality the status of woman / mother is very deteriorating. Mother has a little say in the proceedings of the family as father / male assumes the position of decision-making authority.

It should be noted that in pre-Vedic period, women occupied very important place in Indian society as she was very much part of decision-making in public sphere as well as in the family. But with the advent of Vedas there is a drastic decline in the position of women as well as mother.

In the African context the term 'mother' refers to grandmother or the oldest wife in the family. In African society motherhood shapes the identity of women. Hence, the notion of motherhood holds prime importance in African literature. In fact, Catherine Acholonu coined the term 'motherism'. In her opinion, the African feminist theory is built on the premises of motherhood. Acholonu further states that motherhood is binding force behind the unity of African continent in all aspects.

But Mariaamma views this celebration of motherhood by Acholonu as utter nonsense. She states that the new generation of women writers of Africa do not connect themselves with the concept of African mother. In a similar vein, Buchi Emcheta deconstructs the myth of African motherhood in "Joys of Motherhood". Through, Nnu Ego, the protagonist, Emcheta looks to delink the virtue of 'ideal mother' whose only contribution is to bear children to society.

Both Shashi Deshpande and Yvonne Vera look to subvert the popular notion of motherhood in their novels. Here the mothers are portrayed as irritative and beings filled with hatredness towards their children. Even the killing instinct is visible in Vera's novels.

In *A Matter of Time*, Kalyani shares acrimonious relationship with Manorama, her mother. Manorama always wished for a male heir, but Kalyani was born. Hence, Manorama ignored her daughter. Manorama did not allow Kalyani to pursue her studies though she was good in academics.

Manorama married off Kalyani to Shripathi, her brother. It should be noted that Kalyani is reluctant to marry her maternal uncle. Even Shripati is not yet ready to take up the responsibility of husband. But Manorama insisted on marriage to take place. Both Kalyani and Shripati yielded the pressure of Manorama and tied marital knot. It should be noted that Manorama stressed on the marriage of Kalyani and Shripati with the view to keep the property in the family itself. Hence, it could be said that Manorama ignored the aspirations of her daughter in the wake of her greed for property.

The marriage between Kalyani and Shripati proves to be a disaster as Kalyani comes back to her parents' house. Because she is held responsible for the disappearance of their mentally retarded son. At this point, Manorama blames Kalyani for the incident instead of consoling her. It could be said that till the end of her life Manorama, never loved her daughter.

In Deshpande's *Small Remedies*, Bai and Munni shared a relationship of hatredness as mother and daughter. It could be noted that Bai is a very famous singer. But she has a dubious past. Bai has let go her marriage in order to chase her dreams in the world of music. She left her in-laws house with Gulam Saheb, a tabla accompanist. Munni is the daughter of Bai and Gulam Saheb. hence, it could be observed that Munni is born out of wedlock.

Interestingly, both Bai and Munni look to gain social acceptance now. Bai looks to maintain her status and dignity in the social set up. But accepting Munni as her daughter would hinder the newly acclaimed social status and dignity of Bai. Hence, Bai decides to wipe out both Munni and Gulam Saheb from her life. Hence, Bai while narrating the story of her life to Madhu, her biographer and protagonist of the novel blocks out the details of Munni. She even refuses to accept Munni as her daughter.

On the other hand, Munni yearns for social acceptability. Hence, as a child, she refuses to accept

Gulam Saheb as her father. She comes up with a story that her father is a lawyer stationed at Poona and accuses Gulam Saheb of kidnapping her.

Later in the narrative, Munni's yearning for social acceptance has been fulfilled as she is married to a Brahmin family. Munni even changes her name and calls herself as Shailaja Joshi. She is very much content in living a life of a Brahmin house-maker away from Bai.

But ironically when Munni dies in the bomb blast she is recognized as the daughter of Savitribai Indolkar. Hence, it could be said that though both Bai and Munni look to wipe out each other from their lives, they are very much connected to each other.

In *Moving On*, Vasu and Manjari share a strange mother-daughter relationship. Vasu, the mother of Manjari is always detached from the family. Initially both Vasu and Manjari share a warm bonding. But things turn on its head when Manjari decides to marry Shyam, against the wish of Vasu. Vasu is furious at Manjari. But Manjari does not pay heed to Vasu.

Later in the novel, circumstances lead Manjari back to her parents' house. But Manjari has to face the warmth of Vasu. Vasu's anger towards Manjari reaches the peak when it is learnt that Malu, the younger sister of Manjari is impregnated by Shyam, husband of Manjari. Shyam commits suicide burdened by guilt whereas Malu dies after giving birth to girl child.

Though Manjari has no fault of her Vasu holds her elder daughter responsible for this fiasco and cuts off all relations with Manjari. Vera presents a mother with killing instinct in *Without a Name*. Mazvita the protagonist of the novel is raped by a freedom fighter in the rural landscape. Hence, she decides to move to Harare, Mazvita's 'dream city' in order to forget that horrible incident. At the same time, she wants to taste freedom in the city. For, Mazvita believed that Harare could offer her freedom.

Here Mazvita comes across Joel, who offers Mazvita his place to stay on the condition of sexual favors. Mazvita readily agrees. Because she wanted to stay away from the rural landscape, which reminds her of the brutal rape. Mazvita enjoys the ride on the cycle like a child as the 'ride' symbolized freedom for her. But her shot at freedom is short lived as it is learnt that she is pregnant. Joel refuses to take the responsibility of Mazvita and the unborn child. He asks Mazvita to leave.

Mazvita's life turns to square one. She has no place to live. No one to look after her. Hence, she commits infanticide by strangling the child to death with the help of Joel's tie.

For Adriene Rich infanticide is a deliberate act committed by mother in trying circumstances. She states in *Of Woman Born* that infanticide is a tool of power given to mother which she can exercise in extreme circumstances. Rich opines that a mother commits infanticide when she is sure that she cannot take the responsibility of the child on emotional and economical front. Rich observed that infanticide is the last resort for mothers as children were trusted upon them through rape, ignorance, poverty, marriage or lack of sanction against birth control and so forth.

Hence it could be argued that Rich tries to convey the point that infanticide is one of the consequences of motherhood without choice. This argument holds good in the case of Mazvita as she becomes a mother without choice and has no avenues to look after her child. Hence she decides to take the extreme step. Rich argues that infanticide is a metaphor of freedom for women against the oppressive patriarchal order. Mazvita fits in this argument of Rich as the child has become a stumbling block for Mazvita in her way to freedom. Hence, she decided to clear it.

Vera once again showcases the troubled mother-daughter relationship in the illing instinct of other in *Butterfly Burning*. In the novel Phephelaphi is the daughter of Zandile, a prostitute by profession. She leaves Phephelaphi in order to seek sexual pleasures. Hence, Gertrude takes care of Phephelaphi and nurtures her. It should be noted that even Gertrude is a prostitute, but there is a stark difference between the attitudes of Zandile and Gertrude towards Phephelaphi.

After the demise of Gertrude, Phephelaphi goes to Zandile and seeks her help. But once again Zandile ignores her plea and is busy in seeking sexual pleasures with her lover.

Hence, one could not think that the terminologies associated with motherhood, i.e., affectionate, caring nurturer does not find a place in the dictionary of Zandile. Instead, she is calculative, pleasure-seeking and self-centered entity.

Phephelapi is an ambitious girl. She wants to be the first black nurse in Bulawayo. But unwanted pregnancy becomes the stumbling block to fulfill her ambition. Phephelapi has applied for the training of nursing. She is waiting for confirmation from the authorities. In the meantime, Phephelapi learns that she is pregnant. And pregnant ladies are disqualified from attending the training of nursing.

Hence, she operates on herself in the midst of bushes. But as fate would have she is impregnated for the second time by Fumbatha, her partner. This time Phephelapi sets herself aflame with the unborn child. It should be noted that this act of Phephelapi signals resistance against patriarchy, which looks to take control of women. Hence, here 'pregnancy' is a tool of patriarchy to keep women under its control.

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## LOCATING THE DISPERSED: PORTRAYAL OF THE WOMEN IN NEW GENERATION MALAYALAM FILMS

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### **Abstract:**

*Film is a complex art form and a cultural establishment. But in the beginning, cinema was considered as an inferior art and it was not taken seriously. The history of cinema has passed through different stages of aesthetic and technological advancements. It is a potential medium which is capable of influencing people both culturally and socially. Like any other forms of art film also creates ideological notions. The advantage of having a visual component rather makes its attempts plausible. Malayalam cinema is characterized by the synthesis of the popular and art, which has slowly evolved from the political movements. With the outbreak of a set of young directors and technicians, Malayalam film industry has gained a new vigour both commercially and aesthetically. This paper is an attempt to analyses the positioning of women in New Generation Malayalam movies and the concealment of patriarchal consciousness.*

**Keywords:** *New Generation Films, Patriarchy, Sexuality, Women Empowerment*

Malayalam cinema has undergone tremendous changes during the last ten years. The first movie in Malayalam, *Vigathakumaran*, a silent movie released in 1930, was directed by J. C Daniel, who later came to known as the father of Malayalam Cinema. The first ever heroine in Malayalam cinema, P.K Rosie, had to meet with the public contempt because of her lower caste position in the then caste ridden society of Kerala. Consequently, she disappeared from the scenario without any trace anticipating the plight of many actresses to come. Early films like *Marthanda Varma* (1933) and *Balan* (1938) went into obscurity without any marks or evidence thus making further attempts to watch the movie or analyses, intractable. Several films in the 1950s and 60s like *Neelakuyil* (1954) and *Chemmeen* (1965) triumphantly set forth the gender roles by promulgating the idea of femininity with humility, compassion, purity and sacrifice. Furthermore, Malayalam Cinema was changing “in favor of respectable practices of monogamy, patriliney and patrilocality, all consolidated under a reformulated patriarchy” (Pillai, 104). The years between the 1970s and 1990, witnessed the radical shift in visual aesthetics with the new array of directors like K.G George, Padmarajan, G. Aravindan and John Abraham. Directors like Bharathan, Sibi Malayil, Fazil, Venu Nagavally, Hariharan, and Lenin Rajendran. There occurred a gradual shift in the status of women from objectified commodities to a speaking subject of substance and merit.

The aesthetic and artistic quality of Malayalam Cinema began to deteriorate in the 2000s. Slapstick comedy films by Dileep celebrated the female actresses and their presence with double meaning dialogues and vulgar objectification. His films generated humour by projecting the overt and sexually charged female characters. Films by Mohanlal and Mammootty have marginalized the women in their respective films by positioning themselves as the culmination of masculinity with an exaggerated masculine sensibility. The male protagonist in the film *Narasimham* (2000) is an embodiment of feudalism and machismo. He hegemonies the educated and bold heroine in all possible ways.

The lethargic existence of Malayalam cinema has witnessed a tremendous refashion with the instigation of a set of young directors. A new category of mainstream film emerged during this crisis period and this trend was led by a generation of young film makers. In the media discourse, this trend was called by different terms like New Wave and New Generation. These directors are Rajesh Pillai, vineeth

Sreenivasan, Amal Neerad, Ashiq Abu, Anwar Rasheed, Jeethu Joseph, Anil Radhakrishna Menon and Lijo Joseph Pallisery. This trend was set into motion with films released early parts of this decade like *Pranchiyettan and the Saint* (2010), *Traffic* (2011), *Salt n Pepper* (2011) and *Annayum Rasoolum* (2013). This trend was marked with the technical innovations, the shift in the aesthetic paradigm and the synthesis of the art and the commercial stream of cinema. A notable feature of New Generation movies is its focus on urban themes, faster life style, overabundance of background score and sound effects. Most of these films have established an essential urban sensibility with a troubled metrosexual hero. However, as the noted film critic Dr C.S Venkiteswaran points out, “while their formats and styles are deeply influenced by global and national trends, their thematics are firmly rooted in Malayali life and mindscapes”.

Unlike the previous films that eulogize masculinity, new generation films evince male figures that are submissive, sexually frustrated and less narcissistic. In *Salt n Pepper* (2011) directed by Ashiq Abu, the male hero Kalidasan and his cook Babu subvert the rigid gender roles by engaging themselves in cooking which is a skill or job traditionally attributed to women. Kalidasan is a troubled middle aged bachelor who feels inferior with the acquaintance of females. Maya, the female protagonist, is an unmarried and emotionally troubled yet strong woman. She dares to overturn the traditional, social and cultural notions associated with femininity. Her aversions towards beauty treatments, and the forthright verbal attack against men, make her a deconstructed version of the females. Maya and her friends celebrate the New Year by having beer in the terrace of their hometown. To subvert something is to take oppressive forces and turn them into something that challenges the oppressor. Institutions such as Gender can be subverted by acts such as extreme performance of one's assigned gender or the adoption of criteria for a gender other than one's “own”. Maya chooses to stay away from marriage which can be viewed as a brave stand against patriarchy. Simon de Beauvoir avers “Marriage is enjoined on woman because it is her duty to satisfy a male's sexual needs and to take care of his household. Woman renders these services to the spouse and in return he is supposed to give her presents or a marriage settlement and to support her” (Beauvoir 447). The film questions the legitimacy of gender expectations by acknowledging and subsequently undermining gender roles.

New Generation films posit women of substance, opinion, courage and distinctive personality unlike the objectified, compromising and compassionate shadowy figures in the previous films. In the film *Cocktail* (2010), the wife takes a drastic step to make her husband decipher the consequences of his extramarital affair. Her decision to avoid a divorce and to stay within the institution of marriage even after her husband's infidelity, moreover her determination in collaborating with another man to trap her husband and to execute a brave plan of taking revenge shows her singularity and audaciousness. *Trivandrum Lodge* (2012) directed by VK Prakash is the greatest blow to the morally conservative society of Kerala. With its explicit remarks on both male and female sexuality and the sexual frustration of the characters, the film has invited severe criticisms. The film untangles the intricate lives of people living in a lodge, namely Trivandrum Lodge. Nidhi is a young independent woman writer who has recently inhabited the lodge. She separates from the domineering husband and in search of a sexual partner. She is bold enough to nurture her sexual fantasies and advances from the inmates. Nidhi presents herself as the one who keeps on experimenting with her sexuality after a disappointing marital life. Both the society and tradition expect women to keep their sexuality as a concealed entity and view any transgressions as lethal and a threat to the patriarchal institutions. Madhuri in the film *Ee Adutha Kaalathu* (2012) embarks on a friendship with a man to retain her selfhood shattered by a sexually inactive and abusive husband.

Although the women in New Generation movies are unflinching and courageous, there are particular cases of heroines whose boldness or determination shatter with the emergence of a fully-fledged male hero. Shoshanna in *Amen* (2013) is more dynamic and intrepid than her timid lover. But her unflinching nature has used peculiarly by the film for the transformation of the hero to be masculine enough to win her over. In *Annayum Rasoolum* directed by Rajiv Ravi, the heroine is a meek subject visible

only through the male presence of Fahad Fazil, the hero. Anna's sacrifice for the family and her quality as an individual dwindle during the non-appearance of the hero. Swetha in *Traffic* (2011) embarks on an extramarital affair with the best friend of her husband, which makes her husband to punish her with an accident. Thus the disturbance in the patriarchal and familial equilibrium is met with brutal punishment by the institution. Apart from these, his final act of forgiving enforces his authority and dominion over his wife. Like Swetha, Anjali in *Beautiful* (2011) also metes out the punishment for her illegitimate relationship with a married man. All these women are dauntless and distinct yet lack the actual robustness to challenge the patriarchal consciousness. The presence of masculine subjugates the female figure. As John Berger says in his *Ways of Seeing*, "A man's presence suggests what he is capable of doing to you or for you. His presence may be fabricated, in the sense that he pretends to be capable of what he is not. But the pretense is always towards a power which he exercises on others" (Berger 47).

The first film which has adopted feminism as its market strategy is also a New Generation film *22 Female Kottayam* (2012) directed by Ashiq Abu. The promotional strategy includes the testimony given by a male chauvinist audience. Consequently, the film has lauded with critical acclaim as the exemplification of women empowerment. The film recounts the transformation of Tessa K Abraham, a 22-year-old Malayali nurse in Bangalore whose sole aspiration is to achieve a nursing job in Canada. In the course of her visa clearance, Tessa begins a love affair and premarital consummation with Cyril. But Cyril's evil intentions and his association with the rapist Hegde unveils after Tessa's brutal rape by Hegde and her fabricated arrest organised by Cyril. She takes a firm decision to avenge Cyril by using her sexuality and transforms herself as a formidable opponent to Cyril and Hegde. Cyril is a metrosexual with no inhibitions at being slighted by voyeuristic comments of girls and one who is open with sexual relationships. But these are only a prelude to his true identity as a glorified pimp who preys upon vulnerable women. The final scene of castration as the revenge of Tessa raises several questions about the concept of masculinity and its channelization. Tessa castrates Cyril by removing his phallus surgically. After the castration scene, Cyril arrogantly shuns Tessa by saying that his masculinity does not depend upon the six-inch removed from him. Cyril's ultimatum to Tessa even after her revenge explicitly shows that her attempt to make Cyril remorseful is a failure. During her prison life, her fellow prisoner alerts her that the greatest weapon of a woman is her sexuality. Cyril boasts to retaliate with her regardless of the absence of the penis.

The masculinity flux has reduced to an extent with the introduction of New Generation sensibility. The visibility and scope of women in the screen have expanded. But the classic feminist concern of the objectified female still remains the same. The lens of the camera assumes the gaze of a man when it comes to the representation of the female. Irrespective of the greater female visibility New Generation films celebrates lewd dialogues with sexual connotations. In *Chappakurissu* (2011) Arjun shoots the intercourse with Sonia by using his mobile phone. The visuals leak in front of the whole world reducing the life a girl into the mobile screen. This exposure of Sonia's body shows the commodification of female body and sexuality. Rustom in *Ee Aduthakalathu* (2012) works for porn industry by seducing female celebrities for their clippings. At some point, the film shows some of his sexual encounters too. The visualisation of the rape scene in *22 Female Kottayam* (2012) manifests the male gaze of the Camera. This device of the cinema itself becomes another patriarchal instrument to instil the threat of violence to the women breaking the normative frameworks. Laura Mulvey opines:

"In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its fantasy on to the female form which is styled accordingly. In their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote to-be-looked-at-ness. Woman displayed as sexual object is the leit-motif of erotic spectacle" (Mulvey 14)

The chronological history of Malayalam cinema is undoubtedly male centric. It is very infrequent to trace women centric movies in the in the current of patriarchal and masculinist set of movies. Their representation with the masculinist perspective has problematised the positioning of women. But the evolution of a trend called New Generation able to portray women with significance and substance. Even though such a trend brought a very positive transformation, the boldness they show is a mirage. All these movies celebrate patriarchal supremacy in the disguise of women empowerment.

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## SALMAN RUSHDIE'S MAJOR NOVELS

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Sir Ahmed Salman Rushdie is a British Indian novelist and essayist. His second novel, *Midnight's Children* (1981), won the Booker Prize in 1981 and was deemed to be "the best novel of all winners" on two separate occasions. Much of Rushdie's fiction is set on the Indian subcontinent. He combines magical realism with historical fiction; his work is concerned with the many connections, disruptions, and migrations between Eastern and Western civilizations.

Rushdie's epic fourth novel, *The Satanic Verses* (1988), was the subject of a major controversy, provoking protests from Muslims in several countries. In 1983 Rushdie was elected a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, the UK's senior literary organization. He was appointed Commander de l'Ordre des Arts et des Letters of France in January 1999. In June 2007, Queen Elizabeth II knighted him for his services to literature. In 2008, *The Times* ranked him 13th on its list of the 50 greatest British writers since 1945.

Since 2000, Rushdie has lived in America. Rushdie's first novel, *Grimus* (1975), a part-science fiction tale, was generally ignored by the public and literary critics. His next novel, *Midnight's Children* (1981), catapulted him to literary notability. This work won the 1981 Booker Prize and, in 1993 and 2008, was awarded the Best of the Bookers as the best novel to have received the prize during its first 25 and 40 years. *Midnight's Children* follows the life of a child, born at the stroke of midnight as India gained its independence, who is endowed with special powers and a connection to other children born at the dawn of a new and tumultuous age in the history of the Indian sub-continent and the birth of the modern nation of India. The character of Saleem Sinai has been compared to Rushdie. However, the author has refuted the idea of having written any of his characters as autobiographical.

*Midnight's Children* deals with India's transition from British colonialism to independence and the partition of British India. It is considered an example of postcolonial literature and magical realism. The story is told by its chief protagonist, Saleem Sinai, and is set in the context of actual historical events as with historical fiction. But, his style of preserving the history with fictional accounts was self-reflexive which he himself explained with a term chutnification. The frequent intertextuality between his story-line and Bollywood films gives it a flavor of a pastiche. Therefore, this novel is an example of postmodern literature.

Various influences are there in Rushdie's writing of *Midnight's Children*. These influences include India's freedom movement, India's partition, Vedic literature (texts like Kathasaritsagar), magic realism, Kashmiri diaspora, fantasy, modernism, telepathy, history and folklore, and several other postcolonial trends in themes and techniques.

After *Midnight's Children*, Rushdie wrote *Shame* in 1983, in which he depicts the political turmoil in Pakistan, basing his characters on Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq. *Shame* won France's Prix du Meilleur Livre Étranger (for the Best Foreign Book) and was a close runner-up for the Booker Prize. Both these works of postcolonial literature are characterized by a style of magic realism and the immigrant outlook that Rushdie is very conscious of as a member of the Kashmiri diaspora.

Like most of Rushdie's work, this book *Shame* was written in the style of magic realism. It portrays the lives of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (Iskander Harappa) and General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq (General Raza Hyder) and their relationship. The central theme of the novel is that violence is born out of shame. The

concepts of 'shame' and 'shamelessness' are explored through all of the characters, with main focus on Sufiya Zinobia and Omar Khayyám.

*Shame* discusses heritage, authenticity, truth, and, of course, shame and shamelessness, as well as the impact of all these themes on an individual, the protagonist Omar Khayyám.

This story takes place in a town called “Q” which is actually a fictitious version of Quetta, Pakistan. In Q, the three sisters (Chunni, Munnee, and Bunny Shakil) simultaneously pretend to give birth to Omar Khayyám Shakil. Therefore, it is impossible to know who Omar's true mother is. In addition, they are unsure of who Omar's father is as the three sisters got pregnant at a house party. While growing up, Omar becomes mischievous and learns hypnosis. As a birthday present, Omar Khayyám Shakil's “mothers” allow him to leave Q. He enrolls in a school and is convinced by his tutor (Eduardo Rodriguez) to become a doctor. Over time, he comes in contact with both Iskander Harappa and General Raza Hyder.

There are various influences on Rushdie in writing this novel *Shame* such as Islam as a radical religion, dream vision, Pak government, mafia and the like.

Rushdie's most controversial work, *The Satanic Verses*, was published in 1988. The publication of *The Satanic Verses* caused immediate controversy in the Islamic world because of what was seen by some to be an irreverent depiction of Muhammad. The title refers to a disputed Muslim tradition that is related in the book. According to this tradition, Muhammad (Mahound in the book) added verses (Ayah) to the Qur'an accepting three goddesses who used to be worshipped in Mecca as divine beings. According to the legend, Muhammad later revoked the verses, saying the devil tempted him to utter these lines to appease the Meccans (hence the “Satanic” verses). However, the narrator reveals to the reader that these disputed verses were actually from the mouth of the Archangel Gibreel. The book was banned in many countries with large Muslim communities (13 in total: Iran, India, Bangladesh, Sudan, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Kenya, Thailand, Tanzania, Indonesia, Singapore, Venezuela, and Pakistan).

*The Satanic Verses* consists of a frame narrative, using elements of magical realism, interlaced with a series of sub-plots that are narrated as dream visions experienced by one of the protagonists. The frame narrative, like many other stories by Rushdie, involves Indian expatriates in contemporary England. The two protagonists, Gibreel Farishta and Saladin Chamcha, are both actors of Indian Muslim background. Farishta is a Bollywood superstar who specialises in playing Hindu deities. (The character is partly based on Indian film stars Amitabh Bachchan and N. T. Rama Rao.) Chamcha is an emigrant who has broken with his Indian identity and works as a voiceover artist in England.

At the beginning of the novel, both are trapped in a hijacked plane flying from India to Britain. The plane explodes over the English Channel, but the two are magically saved. In a miraculous transformation, Farishta takes on the personality of the archangel Gabriel and Chamcha that of a devil. Chamcha is arrested and passes through an ordeal of police abuse as a suspected illegal immigrant. Farishta's transformation can partly be read on a realistic level as the symptom of the protagonist's developing schizophrenia.

Both characters Farishta and Chamcha struggle to piece their lives back together. Farishta seeks and finds his lost love, the English mountaineer Allie Cone, but their relationship is overshadowed by his mental illness. Chamcha, having miraculously regained his human shape, wants to take revenge on Farishta for having forsaken him after their common fall from the hijacked plane. He does so by fostering Farishta's pathological jealousy and thus destroying his relationship with Allie. In another moment of crisis, Farishta realizes what Chamcha has done, but forgives him and even saves his life.

Both return to India. Farishta kills Allie in another outbreak of jealousy and then commits suicide. Chamcha, who has found not only forgiveness from Farishta but also reconciliation with his estranged father and his own Indian identity, decides to remain in India.

Embedded in this story is a series of half-magic dream vision narratives, ascribed to the mind of Farishta. They are linked together by many thematic details as well as by the common motifs of divine revelation, religious faith and fanaticism, and doubt.

*The Moor's Last Sigh*, a family epic ranging over some 100 years of India's history was published in 1995. *The Moor's Last Sigh* is the fifth novel by Salman Rushdie. It is set in the Indian cities of Bombay and Cochin.

*The Moor's Last Sigh* traces four generations of the narrator's family and the ultimate effects upon the narrator. The narrator, Moraes Zogoiby, traces his family's beginnings down through time to his own lifetime. Moraes, who is called 'Moor' throughout the book, is an exceptional character, whose physical body ages twice as fast as a normal person's does and also has a deformed hand. The book also focuses heavily on the Moor's relationships with the women in his life, including his mother Aurora, who is a famous national artist; his first female tutor; and his first love, a charismatic, demented sculptor named Uma.

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## U. R. ANANTHMURTHY'S *SAMSKARA*: A DUEL BETWEEN CARNAL DESIRE AND ELITE CULTURE

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### **Abstract:**

*Ananthmurthy's award winning novel Samskara portrays various aspects of South Indian Culture along with intercultural relationship encountered like salad bowl in a small village. The so called elite culture of Praneshacharya in this novel has been emerged at the cost of the sacrifices of baser human instinct and carnal desire. Culture as a gist of all its definitions which lets an individual to celebrate his/her existence in the society as the member of that group but a responsible and respected character like Praneshacharya gets isolated from the society and he is detained within his own boundaries behind the walls of social taboos. Culture which makes man more interactive, celebrative and open-minded and carnivalesque performs exactly in the contrast in the case of Praneshacharya. This paper is an attempt to explore this contrast from the novel and illustrate how a poor guy is a prey of his own carnal desire against his own panorama of cultural value responsible for his escape from the society and as a social being.*

**Key Words:** Culture, Carnal Desire, Human Values.

Carnal Desire is one of the baser instincts like hunger in human beings like animals. It needs to be satisfied instead of locking up in deep down in our subconscious mind. In the theory of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud focuses on this instinct of human beings. He defines an instinct as “a source” which “is a state of excitation within the body and its aim is to remove that excitation”. (Freud 1938:125) According to him “The sexual instincts are remarkable for their plasticity, for the facility with which they can change their aim...for the ease with which they can substitute one form of gratification for another” (Freud 1938: 127)

In Indian culture irrespective of religions, sex has always been a social taboo. Hindu society even forbids discussing the subject among the adults. However, sex is sublimated in the form of marriage which is approved socially by the other members of the cultural group. If a man or woman has sexual relation without being married, then it is labeled as the adulatory and sin. Such a man or a woman is expelled from the society. Due to this, often sexual desires are suppressed but these desires flows out whenever they find the way. The Jnanpeeth awardee U. R. Anantha Murthy is a well-known figure in Kannada Literature. His short novel *Samskara* - a Rite for a Dead Man is a controversial classic in Indian Literature which shows the Praneshacharya's duel between his carnal desire which the baser instinct of all human being and his elite Brahmin culture which is trapped in its old-age hypocrisy. The novel was originally written in Kannada and published in 1965; it was translated into English by A. K. Ramanujan.

The novel *Samskara* is the story of an anti-Brahminical Brahmin Naranappa who is dead in novel. His death causes the havoc among the Brahmins in Durvasapura because he is man who had abandoned his legal wife and had relationship with a low caste woman, Chandri. He would not observe the death anniversary of his parents. Besides, he has friendship with Muslims with whom he would eat and drink forbidden things. No one is ready to perform Naranappa's last rites. It is the story of lusty, greedy, hypocrite Brahmins of the agrahara like Garudacharya, Lakshmanacharya, Dasacharya, who hate Naranappa and

curse him for being anti-Brahmin even after his death. These Brahmins are the hypocritic who appear the staunch follower of their scriptures and dharma. They hide behind religion but they are exposed in the course of plot. Their gluttony is displayed when Chandri offers her ornament to one who performs Naranappa's rites. It is also the story of low caste prostitute Chandri who loves Naranappa very much. She is the loyal woman with mission. She wants the appropriate rites and ritual for the dead body of Naranappa. So she visits the guru of Brahmin Praneshacharya for the proper sacrament for Naranappa's body. *Samskara* is more especially the story of great Sanskrit scholar Praneshacharya, who belongs to elite culture of Brahminism who leads the community. He lives a life of high values and is respected highly among his fellow Brahmins. Praneshacharya is a learned Brahmin "Crest-Jewel of Vedic Learning" (6) who represents the higher section of the social order in Hindu varna system. As a person, he has earned the greater reverence among his fellow Brahmins. Durgabatta, one of Brahmins describes praneshacharya's intellectuality in following words

Our Acharya has won all sorts of arguments with all the super-pundits, yours and ours, won honours at every seat of learning in the South, fifteen lace shawls and silver platters ... our Acharya... (6)

In novel, Praneshacharya seems to be trapped in the panorama of his highly regarded elite culture that does not allow him to enjoy the basic urges of human beings. Initially he is a satisfied soul whose activities are divided into domestic and religious. He begins his day by performing his regular duty of helping his wife in getting bathed, dressing her up, feeding her meal and giving her medicines. After completing his domestic duties, he worships at Maruti temple and recites the holy legends to the Brahmins of the agrahara who regularly gather in front of his house to listen to his preaching both in the morning and in the evening. He is a scholar and his recitations are new every day. He is absorbed with his routine life. He is a firm Brahmin who is devoted to his Dharma and Karma and who only wants to get salvation. He marries a barren sick woman only to lead a celibate life. He feels proud of his supreme self-sacrifice of carnal desire. He himself thinks 'By marrying an invalid, I get ripe and ready.' (2) He is fully occupied with his duties and responsibilities that even he does not know what desires are meant to be. His state is vividly described in Chandri's thoughts

Poor man, he probably knew nothing of the body's pleasures, his wife lay there like a dry log, the good woman. Yet how patient he was, what a halo around him. Not even once had he raised his eyes and looked at her. (46).

His virtues even attract Chandri; she reminds her mother words "...prostitutes should get pregnant by such holy men. Such a man was the Acharya, he had such looks, virtues; he glowed. But one had to be lucky to be blessed by such people." (46) Praneshacharya has preserved his characters from all the evils in society but he has not experienced the purity of carnal desires. He himself has the attraction towards the forbidden things which his elite Brahmin culture denounces; which Naranappa enjoys when he was alive. The confrontation between Praneshacharya and Naranappa reveals Naranappa's hate towards falsity of Brahmin culture. Naranappa argues,

'Your texts and rites don't work anymore The Congress Party is coming to power, you'll have to open up the temples to all outcastes,' and so on irreverently.

The Acharya had even said, 'Stop it, it isn't good for you. Don't separate Shripati from his wife.'

A guffaw was the answer. 'O Acharya, who in the world can live with a girl who gives no pleasure-except of course some barren brahmins!'

'You fellows-you brahmins-you want to tie me down to a hysterical female, just because she is some relative, right?'

Just keep your dharma to yourself -we've but one life-I belong to the "Hedonist School" which says-borrow, if you must, but drink yourghee.' (21)

Again when Praneshacharya attempts to bring Naranappa on the righteous path in his second visit to Naranappa's house, Naranappa lashes out the Brahmins in front of Acharya and narrates 'Aha! The Acharya too can get angry! Lust and anger, I thought, were only for the likes of us. But then anger plays on the nose-tips of people who try to hold down lust. That's what they say. Durvasa, Parashara, Bhrgu, Brihaspati, Kashyapa, all the sages were given to anger....Look, Acharya-those are the great sages who set the tradition, right? Quite a lusty lot, those sages. What was the name of the fellow who ravished the fisherwoman smelling offish,right in the boat and gave her body a permanent perfume? And now, look at these poor brahmins, descended from such sages! (23)

Naranappa threatens "Let's see who wins in the end-you or me. I'll destroyBrahmanism, I certainly will. My only sorrow is that there'sno Brahmanism really left to destroy in this place-exceptyou." (23) Naranappa proves Praneshacharya how he is one responsible for the decay in Brahmanism. He criticizes Acharya for his vanity and suppression of feelings and desires

You read those lush sexy Puranas, but you preach a life of barrenness. --- Be like the sages of your holy legends-get hold of a fish-scented fisherwoman who can cook you fish-soup, and go to sleep in her arms. And if you don't experience god when you wake up, my name isn't Naranappa.' (25, 26)

The episode between Naranapp and Acharya shows how Acharchaya himself comprises the baser carnal desires. It is also true. When he recites the holy legends, it attracts the youth because of his narration skill with erotic poetry. Shripathi, a young brahmin has slept with Belli a low caste at the river only after he had heard the Acharya description of Shakuntala's beauty.

He couldn't stand it anymore. Belli was carrying a pitcher of water on her head, the rag on her body had slipped, and as she stood in the moonlight bouncing her breasts, the colour of earth. she'd looked like Shakuntala herself. He had then personally, carnally, enjoyed the Acharya's description. (39).

It is Naranappa who in fact, helps Praneshacharya to find out his personality's another side which he has buried deep down in his subconscious. He has compromised with his inner feelings.

Later in novel, his character exhibits his inner urges and carnal desires that are restrained deep down in his soul. The self-awakening thoughts of Praneshacharya persuade him. He symbolically goes through a rebirth and experience the dual existence of contrasting natures within himself when he truly comes to know about the physical pleasure with Chandri. When Acharya fails to find out the solution over the problem of Naranappa's dead body, he offers prayers to monkey-god and asks for His help but he does not get any positive sign from the God. While returning home, he meets Chandri who was on her trail to Praneshacharya. Chandri overflows with compassion for him. Acharya gets tempted towards the touch of true woman. Anathamurthy vividly portrayed the incident.

She wanted to hold his feet and offer him her devotion. The next second, she was falling at his feet. It was pitch dark, nothing was visible. As she bent over as if overcome with grief, she didn't quite fall at his feet. Her breast touched his knee. In the vehemence of her stumbling, the buttons on her blouse caught and tore open. She leaned her head on his thigh and embraced his legs. Overwhelmed with tender feeling, filled with pity at this Brahmin

who had perhaps never known the pleasure of woman, helpless at her thought that there was no one but him for her in the agrahara-overcome, she wept. Praneshacharya, full of compassion, bewildered by the tight hold of a young female not his own, bent forward to bless her with his hands. His bending hand felt her hot breath, her warm tears; his hair rose in a thrill of tenderness and he caressed her loosened hair. The Sanskrit formula of blessing got stuck in his throat. As his hand played on her hair, Chandri's intensity doubled. She held his hands tightly and stood up and she pressed them to her breasts now beating away like a pair of doves.

Touching full breasts he had never touched, Praneshacharya felt faint. As in a dream, he pressed them. As the strength in his legs was ebbing, Chandri sat the Acharya down, holding him close. The Acharya's hunger, so far unconscious, suddenly raged, and he cried out like a child in distress, 'Amma!' Chandri leaned him against her breasts, took the plantains out of her lap, peeled them and fed them to him. Then she took off her sari, spread it on the ground, and lay on it hugging Praneshacharya close to her, weeping, flowing in helpless tears”

The sexual encounter with Chandri totally transformed Praneshacharya. He felt that he no longer had any moral right to continue as the spiritual leader of the agrahara. So he refused to direct the Brahmins in the issue of Naranappa dead body. What retires Praneshacharya from his place is nothing but the so call elite-brahmin culture which withholds him from living his true life. The culture which makes an individual interactive, celebrative, carnivalesque chains Praneshacharya within the walls of social taboos. His revered character emerges in the society at the cost of the sacrifices of his baser instinct and carnal desires. Naranappa does not succeed to trap Praneshacharya, but he instigates him to ponder over the true philosophy of life. Whereas Chandri lets him flow as man within her to satisfy his inner carnal desires.

The novel vividly portrays the dilemma and duel of Praneshacharya with his carnal desires and it is the elite cultures of Brahmin that prevents him to enjoy the life. He has trapped within his own boundaries behind the walls of social taboos. He tries to escapes from the reality of his life by evading in another village so that the people would not come to know about him and Chandri. But he carries guilt along with him; wherever he goes, he is haunted by the fear of discovery. He cannot forget Chandri's touch. Praneshacharya thinks that it is not his dilemma or problem but it of all. He reflects

But, my dilemma, my decision, my problem wasn't just mine, it included the entire agrahara. This is the root of the difficulty, the anxiety, the double-bind of dharma. When the question of Naranappa's death-rites came up, I didn't try to solve it for myself. I depended on God, on the old Law Books. Isn't this precisely why we have created the Books? Because there's this deep relation between our decisions and the whole community. In every act we involve our forefathers, our gurus, our gods, our fellow humans. Hence this conflict. Did I feel such conflict when I lay with Chandri? Did I decide it after pouring and measuring and weighing? (109)

The criticism of Praneshacharya reveals the falsity of his Brahmin culture. His anxiety is not Chandri but his own community that has shackled him with morality. Chandri in fact becomes a dream for him. At moment he decided to rebel against his culture.

By an act of will, I'll become human again. I'll become responsible for myself. That is ... that is ...I'll give up this decision to go where the legs take me, I'll catch a bus to Kundapura and live with Chandri. I'll then end all my troubles. I'll remake myself in full wakefulness ... (109, 110)

The novel ends with Praneshacharya's return to the agrahara in a state of confusion. His return portrays the paradox. The lust and greed for his position force him to return among his hypocrites Brahmins. Culture which lets an individual to celebrate his/her existence in the society as the member of that group compels a responsible and respected character like Praneshacharya to get isolated from the society only due to morality that his culture has laid upon him.

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15

## T. M. ALUKO'S *ONE MAN, ONE WIFE*: A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN TRADITIONAL RELIGION AND CHRISTIANITY

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### **Abstract:**

*The present paper concentrates on the theme of culture clash in Aluko's One Man, One Wife. During the 60s and 70s, many African writers focused on the challenges of the post-colonial state. Colonial rule drastically changed the cultural, social, religious and ethnic environment. Western civilization brought with it evils of different types including social and financial corruption. In such a context, T. M. Aluko has tried to expose the evil seeds of colonialism which has given rise to many negative influences on African citizens. The present study offers an opportunity to peep into traditional customs, beliefs and attitudes, the characters of myth and legends and the indigenous culture of Nigeria and shows how successfully the link between tradition and modern experience has been established by Aluko.*

The fictional work of Timothy Mofolorunso Aluko deals with social change and the clash of cultures in modern Africa. Culture-clash is the most prominent theme of the contemporary African fiction. Timothy Mofolorunso Aluko (1918-2010), born in Western Nigeria, has made a significant contribution to the development of the African novel. His novels brought him much critical acclaim. In his novels Aluko's pre-occupation is with the post-colonial African societies transitional societies. His novels deal with social change and the clash of cultures in modern Africa. The present paper deals with the culture-clash as depicted in Timothy Mofolorunso Aluko's *One Man, One Wife*.

In the 60s and 70s, many African writers focused on the challenges of the post-colonial state as the novel became the vehicle for analyzing new realities, leadership challenges and the crises of expectations. A popular preoccupation in the earlier literature of Africa was the impact of western civilization on the African tradition. The earlier African writers like Chinua Achebe, Ngugi Wa Thiongo, and Elechi Amadi portrayed the negative as well as positive impact this new incursion had on the society. But generally they yearn for the bliss and peace of the lost traditional world. For them, the western civilization brought with it evils such as social and economic corruption. This culture-clash is significantly suggested both in the title and the narrative of Achebe's classical novel *Things Fall Apart*. Soyinka, among others, confronted this critical phase. Of the many texts of the corpus of modern African writing namely Soyinka's *A Dance of the Forest*, Armah's *The Beautiful Ones are Not Born Yet* and *Fragment*, Cheikh Hamidou Kane's *Ambiguous Adventure*, Bessie Head's *A Quest of Power* and Dambudzo Marechera's *House of Hunger* and *Black Sunlight* deal with this culture-clash. There are different forces that have influenced the people to deviate from African values to western values. The present researcher wishes to frame his reflections here around the clash of cultures between Africans and westerners. This clash of tradition and western civilization is at the center of most of the novels of T. M. Aluko. It will therefore be interesting to see how this is brought out in *One Man, One Wife*. In his book *African Literature in the Twentieth Century* O. R. Dathorne writes Aluko's novels debunk the African. He is more concerned with the customs and traditions of his people. In the same way most of the novels of T. M. Aluko deal with the conflict between rural

African tradition and modern city life. Killam G. D. remarks in his book *Literature of Africa*, T. M. Aluko is concerned with the social, political and religious morality of society and with the tensions that exist between tradition and modernity. G. Gulam Tariq in his book *Contemporary African Novel* has taken

up a study of novels of Aluko, Ekwensi, Achebe and Soyinka and writers that culture-clash is the most predominant theme of contemporary African fiction. Ngugi Wa Thinogo'o in an article in *Homecoming* observes: "Unlike Achebe . . . He (Aluko) sees the conflict too much on one plane, the cultural and does not emphasize its social and economic basis enough" (Thiong'o, 1972: 43). Hence, the present study concentrates on the theme of culture clash in Aluko's *One Man, One Wife*. During the 60s and 70s, many African writers focused on the challenges of the post-colonial state. Colonial rule drastically changed the cultural, social, religious and ethnic environment. Western civilization brought with it evils of different types including social and financial corruption. In such a context, T. M. Aluko has tried to expose the evil seeds of colonialism which has given rise to many negative influences on African citizens. The present study offers an opportunity to peep into traditional customs, beliefs and attitudes, the characters of myth and legends and the indigenous culture of Nigeria and shows how successfully the link between tradition and modern experience has been established by Aluko.

His first novel *One Man, One Wife* published in Nigeria in 1959, is a controversial invective on Christians in combat with traditions in southern Nigeria. Thus, *One Man, One Wife* deals with the culture-conflict in terms of tradition verses modernity. The conflict between traditional and western civilization in the novel is in the form of a confrontation between traditional religion and Christianity. It starts with Christianity making inroads into the traditional society. Aluko, at the very beginning of *One Man, One Wife*, has presented a colonial situation leading to culture- conflict, a conflict between the 'village souls too far steeped in the worship of streams and trees' and the so-called civilized by cultural superiority. The church's campaign against 'heathenism' of the traditional religion has become a regular routine. The new religion, Christianity, believes in one god and in the worship of Jesus Christ, whereas the native religion has many gods and goddesses. The native society is polytheistic, who worships several gods and demi-gods. Religion, for them, is a way of life, the basis of cultural and social morality. The natives are highly superstitious, they live in harmony with their gods, ancestors and nature. There is deification of nature by the villagers. They worship plants, caves, animals, rivers and sea. They believe that their gods, demi-gods or Orishas are in close contact with their inhabitants, while 'the new God is in the little mud-walled church', the Yorubas have Eshu, the trickster god, found at the market place but without a house of worship. This conflict of tradition and western civilization is at the centre of *One Man, One Wife*. The 'church's campaign against heathenism' are conducted in order to inspire hundreds of villagers to abandon worshipping streams and trees for the one and only God of the Christians. The traditional villagers are, thus pantheistic in their belief. On the contrary, the Christian are monotheistic; their God is and omniscient, omnipotent, super-sensible Supreme Being. In the Christian sense God is accessible by reason and human spirit. To the African, the god's existence is both material and spiritual. In this context, C. Nze writes, "His (African's) belief assures him that gods exist, and their affirmation and justification of their existence is the fulfillment of their contractual obligation" (Nze, 1981: 24). Nze's observation about the African's belief is very authentic as Aluko, further writes: "Shango, the god of lightning and thunder, was registering his anger at this strange talk of a new God talking hold of simple folk who were once unquestioning votaries of his order" (3). The natives believe that their gods punish offenders, hence Shango, the god of lighting and thunder registers his wrath against the strange talk of new god. Thus, at the very outset of the novel Aluko has presented the conflict of beliefs. Until the incursion of Christian religion, Isolo was a coherent, organic and homogeneous society. Christian religion and new faith imposed by the 'White Collar', greatly affected the Isolo life and tradition. Aluko has contrasted in *One Man, One Wife* traditional Isolo culture with the Western culture.

Isolo villagers believe in interaction of nature and gods with human beings. For them physical nature is not dead. It is imbued with immanent vitality and spirit-force. Behind nature there is supernatural spirit which animates it and infuses it with occult potency. Isolo villagers believe that Shango, the god of Yoruba, interact with men and influences their deeds and thus help in maintaining the social morality.

Shango is both the manifestation of thunder and lightning and the chief security officer and executioner of the undetected and menacing criminals. But the new cultural elements, new beliefs and moral values, new attitudes, new ideologies and new outlook disturbs the peace and harmony in the traditional Isolo society. The converts start admiring the pastor for he is “the curious hero of much learning” (5). To the pastor there is no salvation in the worship of trees and rivers. To prove the ineffectuality of such gods, the pastor goes to the extreme of kicking the trunk of the sacred Odan tree. Pastor, David representing modernism protests against the worship of idols, deities, streams, rivers, trees and rocks and encourages the natives to embrace the new religion, Christianity. For the natives the huge Odan tree is known to be inhabited by the spirit of the god of the village. The pastor kicks the tree, waits for something to happen giving enough time for the tree to hit back if it would. Thus, he challenges the native gods and when nothing happens, he encourages the natives to embrace his call of Word. Thus, Pastor David, a missionary defies gods of the land by kicking them as a demonstration of their impotence. Naturally, his argument creates a situation of clash as the natives have different beliefs and ideas. They disagree seriously with the pastor about his idea of monotheism. The clash is much more deep-seated, for the two religions are diametrically opposed. Traditional religion promises them material reward whilst the Christian religion promises them only spiritual bliss in a mythical world called Heaven. But the strangest demand of the doctrines of the new religion is that a Christian man should believe in only one God Jesus Christ. For it is necessary and most important for him, it is said, if he should attain salvation- the highest bliss. The spiritual concerns are in short incomprehensible and antagonistic to the materialistic traditional world. Shocked by this madness, the people are therefore forced to react.

The modern religion, Christianity advocates monotheism, while African natives who worship several gods and demi-gods could not reconcile to the worship of one God. The god Sango, the God of lightning and thunder, and Shonponna, the God of small pox who figure in *One Man, One Wife* indicate the attitude of African towards their native religion. Thus, the theme of culture-conflict in the novel is presented in terms of traditional and modern religion in the postcolonial society. The conflict is found in two opposite forces- the forces of heathenism trying to smother life out of Christian beliefs, and the church trying to take Jesus out to the hundreds of village souls. The two cultures clash as both have different religious beliefs- one tries to establish its administration in the foreign land, and the other tries to retain its cultural identity refusing to adopt the new religion and their culture. Christianity or David Pastor's sermon teaches that there is one and only one way to eternal life- the Lord Jesus is the way. It asks the natives to throw away their gods, as they are false, and follow Jesus. In Yoruba traditional religion, people believe in the existence of Almighty God which they call Olorun(Lord of Heaven) or Olodumare (the Supreme God worth of great reverence). However, they worship many deities as intermediaries who can link them to God of Heaven. Because, they thought that God of heaven cannot be reached directly. This idea was developed from the respect that they had for their kings. According to Johnson S, “The hypothesis is, if their kings cannot be seen directly, then. Oba awonoba (king of kings) cannot be easily reached without a connection (Johnson, 1921). Thus, religion is fundamental and has tremendous influence in the life of the Yorubas. All their endeavors have to do with religion. It is difficult to segregate Yoruba religion from Yoruba culture. From cradle to grave he is incurable religious. “there is no event in the life of the Yoruba without any religious significance” observes Doi (Doi, 1992:121). In such a context, the incursion of white men into the entity of Yoruba gave rise to culture clash.

Contact between people of different cultures results in clash and rifts. The Christian communities life-style, and cultural practices start absorbing into the native culture and there begins clash between the cultures. In the process of culture-clash the native minority culture relinquishes its identity as it is absorbed into the dominant culture. The traditional culture moves towards the dominant Christian cultures values and practices. “Education. . .the secret of the What Man's magic” (32), compels the young people to adopt Christian culture's practices. Along with the age-old cultural beliefs and practices, Aluko has pointed out

certain beliefs of the native villages like: “Odan trees sprit was known to be to no lover of children” (18), or “Shonponna sends smallpox to people who stay up late at night” or Shonponna, god of smallpox starts “his nightly round of the village of Isolo, seeking whom to devour” (24). The new religion flatly refuses to believe that any god is, in whatever means, harmful to men. While the native gods like Shonponna are harmful, the new god, Jesus is benevolent. Thus, the religious beliefs clash. Another customary practice of that prevails in African society is that at the time of marriage, the bride groom has to pay what is called 'bride price' to the bride's father. The 'bride price' is fixed by the elders. Another reason of conflict between cultures is, the natives leave their village and enter the industrial cities for trade purpose. Generally, clash occurs when people's expectations of certain behavior coming from their cultural backgrounds are not met, as others have different cultural backgrounds and different expectations. It becomes impossible for Jacob to sustain the distinctive traditional values against the force of powerful Christian culture. His traditional values, customs, beliefs, etc. come into clash with the foreign cultural values.

The new faith insists on absolute devotion to the one and only God, whereas the authorities and the people of the land recognized and worshipped many deities. Above, all the new faith teaches a very strong matrimonial doctrine that to reach the highest level of Christianity, the last rung on the ladder to Christian God's heaven, a Christian man must marry only one wife. This doctrine of monogamy of the new faith becomes the cause of culture-clash. Joshua has already paid the bride price for Toro. But this newly convert man is shocked and distressed when he learns that the Christianity forbids him to have second wife. It is in this context James Ngugi observes that *One Man, One Wife* deals with “clash between Christianity - this one man one wife religion and local polygamous culture. This collusion of values which took place all over Africa has been the subject of many African novels”. (Ngugi, 1969:59)

Aluko has very clearly stated the reasons of conflict between the natives and the foreigners. He writes: “The many deities of the land promised material reward of their devotees: fertility and happy maternity to the barren; security against and immunity from the machinations of witches and evil-doers; rain in due season, and abundant harvests; health and immunity from smallpox, ...But the Christians' reward was in Heaven....Enjoyment in Paradise for eternity” (46-47). To the natives, these things are incomprehensible. For them the Christians are soldiers fighting a life-long battle against the desires of the flesh. All the desires of the flesh are evil and hence, they must be drastically repressed for a proper cultivation of spiritual attributes, which alone could secure eternal life. For the Christians, this is the way, the true way, the only way to salvation. The culture-conflict in *One Man, One Wife* is presented in terms of tradition and modernity.

The standards of new faith and old faith are always shown in clash in *One Man, One Wife*. While the slaughtering of a slave at the shrine of Shonponna is a sacred custom for the traditional people, for the While Man all forms of human sacrifice is a criminal offence. *One Man, One Wife* presents conflict of cultural beliefs. The native believe that their gods punish offenders and liars. Thus, *One Man, One Wife* records the conflict of cultures and the consequences of the impact of the west of the native society.

In *One Man, One Wife*, Aluko has observed that the value system is bound to change in the traditional society facing cultural and economic crisis. He believes that values are relative and in a constant state of flux. The novel is a brilliant satire of Westernized Africans. It records the clash of cultures and the consequences of the impact of the west on the native society. His theme, then, broadly speaking, is concerned with culture-conflict which the colonial presence promoted in Nigeria and the cultural, social and political changes which resulted. Thus, Aluko, fully conscious of the history of Nigeria, depicts the situation prevailing in the country in fictional terms. He has presented a realistic picture of Africa in his novels. Actually, he has created of graphic socio-anthropological pictures of the Nigerian society thereby setting a model for the other commonwealth writers of the other countries.

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**POLITICAL HISTORY THROUGH INVERTED GAZE: A CRITICAL STUDY OF  
KAMILA SHAMSIE'S *IN THE CITY BY THE SEA***

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**Abstract**

*Kamila Shamsie is a front-line contemporary Pakistani English fiction writer who has truthfully captured the essence of a nation in turmoil in all her novels. Politico-historical novels are an important aspect of her creative identity and her novels can be rightly called as socio-cultural document in an era of hope and despair in her country. She maps a trajectory of human emotions and conflicts propelled mostly by politics. Shamie's debut novel *In the City by the Sea*, set in the turbulent times of a military dictatorship, is a story of the heavy price that dissenting voices have to pay in a country where military rule is the norm and democracy an aberration.*

Kamila Shamsie is a front-line contemporary Pakistani English fiction writer who has truthfully captured the essence of a nation in turmoil in all her novels. Politico-historical novels are an important aspect of her creative identity and her novels can be rightly called as socio-cultural document in an era of hope and despair in her country. She maps a trajectory of human emotions and conflicts propelled mostly by politics. Shamie's debut novel *In the City by the Sea*, set in the turbulent times of a military dictatorship, is a story of the heavy price that dissenting voices have to pay in a country where military rule is the norm and democracy an aberration. And while the writer has voiced her country's disturbances in all her subsequent novels as well, what sets this novel apart is that she has, as her first protagonist, eleven year old Hasan, through whose eyes she sensitively portrays the times of dictatorship in beloved country where house arrests, the tradition of silencing the dissenting voices, street protests, strikes, rallying, riots, curfews, mindless killings, loss and fear are the normal order of the day.

The novel on its release was acclaimed for its maturity and self-assurance, given that the author was just 25 when it was published. Like most of her novels, this book too is set in Karachi and features the upper-middle class elite and their experiences in a politically turbulent homeland. The novel is political in a quiet and subtle way; the turbulent political environment and oppressive military rule of a country thus infiltrates the novel as it infiltrates Hasan's sheltered world. The young protagonist responds by making use of his imagination and creativity- his make believe friends include characters from Shakespeare and from Arthurian legends. His incorporation of fantasy is not escapist, but uplifting and life-affirming, for it demonstrated the power of imagination to transform one's reality and to enable one to see magical in the mundane.

The question of re-writing history pre-supposes that history is written in the first place. From the chronicles to the anecdotal, from the cyclical to the dialectical, perspectives on history-writing are many and varied. The very idea of re-writing history is a 20<sup>th</sup> century phenomenon. Until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was the positivist-objectivist view of history that dominated the discourse of history writing. This objectivist view was based on chronological, sequential, and casual understanding of history and history writing. This was the era wherein the historians believed that their sole purpose was to collect hard, verifiable facts, sift and sort through them so as to construct a linear and a coherent narrative of what they deduced from their findings as to what might have happened at a particular point in history or in a particular society or a culture. The concept of 'history' and what it supposedly represents has been constantly changing, shifting

and evolving through the ages. From Herodotus' notion of history as a chronicle to Vico's cyclic view, from Hegel's 'Universal History of Mankind' to Marx's 'Historical Materialism', understanding the grey zones of history has been a constant struggle for self-determination; but up until the 20<sup>th</sup> century history and history writing continued to function largely within the domain of social science, with a distinct methodology or apparatus of its own. The nineteenth century was the age of facts and the historians of the age believed that their sole task while writing histories should be to 'simply show how it really was' (wei es eigentlich gewesen), an aphorism that almost became a recurring chant for three generations of German, British and French historians who hid behind their incantations of above phrase to escape from the obligations of thinking for themselves. The Positivists, who were also anxious to stake out their claim for ascertaining history as a science, threw their weight and their influence behind this cult and obsession with gathering of facts. They propagated the idea that the task of the historian was relegated to the assimilation and accumulation of facts and the conclusions could be drawn later depending upon the historian writing the history. The biggest problem with this premise of writing history based on facts is: how does one distinguish a fact of history from other facts about the past? The facts are available to the historian in documents, inscriptions, journals and so on, who then decides the criterion for distinguishing a fact of history from simply the facts of past. Who decides which battles, which landmark, which famous words gain the status of being called a historical fact rather than simply a fact from the past? The belief that histories can be written solely on hard core historical objective facts, independent of historian's opinions and interpretations is a myth, a fallacy; but one which is very hard to eradicate and took a long time to change.

It was in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that the idea of narrativization of history was first talked about. Narrative is a kind of a meta-code, a human universal on the basis of which transcultural messages about the nature of a shared reality can be communicated. In other words, as Barthes says, "narrative is translatable without fundamental damage." The scientific aspect of history in the 19<sup>th</sup> century believed that the past could be reflected as it actually happened; it is this particular viewpoint that the later historians adamantly refuted. Hayden White has rightly suggested in his book *Content of Form* (1987) that history has become a form of narrative, a kind of story-telling. The narrative of history is not the reading and interpretation of individual stories, but an attempt to study the nature of story itself, as a concept and as a cultural practice. The narrative of history pre-supposes an author, writer or a historiographer, which implies subjectivity and a subject position. The traditional paradigm of objective history today stands dismantled. The conventional view of history as a record of well ascertained, documented and archived facts has been problematized. Subjectivity and relativism now pervade the historical narratives. However hard we may try to avoid the prejudices of colour, class, caste and gender, we cannot avoid looking at the past from a particular point of view. Histories we assign to things and people are composed, created, constituted, constructed and always situated literatures. It is now a foregone conclusion that every history will be a study of not only the past as arranged by the historian but also the historians subjective opinions about the study in question. The historian cannot override the basic thought processes and belief systems through which all the collected information is processed and assembled into linear narratives.

In the newer models of history, historians are more concerned with 'history from below' or the view point of the ordinary people and their experiences with social change. When the people who have long been suppressed and forced into obscurity begin to tell their (hi)stories, a newer model of subaltern history begins to make its presence felt. The notion of writing personal histories is of paramount importance in the nations which were once under the colonial rule. The indigenous people were disinherited from their own histories and were considered to be ahistorical before the colonial powers extended their 'civilization mission' and gave them a history, a culture. Today the canon of postcolonial writing is dedicated to deconstructing this received history and stepping out of the 'Grand Narrative' of the West. In doing so, the postcolonial societies are seeking to find their own versions of history in the form of meta-narratives,

drawing upon memory as a function of identity and as a measure to recollect, reconstruct and ultimately redefine a past which has survived in whispers alone. The focus has now shifted to the Micro-histories of the individuals, as against the Macro-histories of the nations, to the local history of the people that make up those Micro-histories as against the nationalist historiography of the nation that they belong to. The fact is that 20<sup>th</sup> century provided for both the context and the rationale for the de-centering of history and emergence of pluralism in history-writing.

With the advent of newer schools of thought, there have emerged different approaches to the analysis of History. Macro-history and micro-history are both subfields of the 'new history' that emerged in the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Historians of each school take radically different approaches to their study. While macro-history takes the long view of multiple societies and nations over the course of centuries, the author of micro-history concentrates upon a single individual or community and carries out an in-depth analysis for finer understanding of the subject at hand. Whereas Macro-histories have been popular since the beginning, it is the micro-histories that are gaining currency these days. Macro-histories tend to make over sweeping statements to reach wide-ranging conclusions that prove too straightforward whereas micro-histories present an opportunity to bring forth a worm's eye view of history. These histories are independent stories of personal experiences. Although micro-histories might select a subject who is not a true representative of a common man or woman, as in the case of Kamila Shamsie's novel under discussion, but macro-histories seem to completely lose the individual in the drive for a greater picture.

Historians attempting recreation of past through micro-history use a variety of unconventional sources such as journals, memoirs, letters, trial transcripts etc as opposed to the more 'official' and 'archived' sources of information available. But that does not make them any less valuable or authentic. A brilliant example of this is *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank. It is a first-hand account of a 13 year old girl who had to go into hiding for two years during the Nazi occupation of Netherlands in 1944. Her account of what happened during that time finds more connection with people than any other 'monumental' version of the history of Second World War ever could because her diaries become a tool of deconstruction of the macro-narrative. Her anecdotes, her stories, her memories, her realities interrogate and challenge the macro operations of history by focussing on the micro processes of history. Her history in essence becomes people's history.

Kamila Shamsie too in her novels attempts to deconstruct the political scenario in her homeland. She presents to us alternate versions to historical facts that become tales of personal history for the characters in her novels. Toppling of governments, military coups, assassinations, martial law, dictatorship, suspension of all fundamental rights and duties etc- all these instances mark the political landscape of Shamsie's homeland. Having being born in 1973, she grew up amidst the resentment and cynicism of having to go through the pain and loss of a Second Partition; when East Pakistan broke free and became the Independent nation of Bangladesh; although she moved to London at a very young age, but the troubles and the heartache of her motherland kept haunting her. Four out of five of her novels are situated in Karachi- the city where she was born; the city by the sea, which incidentally is also the title of her first book and the novel which is under consideration for this paper.

Through her books, Kamila Shamsie has tried to understand Pakistan's troubled political history by putting her protagonist's right in the middle of the political scene and then has the reader grapple for meaning and resolution along with the main protagonist. Be it, Aasmani Inqalab (*Broken Verses*) whose mother disappeared one fine day because she was a woman revolutionary and was asking too many questions for the comfort of the people in power. So was she assassinated? Imprisoned? Readers, like Aasmani never find the answer and struggle to make peace with the fact that life goes on- incomprehension notwithstanding. Or be it Karim and Raheen (*Kartography*) who try to decode the anguish their parents went through during the creation of Bangladesh. Shamsie adds her touch of brilliance by giving Bengali ethnicity to Karim's mother. Or be it her very first novel, *In the City by the Sea*, wherein she narrates the

story through an 11 year old protagonist who is caught in the adult world of politics without any footnotes to comprehension. His beloved Uncle is a dissenting politician who is first put under house arrest and then later imprisoned for treason. The book is a child's commentary on the politics of the country. Shamsie in her books is no doubt talking about personal tales of loss and grief but her stories transcend the personal to become deeply political. She raises a lot of questions, but doesn't even attempt to answer them. She places her characters in the present, the recent past, the distant past as well as in her flights of imaginations, in the future too; and from all these vantage points she first deconstructs the objective history as we know it and then attempts to reconstruct it through the perceptions and the prejudices of her characters. No two books arrive at the same conclusion, and no two characters have similar passions and obsessions. They all attempt reconstructing their personal histories through their personal judgments of right and wrong. And once they understand they understand their personal history they become more forgiving to the incomprehension of their country's political history. The reconstruction of history through subjective positions substantiates the argument that we no more have a single version of truth. There are no permanent hierarchies of right and wrong anymore, just like there are no more 'absolutes'.

For the purpose of my paper, I will be dealing with her first novel primarily. Her first novel, 'In the City by the Sea' is set in Karachi like most of her works. The book opens amidst the idyllic world of its 11 year old protagonist, Hassan. There is a witty advocate father, an artist mother, a doting friend/ neighbor. There is cricket and pomegranates. And in the middle of it all is Hassan's beloved politician Uncle who is caught up in the most recent political storm to hit the country's soil. The novel's landscape is littered with curfews, strikes, demonstrations, rallies, intrigues, military coups etc. It's difficult to pin point the exact time frame of the novel's political scenario given the inability of democracies to succeed in Pakistan. Still, if one were to give a rough estimate, one can place the novel in Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's era. The novel continually refers to the head of the state as 'The President' and there is never a mention of any Prime Minister, thereby indicating that the Parliamentary System was not functional at that time; but towards the end of the novel when Hassan's 'Salman Maamoo' is let free because the President had been issued a final warning through a symbolic 'pinecone', Salman indicates the upcoming elections and the possible return of democracy. One is tempted to place the novel in Mr. Bhutto's regime because Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was the President of Pakistan from 1971 to 1973 but after the 1973 Constitution was promulgated, he was sworn in as the Prime Minister of the country with Mr. Fazal Ilahi Chudhary taking over as the President.

Although the era which Shamsie is talking about could also be the era of General Zia-ul-Haq, the successor of Bhutto because General Zia's years as a President were dominated by what the historians usually refer to as pseudo-democracy. Plus the eleven year old Hassan plots the possible assassination of the President which is indicative of the several assassination attempts on General Zia's life. The General ruled as a dictator for a span of ten long years (1978- 1988) He was assassinated in 1988 in a bomb blast when his plane exploded mid-air. General Elections took place the same year and Pakistan was restored as a Democracy with Mrs. Benazir Bhutto becoming the first woman Prime Minister of the country and Mr. Ghulam Ishaq Khan taking over as the President.

So the novel can be very well placed in any of two above mentioned political generations. Shamsie does not give any specifics but leaves it to the readers to make sense of the political cacophony.

For Kamila Shamsie, *In the City by the Sea* is a personal novel in more ways than one. Being her first novel it draws a lot of parallels to her own personal history. She unconsciously ends up holding a mirror to her own upbringing and her own privileged childhood. 11 year old Hassan is almost an alter ego to Shamsie's 11 year old adolescent memories of herself. She is attempting to reconstruct the past of her childhood by linking it to the political context that she was too young to understand back then. The novel highlights the intense amount of repression that a country's oppressive machinery can breed. We have an un-named President who will not tolerate any opposition and as a counter-foil to him we have Hassan's Salman Mammoo who wants to restore democracy in the country. Because of his very vocal opposition

against the big guns, he is incarcerated and his reeling family has 40 days to find a way to save him. Salman's supporters take to the streets and almost bring the country to a standstill, demanding the release of their hero, their only shot at normalcy. The apprehensions and the anxieties for Salman's life are not merely confined to his family members but take larger proportions than that. Hassan's family almost becomes the 'first family' of the country which has moral obligations to its people. Salman becomes the mouthpiece of the masses who demand freedom from this tyranny of their rulers. They want respite from this constant brutal subjugation and it almost becomes Salman's responsibility to come to the rescue of the people at large. Shamsie makes the personal experience of pain and fear very public and connects the elite to the masses through their common concern for Salman's welfare.

Shamsie uses a very ingenious symbol to metaphorically represent Salman's quest for justice. She uses the symbol of a pine-cone. The use of pine-cone as a symbol is clever because a pine-cone is essentially something one will not find in a city by the sea. It's found in the higher mountainous altitudes, somewhere beyond the reach of corruption, beyond the darkness of ambition and greed. Salman's supporters rain pine-cones in his garden every evening while he is under house arrest to show their support and solidarity. In fact at the end of the novel, 'The President' is issued a warning to set Salman free through a pine-cone only. A young girl reaches up to the President when he is in a public rally and opens her palm to show him a pine-cone and before the President could recover, she disappears into the crowd. An almost similar experience accosts eight of the President's closest advisors thereby sending across the message that Salman has to be let free before people take law into their own hands and cause collateral damage. The symbol of a pine-cone is almost whimsical and a romantic one signifying resilience and hope at the same time.

It can be argued that the history represented in the novel cannot be called cultural history of the masses because Shamsie is not tackling the issues of the masses first hand. She accesses the story of the masses indirectly through her main protagonists that don't belong with the common masses. She takes an elitist point of view to reconstruct the History of the Nation. Her characters hail from the aristocratic line of politicians who have had a very privileged and a comfortable life. Their struggles are very different from the ones that confront the regular masses; hence it becomes imperative to classify her work as a history of a particular class. But Shamsie counter-acts this problem by introducing a child-narrator. The book is narrated through the voice of an 11 year Hassan. Once Shamsie hands over the central voice to a child narrator, she comfortably side steps the problem of being labelled as an elitist because the child here is an insider and an outsider at the same time. He is an insider because he belongs to the world of his parents, family and relatives but he is also an outsider because so far he hasn't been co-opted into the understanding of class divisions. He looks at everything happening around him through a sense of bewilderment and confusion. The reality of his world doesn't make any real sense to him. With a child narrator the novelist keeps class prejudices at bay and is successful in keeping her voice free from an elitist strand which otherwise would have crept into the narrative. In a way the child narrator is Kamila Shamsie herself. She too is an outsider and an insider at the same time. She was born and brought up in Karachi, but she moved to London for higher studies, so she first saw the political struggle up close and personal and then later as an outsider who tries to make coherence of the reality around. It's almost like a person trying to guess the lyrics of a song by just listening to a melody.

A genre that has become a major movement in the recent times is that of having a child-narrator. Although having a child narrate a story can seem like a model that has existed since forever but surprisingly, Marc Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* is the first book, which is consistently written from a child's perspective. Before the 19<sup>th</sup> century children were either treated like young adults, ready to work as cheap labourers or as unworthy of adult attention, except for the offspring of wealthier families. In the past, little to no interest was paid to the child's psyche or inner life because they were expected to help in securing a family's immediate survival, but with the changing times and growing economic stability, more stress was

given to a child's physical and mental wellbeing. While nowadays children are much more socially and physically protected than some centuries ago, but their mental development has had to keep pace in ways that are almost too much for their tender years. Children today are not expected to be children anymore in the sense that their worldview is much more influenced by an adult way of thinking. They have access to all kinds of information, even if they live in socially challenged circumstances. Today's children are encouraged to voice their opinions and to form their attitudes, as compared to children almost two centuries ago, when children were urged to live by rules set by their parents, religion and society and were expected to keep quiet; they were meant only to be seen and never to be heard. Although contemporary children are encouraged to speak up whenever and with whoever they are, one wonders if children today can form their own opinions and attitudes in relation to a subject, when they are confronted with too much information. Nowadays children have to grow up intellectually much quicker in order to make sense of all the information that assails them from every direction.

Although Kamila Shamise published the book under consideration in 1998, long before the genre of using the child narrator became as popular as it is today, the book still managed to garner a lot of critical acclaim and attention. In the contemporary times, the literary corpus comprising of books with child narrators has grown considerably especially so with the novels like *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time* by Mark Haddon, *Extremely Close and Incredibly Loud* by Jonathan Safran Foer and *In the Country of Men* by Hisham Matar became phenomenal successes. With Foer's book being adapted into a full length feature film the technique of child narration is receiving even more attention and inspiring other writers to make use of it in their own works. There is a plethora of potential reasons for the widespread appeal of this technique, the foremost being that adults take most of their environment for granted and wonder very rarely about everyday incidents, dismissing them from their conscious mind as ordinary and not worthy of their attention. Children on the other hand have the ability to question everyone and everything with relentless energy and enthusiasm. The primary reason for this continued engagement with their environment can be because of the fact that their encounters with the world are new and they do not have any reference points to compare their experiences with. They have the ability to discuss their surrounding world on a completely different level from the adults around them because young people are interested in a different reality and consequently look for different answers than the adults. What an adult might find acceptable, a child might not, for the simple fact that they still haven't been completely co-opted into the workings of their surrounding society and world.

Another reason for the recent popularity of this genre is the fact that unlike olden times, the children today are confronted with a world of media that is not tailored specifically for a child's needs. As a result of this, children have to cope with realities that are beyond their level of comprehension and understanding. For example, *In the city by the Sea*, Hassan is trying to resolve the problem of how to help escape his Uncle, who is imprisoned on the charges of treason in a country like Pakistan, that is constantly under the threat of insurrection and unrest and hence the charges of treason could only result in execution. But Hassan aided by his innocence and naivety believes that he only has to find a way to get close to the President one way or the other and remove him from the equation to set his uncle free; all the while ignoring the fact that he was eleven years old and was in no position to be able to cause the military ruler of a nation any sort of harm. Adult novels with child narrators understand the fact that in the modern times the children are confronted with the same current of worldly events like the adults and that this confrontation is unfiltered and uncensored because it has been tailored to adult understanding. The resulting effect of this exposure is a sense of bewilderment and incomprehension, the children today are caught adrift and are overwhelmed with the newer truths that lay an onslaught to their minds with realities that they cannot comprehend but at the same time they cannot un-see.

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By giving over the central voice to a child narrator, Shamsie in a way turns the angle with which we as readers are used to seeing and understanding a reality that surrounds the present day political chaos thereby almost inverting the binoculars through which we view the world- and hence the 'inverted gaze'. It's through this inverted gaze that Hassan looks on upon the events unfolding in the novel. His gaze is free from class consciousness. He is worried about his uncle not because he is a revolutionary politician and perhaps the possible future of the country but because he genuinely loves his uncle. His gaze is not aligned to deduce the obvious conclusions, in fact there is so much reality around him that doesn't make sense to his 11 year old sensibilities that his first impulse is to try and escape the reality. The child in him is oppressed because of who he is and the class he belongs to. He has no real friends except his neighbour Zehra because he is not supposed to be friends with just anybody. In the novel there comes a point when he wants to join the protest rally in support of his uncle, but he can't because there might be people out there who might want to harm him for who he is to Salman. The schools are suspended, the city is under curfew, his parents are drifting away in their own worries and concerns, and he has nobody except Zehra to talk to, nowhere to go, no games to play and no real means to cope with the reality that he is stuck in. There is a sense of claustrophobia that engulfs Hassan's world and he escapes from this feeling of suffocation through the most obvious tool in his hand- escape into fantasy- the unreal.

For centuries now writers have resorted to the use of Magic Realism when the representation of what is real was beyond words. The reality they confronted was so brutal and nightmarish that its representation was possible only through the surreal- the unreal. The technique of Magic Realism was especially popularized by the Latin American writers like Gabriel Garcia Marquez who used Magic Realism as a weapon to counter-act the reality and be heard over the clamour of oppression and suppression. They wielded this technique as a double edged sword that although dint cut and gash but left the scar nevertheless. It served the twin purpose of being an instrument of rebellion as well as brought forth new models of writing. The technique of Magic Realism specially holds a lot of importance in a Post-Colonial Discourse because it becomes a tool for the 'other' to represent an alternative version to truth.

Kamila Shamsie too uses this technique of Magic Realism to bridge the gap between what is hyper-imagined and what is real. The novel has a character by the name of 'Widow' who claims to dream about her dead husband every night. Each night, one feather from her pillow becomes a dream of her husband and she believes that the day the feathers in the pillow finish, she'll die and be reunited with her dead husband once again. This 'Widow' becomes a symbol of someone who is nostalgic about the past, someone who wants to hold on to the memories of the good-old days and not confront the horrid reality that they find themselves in, much like the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized wherein the colonized want to recall the good-old days of being free. The character of 'Widow' becomes important also because she takes over the role of becoming a champion of Women Rights. And an intriguing group of commoners become her 'Bodyguard' when death threats against her start making appearances. This innocuous group of people is Shamsie's only glimpses into the world of common masses.

The novelist uses the technique of Magic Realism on two fronts, one as an author and secondly as a narrator too. Her narrator indulges into flights of fantasies too when he imagines himself to be 'Sir Huss' a knight of the Round Table. He fights imaginary battles much like Cervantes' *Don Quixote* and emerges victorious in trying to save his Uncle's life. These moments of escape from reality stem from his feelings of helplessness of being unable to 'do something' and bring back his Uncle. Whenever the reality comes crashing as waves into his conscious mind, he resorts to his world of make-believe where he can will things to happen the way he wants, and can keep the unwanted reality at bay. Also there are moments when Hassan closes his eyes and extends his arms up to the sky as if reaching out to touch the stars. He believes that if he tries hard enough or long enough, he will be able to touch the stars above and return just like he believes the moon beams slanting into Salman's garden can carry him out of his incarceration. So Magic Realism is used both at the level of a comprehensive novel as well as at the level of Hassan's own private world. By using a child narrator and equipping him with the imaginative powers that enable him to escape the reality that is beyond his endurance, the novelist is attempting almost a parallel between Hassan and Scheherazade of *1001 Arabian Nights*, wherein story-telling becomes a way of postponing death. The more stories Hassan can come up with, the more chances he has to save his Uncle's life. In Barthian terms, it's almost like 'myth making' where Hassan's stories, Widow's dreams and Pakistan's political history all become over lapping terms and a part of a Myth Narrative.

The novel is an attempt to uncomplicated the confused narrative of Pakistan's political history by using a child narrator who views the reality through the wrong end of the telescope thereby inverting all the essentialisms and binaries. But it's important to note that although Kamila Shamsie resorts to the use of Magic Realism to account for Pakistan's bizarre political scenario but she doesn't end the novel like most practitioners of Magic Realism do. She ends the book in resolution. Although the resolution she provides is fictional and there is no account of anything similar happening in reality but what matters is that she ends all the polarities. Her entire novel is structured in binaries. Be it the binary of adult versus child, real versus fantastic, elite versus the common or political versus the personal. She resolves all these contradictions towards the end maybe because she is conscious of the fact that although escaping into fantasies and going into denial might provide temporary relief but they offer no real solutions. The disease that plagues

Pakistan's political scene needs to be eradicated by real answers and as a novelist she does what she can by untangling all the confused narratives in her book. Be it setting Salman free in the end and the possibility of him being the next Head of the State or the Widow finally tearing off her pillow and confessing that her real motivation is to join active politics and bring about a change in the condition of women. These are real attempts by the characters in her novel to set their life in order and make their peace with the reality that they confront. Kamila Shamsie enables the readers to finally reach an interpretive closure by providing a resolution albeit an aesthetic one.

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**SALMAN RUSHDIE'S THE SATANIC VERSES**

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O my body, make of me always a man who questions! (Frantz Fanon, 1952)  
So I went on with my devilment, changing verses. (Rushdie, 1988, *Satanic Verses* 368)

Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* is a kind of critique of Islam. In 1988, after a short creative detour to Nicaragua in his travelogue *The Jaguar Smile*, Rushdie published his fourth novel, *The Satanic Verses*. Like *Midnight's Children* and *Shame* before it, *The Satanic Verses* is a strongly satirical text that takes, as one of its dominant socio-political agendas, the condemnation of the abuse of power and authority by state and church. Unlike the two earlier novels, however, *The Verses* shifts its attention away from the abuses committed by South Asian political leaders towards the abuses that flourished under Margaret Thatcher's Prime Ministerial watch in the 1980s Britain. Specifically, the novel, in its dominant narrative line, sets out to explore (or expose) the impact upon Britain's minority communities of lingering Falklands-era jingoism, and of systematic, institutionalized racism in organizations such as the police force and the media.

This aspect of the novel's politics is to the fore in the scenes that concern one of the novel's two main protagonists, Salahuddin Chamchawala, the Bombay-born actor who has, after an English public school education, settled in England, endeavoured to become 'a good and proper Englishman', and Anglicized his name to 'Saladin Chamcha' (the surname of which, by unfortunate but revealing linguistic accident, translates from Hindi and Urdu as 'spoon', an idiom for a sycophantic toady).

Chamcha, in this incarnation, is representative of a class of migrants well-theorised in discursive accounts of post-colonial diasporic identities. Saladin is a near relative of the psychologically traumatised 'native intellectual' in Frantz Fanon's writings, who has internalised the racism of a dominant white culture to such a degree that he attempts a 'hallucinatory whitening'. In this role he is a descendant of earlier fictional avatars of the compliant migrant, such as the 'mimic men' of V. S. Naipaul's 1967 novel of that name who 'become what they see of themselves in the eyes of others', or Harris in Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* who likes 'English customs', dresses like 'some Englishman going to work in the city and is ashamed of the behaviour of his compatriots ('Only thing/ Selvon's narrator wryly observes, 'Harris face black'). Mimic men are a legion in the fiction of the third world.

Saladin's naive vision of a benevolent England, the reader learns, has survived years of contact with such racism. However, a terminal blow is delivered to his faith in this myth of England at the start of *The Satanic Verses*, which begins *in medias res* with Saladin and his co-protagonist Gabriel Farishta entering England (re-entering in Saladin's case) after plummeting from an exploding aeroplane to land on Hastings beach, site of an earlier conquest of the isles in 1066. Saladin's unorthodox reentry into the UK signifies a precipitous expulsion from the Eden of his comfortable middle-class life in England, and his entry into a lurid fallen world in which he is able, finally, to see England - or specifically London - as it is experienced by less economically fortunate migrants than himself: an England that is 'visible' for those who are prepared to look for it, but remains largely 'unseen' by the willfully blind citizens of the modern metropolis.

Saladin, however, remains an unwilling student of his experiences, which in turn enables Rushdie to maintain an analytical distance from the various political stances that Saladin is confronted with. As a

devil figure Saladin is annexed as an emblem of resistance by a black youth culture seeking to reclaim traditional models of oppositionality; but he makes it clear that he is being appropriated against his will ('This isn't what I wanted. This is not what I meant, at all', Saladin protests, with a revealing echo of T. S. Eliot's Prufrock). Likewise, when Saladin attends a political meeting in support of a black activist who has been arrested for multiple rape on trumped-up charges, he softens to the idea of grass-roots activism, but remains suspicious of the slanted and historically dubious rhetoric employed by the movement's leaders. Saladin's path, like Rushdie's own, is destined to be the 'third way' between extremes. He renounces the 'uncle Tomism' of his early career and so ceases to be a mimic man, but he does not rush headlong into radical opposition to the idea of England *tout court*. Rather he discovers that it is possible to become neither an 'assimilationist' nor a radical 'nativist' but to embrace what Bhabha calls (in reference to *The Satanic Verses*) the 'liminality of migrant experience'; a discovery that allows him to live within the experience of his multiple identity without striving to reduce that multiplicity to artificial certainties.

The transformation of Saladin Chamcha into a devil-goat, and the concurrent transformation of his co-protagonist, Gibreel Farishta, into an angel, associates *The Satanic Verses* closely with a specific sub-genre of the satire, the Menippean, which characteristically employs fantastic scenarios and improbable transmutations to give its characters new perspectives upon the familiar world. As Philip Engblom has argued in an essay on cannibalization and dialogicality in Rushdie's novels, *The Satanic Verses* includes 'every one of the menippean elements enumerated by Mikhail Bakhtin in the influential definition of the genre that appears in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*.

There are two central, and concurrently realized, acts of speculative intellectual enquiry taking place in *The Satanic Verses*. In the first place the novel conducts a searching philosophical investigation of the impact of migration upon individual identity. It sets out to discover what migrant life has been like in Britain in the second half of the 20th century, and poses what might be regarded as the principal philosophical question concerning the migrant experience, modern or otherwise: does the act of crossing over frontiers create the self-again and destroy the prior self, or does the old self remain the same, even as identity is reshaped and remoulded by new experiences. This question is given a classical formulation in *The Verses* by Muhammad Sufvan, the intellectually intrepid proprietor of the Shaandaar Cafe, who finds an analogy for the experience of the modern migrant in the rival descriptions of metamorphosis offered by the Latin authors Lucretius and Ovid.

There are, in this respect, no final answers to the questions raised in *The Satanic Verses*, there are only negotiations of complex realities that cannot be reduced to coherent either/or solutions. 'Anybody ever tries to tell how this most beautiful and most evil of planets is somehow homogeneous, composed only of reconcilable elements, which it all *adds up*', Rushdie's character Otto Cone explains:

You get on the phone to the straitjacket tailor ... The world is incompatible, just never forget it... Ghosts, Nazis, saints, all alive at the same time; in one spot, blissful happiness, while down the road, the inferno. You can't ask for a wider place (*Satanic Verses* 295).

Otto Cone's conclusions, based upon this hypothesis, are not optimistic. In the irreconcilability of different factions, he sees only collision. 'The modern city', he lectures his bored family:

is the locus classicus of incompatible realities. Lives that have no business mingling with one another sit side by side on the omnibus ... And as long as that's all, they pass in the night, jostling on Tube stations ... it's not so bad. But if they meet! It's uranium and plutonium, each makes the other decompose, boom. (*Satanic Verses* 314).

T. S. Eliot in his poem *The Waste Land* speaks of degeneration in Europe. The people spiritually sterile describe a purposeless circle. They flow in a crowd over London Bridge. They inhabit an 'unreal city.' This city is like a hell.

Unreal City,  
Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,

A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,  
I had not thought death had undone so many (Eliot 2368)

Central to Rushdie's fictional premise in these interrogations is the apocryphal incident of the 'satanic verses' that has independent existence in Islamic tradition. The incident is recorded by two early Islamic authorities, Al-Tabari and Ibn Sa'd, and concerns verses that were 'delivered' to Muhammad in the course of the revelation of the fifty-third chapter of the Quran. These verses appear to allow a semi-divine or intercessionary status to three pagan goddesses, Al-'Lat, Al-'Uzza and Manat, who were worshipped in Mecca prior to its conversion to Islam. Muhammad, according to the story, initially believed these verses to be the true word of God, and delivered them to the people of Mecca. A later revelation, however, showed that the acceptance of Al-'Lat, Al-'Uzza and Manat had been inspired by Satan, and the verses were expunged from the sacred text.

*The Verses* returns the Qur'an to the historical conditions of its making, in order to show that it reflects a historically contingent set of ideological belief systems that ought to be open to critique as ideological systems. It is only by recognizing such historicity, in Rushdie's view, that it will become possible for Islam to move beyond tradition and bring the core concepts of Islam into the modern age. Solei propose:

To move beyond the obvious good and evil implicit in such easy binaries to suggest instead that *The Satanic Verses* is, from a cultural point of view, a work of meticulous religious attentiveness ... [that enables] Rushdie to extend with urgency and fidelity - his engagement with both cultural self-definition and Islamic historiography (Solei 321).

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## INTERRELATED WAYS OF SOCIAL HIERARCHY AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS OF JANE AUSTEN'S TIME

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One can begin by identifying an anxiety on the part of academic critics concerning the popularity, amounting to a cult, surrounding Jane Austen. Those critics committed to a role of literary studies in building a democratic culture have often expressed a related anxiety about Austen's novels themselves, in their apparently uncritical acceptance of the decidedly undemocratic society of her time. Among the earliest of these is Arnold Kettle, in the first volume of *An Introduction to the English Novel* (1951). Kettle begins by praising *Emma* in terms, familiar from Leavis, Trilling and Booth, of the 'fineness of feeling' and intense 'moral concern' that it evokes in the reader (Kettle 1951:92). However, Kettle then asks, 'exactly what relevance and helpfulness does *Emma* have for us today?'(94). This is a problem, because unlike Trilling in his essay on *Emma*, or Booth in *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, Kettle is ready to admit that 'the standards we are called upon to admire may be inseparably linked with a particular form of social organization' (99).

Trilling, in a later essay called 'Why we read Jane Austen' (Trilling :204-225), and Booth, in *The Company one keep*, later admit this historical specificity of Austen's values. But this is a particular problem for Kettle as 'the particular form of social organization' involved is one that modern readers, as democrats, are bound to find unpalatable, in its rigid social hierarchy and ruthless economic exploitation: "The values and standards of the Hartfield world are based on the assumption that it is right and proper for a minority of the community to live at the expense of the majority' (Kettle:99). Kettle concludes that *Emma* remains 'a warm and living work of art' which should be appreciated for its 'humanity', but it remains fundamentally limited in its social vision.

The limitation and the narrowness of the Hartfield world is the limitation of class society,, The question at issue is not Jane Austen's failure to suggest a solution to the problem of class divisions but her apparent failure to notice the existence of the problem. (Kettle:98-9)

It is precisely because Austen is still concerned with the eighteenth century problem of relations between different 'ranks' of the propertied that she cannot understand the 'propertied' as a group, defined by their opposition to another group, property less labour (P.5)

In *Jane Austen's Novels: Social Change and Literary Form* (1979), Julia Prewitt Brown sets out to counter this complaint about Austen's 'limited' vision by identifying the transition from traditional to modern society happening within her houses. She does this by showing how Austen chronicles the emergence, not of class identity, but of the modern individual, alienated from any meaningful social identity. *Persuasion*, for example, demonstrates 'the social and moral necessity for a democratic individualism that nonetheless meant powerlessness and alienation for the heroine' (Brown:5). Brown sees Austen's irony as the stylistic means of democratically including a multitude of voices without imposing a hierarchy of significance on those voices (P.99). *Persuasion*, however, is also modern in this darker sense: the collapse of the old hierarchical certainties has produced, not a democracy, but a society split into 'disparate parts', leaving individuals like Anne Elliot 'disoriented, isolated' (137,138), and unable to fulfil themselves in a world which resists their claims for recognition as human subjects. Brown does not describe herself as a Marxist critic, but in this description of modernity as it figures in the novel she draws

on the theories of the Hungarian Marxist Georg Lukacs and particularly his *The Theory of the Novel*, first published in 1920 (Lukacs; Brown:129,139). Lukacs, one might note was also a major influence on the declared but similarly pragmatic Marxism of Raymond Williams.

Along with the Marxist-inflected studies of Williams and Brown, the 1970s saw the development of another way of relating Austen to her social context, not in terms of the broad categories of class or modernity, but by tracing in her writing specific political or cultural controversies of her time. This was the work undertaken by Alistair Duckworth in *the Improvement of the Estate (1971)* and Marilyn Butler in *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas (1975)*. For Duckworth, the political and moral values expressed in Austen's writings closely follow those of Edmund Burke [pp. 31-32]. Austen follows Burke, he argues, in taking the country estate as representative of the English nation as a whole, an inherited institution that has grown originally over the centuries and now embodies those centuries' accumulated wisdom. This country estate is more than the economic basis on which a gentry's family survives: it is the source of their status, of their identity. And this specific dependence of the gentry on their land represents the wider dependence of the individual generally on the social forms and inherited relationships (national or familial as well as local) on which their identity depends. "Isolated from a stable and inherited 'estate', an individual suffers more than loss of station; he is, more importantly, excluded from the 'Grounds' loss of being and action. Without the customary reference points of a structured inheritance, he may feel at a loss how to act". (Duckworth: 4)

In this emphasis on inherited social identity, Duckworth sees Austen as engaging in an argument against the economic individualism represented by the discipline of political economy [pp. 19-21] and her novels as treating 'the dilemma of an individual in a society in which traditional values are giving way, or are felt to be giving way, to new economic and individualistic ones' (Duckworth: 16). Burke's conservatism is formulated in response to a specific event, the French Revolution of 1789; Austen's conservatism, while making full use of Burke's categories, appears convincingly in Duckworth's account as a response to much longer-term changes in a English society, and the deeper 'cultural instability' that they had produced (Duckworth: 23)

This is not to argue either that that Austen was against change, or that she saw no need for change in the landed society she portrays. Indeed, in a novel like *Mansfield Park* Duckworth's starting point, the functioning of the country estate has already been corrupted. Precisely that character most alienated from the life of the estate is the one who understands how it ought to be organized: Fanny Price (72). The 'Moral Autonomy' of the Austen heroine, that is her ability to criticize the society in which she lives, is not 'individualism' but a commitment to its opposite, an ideal of social interdependence. [E]xcessive 'individualism' (23) is precisely what the Austen heroine criticizes in others. Indeed, like Burke, Austen in Duckworth's view can also allow for the 'improvement' of estates (and by extension social institutions generally). New Practices and ideas are acceptable so long as their aim is the health of the whole, and they are introduced with respect with what has gone before. Here Duckworth is able to relate the novels to another, apparently non-political, controversy specific to Austen's period.

No one in *Mansfield Park* actually mentions Burke, but they do discuss the merits of various contemporary practitioners of landscape-gardening, such as Humphrey Repton, who has transformed the estate of a friend of Rushworth according to his fashionable but controversial taste. Rushworth accordingly decides that his own estate, Sotherton 'wants improvement...beyond anything' (I.vi.51). The 'improvements' of Repton and his imitators were designed to improve the way an estate looked, and could involve anything from cutting down trees and diverting streams to moving whole villages, all to improve the view from the big house and its approaches (the issue the crops up again in Henry Crawford's sweeping plans for Edmund's parsonage at Thornton Lacey in II.vii.23-5). Many voices were raised against such irreparable damage to the products of long ages of growth, and Austen is drawing on their arguments. The eventual triumph of Fanny and her acceptance into the Bertram family represents the absorption by

traditional society of the new, not for the sake of fashion but for the necessary maintenance-through-evolution of that inherited order.

Like Duckworth, Marilyn Butler sees Austen as a fundamentally conservative writer in *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* (1975). In contrast to Duckworth, Butler's book in fact places Austen's writing in two productive contexts. One is the revolution controversy (sales 1994 for a counter-argument to this). The other is the sentimental model of the human mind developed in the writing of David Hume and Adam Smith [p.21]. Novels of sentiment or Sensibility focus on the feelings of individual protagonist, on their subjective response to the world, rather than on their social commitments to others. Sometimes the protagonist of sentimental fictions such as Laurence Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* (1768) or Henry Mackenzie's *Man of Feeling* (1771) is shown responding with deep feeling to a victim of the present social order: the seduced and abandoned servant-girl, the old soldier, the evicted small holder. But that feeling is almost always an end in itself: it is involuntary, and does not come from or produce a thought through critique of society that might issue in political action to eradicate such misery. Indeed for those English radicals who sympathize with the French revolutionaries, the sentimental model of the individual is strictly useless, as it leaves the individual powerless before his own emotions and the outside world that plays upon them (Butler: 36).

Instead, radical novelists in Britain turn to reason, not emotion, as the source of their critique, and write stories in which the protagonist educates him or herself into a position where they can enjoy some control events. A simple story by Elizabeth Inchbald (1791), *Anna St. Ives* by Thomas Holcroft (1792) and *The Memories of Emma Curtney* (1796) by Mary Hays are examples of such novels [pp. 101-104]. On the other hand, the arch-conservative Burke adopts the strategies of sentimental fiction in his "Reflections on the Revolution in France", casting Queen Marie Antoinette of France as the sentimental heroine whose tears we are invited to share; and for Burke, the powerlessness of the individual to change anything is in general a good thing. On the basis of these texts, sentiment would seem to lend itself at least as easily to a conservative political position as to a radical one.

Yet in the heated political controversy of the 1790s, the reactionary, anti-Jacobin press [pp. 32-35] identified the emotional self-indulgence of sensibility with political radicalism. For example, it was easy to equate any critique of the institution of marriage, however well-reasoned, with an attempt to license sexual promiscuity, and thus explain it as the product of a culture of sensibility that recommended giving in to one's impulses rather than restraining them. Jean-Jacques Rousseau [p. 35] was also a useful figure for the anti-Jacobin writers, as both a writer of sentimental fiction, a hero to the Jacobin party in Paris, and someone who had confessed to various sexual indiscretions in his autobiography, the confessions (1781).

Butler argues that Austen shares in this identification of Sensibility with political radicalism, and that her criticism of emotional indulgence and Individualism, For example, *Sense and Sensibility's* Marianne Dashwood, encodes her conservative, anti-Jacobin politics. Her manner as a novelist is broadly that of the conservative Christian moralist of the 1790s' in the argument 'between the advocates of a Christian conservatism on the one hand, with their pessimistic view of man's nature, and their belief in external authority; and on the other hand , Progressives, Sentimentalists , Revolutionaries, with their optimism about man, and their preference for spontaneous personal impulse against rules imposed from without' (Butler: 164- 165). As Butler herself has shown, this rejection of sentiment was one shared by radicals and reactionaries in this period, however much the reactionaries might have pretended otherwise. Since anti-sentimentalist is not in itself reactionary , the task Butler sets herself is to show that Austen's anti-sentimentalism is marked in the novels themselves as being a reactionary stance, and not as a more general rejection of sentimentalism 'absorption...in the conscious and unconscious mind , because implicitly it put the individual before the group'(8). The difference between Elinor and Marianne Dashwood then

“Is one of ideology-Marianne optimistic , intuitive, un self-critical, and Elinor far more skeptical,

always ready to study the evidence , to reopen a question, to doubt her own prior judgments...Elinor was never intended to be infallible, but to typify an active, struggling Christian in a difficult world.”(Butler: 192)

For Butler, 'the characteristic resource of the conservative ...is to remind us ultimately of the in significance of individual insights and even individual concerns when measured against the scale of “The Universe as one vast whole” (130: the last phrase is a quote from Maria Edgeworth).

As in Duckworth, this conservative version of Austen seems to hang on what the critic means by 'The Individual' or 'Individualism'. This becomes a particular problem in Butler's reading of *Pride and Prejudice*, the novel most difficult to fit in to her conservative paradigm. Elizabeth Bennet's lively and rational criticism Darcy, defiance of Lady Catherine de Bourgh, and (by extension) her skepticism towards inherited authority in general, make her individual perspective seem a much more likely candidate for the label 'Proto-Jacobin' than Marianne's. Butler indeed makes this case, and reads *Pride and Prejudice* as fundamentally about the reformation of this unruly subversive.

Elizabeth learns in the course of the novel that her irreverence is potentially as socially irresponsible as her father's withdrawal from his family in to his library, unless it can be used to renew and revitalize the old institutions of power represented by the Pemberley estate. The marriage of Elizabeth and Darcy thus represents just that negotiation of inheritance with innovation which Burke sees as essential to national continuity. The problem then faced by Butler is that Elizabeth's witty refusal to be awed by Darcy as a man is so attractive, so entertaining that it is hard to feel that it is fundamentally wrong, as Butler herself acknowledges. Elizabeth, in the end, is awed by Pempberley, and does marry its owner. But this novel ends by affirming the claims of a hierarchical society over the perspective, rationality and feeling of the individual and the experience of reading.

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## NAYANTARA SAHGAL AS A NON- CONFORMIST WRITER WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO *STORM IN CHANDIGARH* AND *THE DAY IN SHADOW*

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Nayantara Sahgal (1927) is a celebrated first Indian political writer with the stream of national consciousness in the post-colonial India. Her novels exhibit her autobiographical touch. In her fictional world, there is an amalgamation of two worlds: the personal world of man-woman relationship and the impersonal world of politics. She is the zealot for the cause of women's emancipation.

The changing facets of man-woman relationship form the crux of her novels. The women characters of Nayantara Sahgal are no longer to be the object of sex, a figure of humility and subjugation. In their conjugal relationship and in their relationship outside marriage, the heroines of Nayantara Sahgal are lonely individuals striving for self-assertion. Nayantara Sahgal is deeply concerned with the failure of marital relationships and the ensuing loneliness of living.

Nayantara Sahgal's novels revolve around the female characters and they are emancipated, assertive, intellectual and independent women. As she is modern and liberal in her approach, she intends to establish new humanism and a new morality in the world. As far as relationship is concerned, Nayantara Sahgal's woman is conscious of her relations and demands for the change of order that will bring individuality and self-identity and for the sake of self-recognition, her woman is ready to fight against an established order.

Nayantara Sahgal's works rest on the theme of modern woman's existential struggle to establish her own identity in order to assert her individuality. Having experienced the bitterness and agony of marital discord which ultimately resulted in a divorce in her own life, She depicts her quest for individual freedom and 'self-identity' with her profound understanding of feminine sensibility; she explores and voices the silent miseries of millions of married women through her works of fiction.

Nayantara Sahgal presents the emergence of the 'new woman' who is no longer “a sex object and glamour girl, fed on fake dreams of perpetual youth, lulled into passive role that requires no individuality”, but someone who can claim to be man's equal and honored partner. In her fictional world, several married women come across moments of excruciating mental torture within themselves in *Storm in Chandigarh* and *The Day in Shadow*, Nayantara Sahgal presents women as more possessive and rebellious.

These two novels namely, *Storm in Chandigarh* and *The Day in shadow* present the sad plight of women in the male-dominated society authentically. The female protagonists of these novels feel conflict, frustration, long drawn period of stress and bitterness in the prison house of loveless marriage. The novels exhibit how the protagonists mature through their bitter experiences and finally find a stable identity of their own.

The female protagonist, Saroj in *Storm in Chandigarh* becomes a victim of suspicion of her husband Inder as she innocently confesses that she had an affair with a young boy. “She just out of college, the hardly dry on her fingers, history and literature fresh on her tongue” and is enchantingly innocent.(96) Inder is not able to forgive his wife's pre-marital affair but he himself has an extra-marital affair with his children's teacher Mara. It is quite ironical but the Indian society lives by a double moral standard: one for

men and the other for women and brands her guilty. As Inder belongs to a male-dominated society, he considers that Saroj has been cheated and her act cannot be justified:

“It had no place in an order that clearly demarcated the roles of men and women, unless that venerable order was breached, trampled and mocked, He was maddened by it. When it came over him he sat looking at Saroj with a revulsion that had ancient, tribal, male roots.”(96).

Inder considers Saroj as his obedient slave, a possession or commodity. He never thinks about her as a person with ideas, feelings and emotions. According to Inder, “A wife was one half an enterprise, the compliant partner, who presided over home and children and furthered her husband's career.”(53). Malhotra clearly points out Inder's male-chauvinism as, “Belong as he does to the he-man school and born and brought up as he is in an atmosphere, where male-dominance is a formidable cult, there is no question of any freedom or self-expression or growth for Saroj, nor of any mutual co-partnership between them.”(Malhotra,230)

In order to strengthen Inder's relationship, Saroj willingly accepts her role as a wife and tries her level best to adjust compromise but everything ends in vain though she lives on Inder's terms she never finds any happiness or satisfaction in her conjugal relationship. She strives hard to build a working relationship with her husband but he bars her entry into his world. She never feels free to express her thoughts and all the time she is afraid “of saying the wrong thing or of being misunderstood just of being oneself and being punished for it”(89). She experiences only loneliness and expresses her deep anguish and distress, “I am alone even when Inder is here.”(223) she observes and boldly puts up with Inder's idiosyncrasies for the sake of her two children and as she is expecting her third child, she finds it very hard to keep on living with her husband under the same roof with no real bond between them.

In course of time, the breach gradually becomes wider and wider in Saroj-Inder relationship as he has no time for emotional involvement and shows a lot of indifference towards her. He feels taking his wife on a walk in the pleasant evenings “a meaningless expenditure of time, when a restlessness took hold of him to get back to whatever work he had to do”(53). Saroj who longs for “the oxygen of understanding finds it in her friendship with Vishal Dubey who has come as liaison officer to Chandigarh to settle the political problem between the two Chief Ministers of Punjab and Haryana and develops a cordial relationship with him. Dubey draws himself emotionally close to her for childlike innocence.

Walking with Dubey, Saroj feels relieved and freshened from the suffocation of the four walls of her home. Saroj who longs for 'someone to talk to finds in Dubey a comforting reciprocative companion. The frequent visits of Dubey and their long walks enrage the envious and suspicious husband Inder and he shows his objections to her. Inder gets irritated about Saroj's absence from home and snubs her. Saroj boldly replies, “I like to talk to him, (...). He's a good man” (193). This infuriates Inder who thrashes her not only with words but also with blows. During their long walks in the jungle, Saroj's value of emancipation and the courage to defy Inder is infused by Dubey. Finally she pops out with a new found courage and decides to go with her children to New Delhi for her confinement according to Dubey's suggestion. By relieving herself from Inder's house, she moves out of the virtuous stereotype which consigns a woman to perpetual humiliation and denies her expression. Saroj begins to start a new life with Dubey who understands her delicate sentiments and emotional needs by leaving Inder apparently. Lakshmi Sinha comments on Saroj's act as, “Saroj leaves domestically and timidness far behind and emerges out of her chrysalis with a new found confidence. Dubey has resurrected her personality and at no cost is he going to let it collapse again”(109)

If Saroj's marital harmony fails due to lack of understanding Simrit in the sequel novel *The Day in Shadow* fails to develop a satisfactory marital relationship with her husband Som due to her own temperamental disparity with him. Jasbir Jain rightly says, “Simrit's story in *The Day in Shadow* is in many ways the continuation of Saroj's”(40). In *Storm in Chandigarh*, Saroj actively contemplates divorce whereas in *The Day in Shadow*, Simrit actually divorces her husband at the risk of facing misery, economic

constraints, depressive bouts of loneliness and a score of other existential problems. The novel *The Day in Shadow* is about the marital disharmony between Som and Simrit. The couple feels happy only for the first few years of their marriage but soon Som fails to understand the sensibilities of Simrit. As Som belongs to an Indian patriarchy society, he treats Simrit not as a person but as a possession. Nayantara Sahgal in her "Of Divorce and Hindu woman" views Som as a typical chauvinistic representation of "ruthless, self-centred anglicized business tycoons, belonging to the man school, whose male-dominance is the most formidable cult"<sup>2</sup> (12 Dec. 1971)

Like Saroj, Simrit also shuts herself out of the world of her husband who never makes any discussion of business matter with her or in her presence. Ironically she realizes their lack of communication. Som never minds to Simrit's words in making ordinary decisions without Som's permission, Simrit cannot purchase or even change chair cones and curtains. If she punished the cook and dismissed him for "drunkenness and bad behaviour"<sup>(38)</sup> Som retained him by treating her merely as a sexual object. But for Simrit, emotional involvement is far more important than sexual relationship. Som's determination of a new deal of fortification depresses Simrit further. While Simrit undergoes sad thinking of the disaster connected with the armament he has entered into, he revels on the prospect of his prosperity. The only goal of Som's life is self-advancement. There is a clash of ideals that leads to their separation. Simrit feels herself unable to respond to her husband's physical needs and likes "separation, excluded, rebellious"<sup>(90)</sup> Som feels insulted at her physical withdrawal, reacts wildly and walks out of her life. Simrit is upset and decides to divorce him. But she never grumbles about her responsibility of looking after her children in this situation.

According to Simrit, divorce never brings freedom but confrontation with all that is orthodox in this man-centred society. Som imposes cruel divorce terms on Simrit in revenge. Even after divorce Som in order to save his own income tax, thrusts cruel consent terms on Simrit, according to which she has to pay "huge taxes" currently <sup>(55)</sup> on the shares of six lakhs worth which are currently in her name but will go to her son Brij, aged sixteen when he attains the age of twenty-five. Simrit does not overcome this condition of her husband. She pleads with Som's lawyer and this makes her reduced almost to the level of a beast of burden.

As a free-lance journalist and writer, Simrit has contact with intellectual circles and parties even at home by journalists just like herself. In order to build a new life for herself and her children, she comes across a brilliant member of parliament, Raj Garg. Finally through Raj's help, she gets rid of her divorce settlement. By understanding and sharing her agony, Raj infuses in her some positive thinking to face the world with renewed confidence in herself. Eventually Simrit decides to marry Raj for his broad sympathies and human attitude. Asnami Shyam points out rightly that their relationship is "grounded in sympathy and empathy, rather than bestial sensuality and cruel insensitivity"<sup>(1985, 130)</sup>

The two novels *Storm in Chandigarh* and *The Day in Shadow* deal with the theme of women's suppression and revolt in the socio-political set up in modern India as the protagonists struggle for freedom is reduced from Nayantara Sahgal's personal experience. Saroj, the female protagonist suffers from suspicion of her angry husband. Inder comes from Nayantara Sahgal's own personal experience. Nayantara Sahgal's mentioning about her pre-marital affair to her husband which had sown seeds of suspicion and jealousy in her husband Gautam and it affected her domestic life. Nayantara Sahgal was tortured with pestering question on her past-affair, suspected and denied self-expression. Finding friendship outside marriage quite satisfactory she spent long hours with Kjeld, a German friend. Having suspicion with Nayantara Sahgal, Gautam began to restrict her moving with other men. In the personal experience of her tortured married life under the watchful eyes of her husband, Nayantara Sahgal vividly exposed the bitter struggle for survival of Saroj with her suspicious husband Inder.

Simrit's agony as a divorcee in *The Day in Shadow* is Nayantara Sahgal's own personal life. This novel was written in 1970, soon after her own divorce in 1967. Nayantara Sahgal reveals it in 'Of Divorce

and Hindu woman' as, "In this book I tried to figure out something that has happened to me the shattering experience of divorce. I want to show how even in a free country like ours, where women are equal citizens, a woman can be criminally exploited without creating a ripple."

Like Simrit, Nayantara Sahgal faces the tax burden thrust upon her by the divorce settlement which was inflicted on her after seventeen years of married life. Finally, she comes out of this problem through her own independent efforts. In an interview, Nayantara Sahgal says to Jasbir Jain:

My husband defrauded one also not only defrauded me but hung me with taxes. I would not have had otherwise. I had a huge struggle after the divorce to make money and I made it. I feel pleased that I managed to do it (...) by my own efforts. (Jain,185)

Having been abandoned by her husband, Nayantara Sahgal found a true companion in a Christian government official E.N.Mangat Rai I.C.S and got married to him. In the novel, the protagonist Simrit after her divorce finds a true comradeship in the company of Raj, a Christian member of parliament and decided to marry him.

It is significant that both Saroj and Simrit stand for the emerging women of India who never remain silent and submissive like conventional 'pativratas' in marriage. Breaking the shackles of hapless marriage, they decide to live a life of understanding love and true companionship and start a fresh life. Neena Arora says,

Sahgal's women depend on some help to escape oppression and exploitation which in their cases is usually provided by man--a friend or a father who often helps them to come out of the miserable relationship and give them moral strength to smash the taboos and assert their identity to live a meaningful life.(Arora,102).

Nayantara Sahgal never opposes marriage as a social institution. She emphasizes the greater need for loyalty and mutual understanding in man-woman relationship. In both the novels, the female protagonists strive hard to lead life by mutual understanding. But when they failed, in their attempts, they become liberated women for their better survival. Nayantara Sahgal herself says that her protagonists are, "strivers and aspires towards freedom, towards goodness, towards compassionate world" (Jain 1994.116).

Nayantara Sahgal's fictional world thus, instinctively takes its shape through her own autobiographical incidents. Indeed each novel exhibits her real life incidents the way she faces and finds the solutions to the problems through her female character. Western education leads her to cross the border of social set-up. Nayantara Sahgal has not limited herself to the domestic adhere but goes beyond the limits of family exploring and portraying social injustices and perverted social values that affect the individual. Nayantara Sahgal thus, as a novelist is known as a non-conformist for her anti-establishment views. Jasbir Jain rightly says about Nayantara Sahgal as a person with "the conscience of liberal and the spirit of a non-conformist" (Jain, p.9) Nayantara Sahgal in a letter to this writer says, "I am a conservative (i.e.) careful about stepping out into the new who has been constantly driven to bring a revolutionary by the force of circumstances and the nature of events around me." (Passion for India.p.87)

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## TRADITION AND MODERNITY IN SHASHI DESHPANDE'S *ROOTS AND SHADOWS*

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In the traditional society of India, woman is essentially acknowledged as a shadow of male identity with little scope for the assertion of her choices. Traditional images of women essentially affirm the subjugated status of women but Shashi Deshpande categorically tries to establish that woman is endowed with inherent potential to recognize her femininity and to assert her inward powers as an individual. In her novels Shashi Deshpande travels in that terrain of human sensibility where externally imposed barriers become weak and insignificant. Her protagonists obviously venture to discover their female identity. She explores and exposes the long smothered wail of the fragmented psyche of her female protagonists, imprisoned within the shackles of domesticity, drifting between tradition and modernity. She portrays women as living individuals, struggling and endeavouring to make spaces of their own in the existing social order.

Shashi Deshpande depicts the anxiety of the educated, independent, middle class Indian woman searching for a balance between her traditional role as daughter, wife and mother in a predominantly patriarchal society. In Indian society, the traditions recommended by legends and religious canons are the foundation of man and woman relationship. The different roles recommended for woman are sanctified by religious texts. The epic figures like Sita and Draupadi are glorified Idealized beings endowed with exceptional power of endurance to sustain their identity beyond the ordeals of society. In Indian social life, woman is conditioned to survive with the support of male desires only.

The novel '*Roots and Shadows*' is the first authentic and organized effort of Shashi Deshpande to probe into the various dimensions of feminine sensibility and its human potential. It is a symbolic representation of the dialectical nature of man and woman set against each other in material terms for power struggle. "*Roots*" stands for tradition and "*Shadows*" signifies the marginal culture. The dying tradition is soon to become shadows against a backdrop of apocalyptic change. Also it suggests that over the root is removed, life is bereft of the binding force given way to new possibilities. This novel can be analyzed as a novel of the synthesis of the dualism of tradition and modernity.

Indu visits her ancestral home after a gap of ten years to attend the function of Akka and also to settle the disputes related with the property of ancestors. She is a middle class young, educated and dynamic woman, is the chief narrator who redefines the ideals of life through the life of her grandmother Akka. In her judgements, she was expected to safeguard the interests of all those who were associated with the ancestral house. In this novel, ancestral home is projected as a manifestation of Indu's affinity with her traditions. Indu earlier left the home to settle her life with unconventional ways but now she shares emotional affinities with her deserted past. She left the house as an orphan. In her second homecoming, she finds herself at the threshold of a great change. Besides the settlement of property matters, she has also to settle the marriage of her cousin, Mini. She stands a foil to Indu. She accepts her home confined spaces with a limited horizon of life. In spite of her own dreams, Mini was destined to accept the challenge of marriage without personal vision and voice. Shashi Deshpande accepts that in traditional framework, marriage is more a social obligation than being related with choices of individual.

Indu's return to her home was a symbolic return to her own deserted childhood when she liberated herself from her roots. The unfolding of each layer of her past was a realization of the reality that she tried to escape in the garb of her professional achievements. Her exile was prompted by the contempt for the monopoly of Akka the other grandmother but her vision modifies and the authority of Akka assumes a noble significance in her life. Indu is summoned by Akka to her death-bed. Akka dies leaving behind all her property at the disposal of Indu.

This responsibility imposed on Indu, enables her to have an insight into the suffering of Akka. The revelation of the horrors of Akka's struggle as a young woman against the irrational tyrannical authority of her unfaithful husband and treacherous mother-in-law inspires Indu to make a reassessment of the conduct of her grandmother. In the background the suffering of Akka, Shashi Deshpande highlights the issues related with the practice of child marriage and fate of widows in traditional society. The suppressed sensibility of a young bride subsequently transforms into obstinacy and invisible rebellion. Akka as a child bride was subjected to violent sexual tortures of her husband and this brutality developed a sex-phobia in her life. Akka was victim both of patriarchal authority and parental authority. Hence the humiliation of women is not a matter of gender discrimination only but is inherent in the entire social structure. Twice Akka tried to run away but her mother-in-law whipped her for that and locked her up for three days, with the additional punishment of starvation. Her mother-in-law turned her expression of aggression "inwards" towards her daughter-in-law. Akka was expected to make unconditional surrender to the sexual drives of her husband that were no better than animal mating. Akka's inability to conceive the child brings greater physical torture and mental suffering in her life. The male-dominated society and patriarchal set up do not leave her freely. Instead of that pricks her. Akka regains her strength and freedom only after the death of her mother-in-law and the paralytic stroke of her husband. Her weak dependent and ineffectual identity transforms into power and authority. Money and mental freedom modify Akka's spectrum of life. She too becomes emblem of parental authority governing and guiding the fortune of her grandchildren.

Her presence and authority provide security to other women in the family who were the victims of identical financial crisis and the curse of barrenness. In Akka's death, we can find the end of "patriarch" and "traditional life" but Indu in retrieval of her past, unconsciously seeks a re-plantation of her desires that have no productive soil of old tradition.

Shashi Deshpande never directs her criticism coloured with personal prejudices but seeks the spaces for the identification of the conscience of readers with the inner world of her characters. Indu declared her freedom against traditions in the form of her marriage with Jayant. The marriage of personal choice was the method to resist the traditional hold of patriarchy but her married life with Jayant was another mode of treachery in Indu's life and therefore she resolute to come back to her parental home. This cycle of rejection, reunion and retrieval suggests that the inner self of Indu was not so much fortified as was her external self.

In this novel it was not a question of her dissatisfaction only but also of her male counterparts who suffered because of strong hold of traditions. Indu finds that like her, Hemant, her college friend is also dissatisfied with his married life. He calls marriage a "trap" where if once one entangled, entangled forever. The institution of marriage is the prime factor responsible for the hostile upsurge of personal relationship. He calls marriage a "trap" or a "cage", "A trap? Or a cage? May be the comic strip version of marriage... a cage with two trapped animals, glaring hatred at each other,... isn't so good after all. And it's not a joke but tragedy. But what animal would cage itself" (61). Hemant is frustrated because in marriage the weight of dowry is more important than warmth of personal relationship. Akka also gives her consent to spend thousands of rupees in marriage of Mini, because her marriage negotiation did not click fast as there was a flaw in her horoscope for some, other rejected her with reasons as too dark, too old fashioned, too modern, too tall, and too short and when everything was alright there was the demand for huge dowry. The marriage is being committed only by the parents or elders of the family in the traditional way.

Whether the bride likes or not it doesn't matter but she has to submissively obey the orders given by the parents.

Shashi Deshpande accepts that forced sexual relation ruins the identity of woman and leaves her soul anguished, tortured and humiliated but at the same time sex as an expression of super sensibility has a power to sublimate human energy. One of the Indian gurus who had undergone great speculation for his movement, had a very broad outlook regarding sexual morals.

“The spiritual aspect of sex is nothing but the sublimation of the incessant drive of sex energy into higher planes of being. Sex in true sense should be an outcome of love from within and not an outward expression of spinning biological demand. The purest form of sex is not a physical relation only. It is love at its psychic end. It should emotive within and not as a sensual reaction. And it could emerge only from the ashes of the ego, where you and I are not separate entities physically, mentally or spiritually, is necessary to consummate love in full splendor” (Osho Rajneesh : From Sex to Superconscious : 16).

The sexual relationship in the company of Jayant prove hollow and incomplete for Indu. In the company of Naren, it comes as a mode of fulfillment. However, having the roots in Indian traditional ways, she is torn between her duty to Jayant and her desire for Naren. Her body fills with ecstasy, lying by the side of Naren. She is overwhelmed with a joyous sense of release of passion and she becomes impatient to seek relief in the company of Naren. She feels an intense desire to have the sensation of the masculinity of Naren.

Indu is the first spokesman created by Shashi Deshpande to represent the authenticity of feminine sensibility beyond the traditional burden of guilt and shame. It was her first assertion of absolute freedom, her own choice beyond the choice of Jayant and Naren. She feels herself “light hearted” and “liberated”. This external contentment of Indu however was not sufficient to sustain her inward sensibility. Her own sense of guilt against what she had done, made her restless to share her innermost feeling with Naren. The image of seduction takes hold on her mind. Torn between her idealism of emancipation and biological need, made her an anguished person. She desperately confesses, “I don't believe in love” and again says, “It is a big fraud, a hoax, that's what it is. They tell you it's the greatest thing, the only thing in life. And you believe them and fall into trap” (137). Shashi Deshpande treads a radical ground to seek a justification of man and woman relationship in the context of psycho-biological needs. Male companionship is an inevitable need of the life of a woman. Indu's failure to resist her urges and to seek their culmination in the company of Naren, is her ultimate realization of the real womanhood.

The novel '*Roots and Shadows*' passes through a complex structure in which narrative moves between past and present to come to a final conclusion in which individuals desires can seek harmony with socially accepted traditions. In the last phase of the novel after Naren's death and Indu's return to her home suggest that from illusion she turn back to reality. Indu's marriage with Jayant, return to Naren and again longing for Jayant signifies the insecurity existing within the inner self of Indu. The shifting ideals of Indu in this novel maintain that through the amicable amalgam of the inevitable opposites of tradition and modernity, a woman can seek a safe mooring escaping the loss in the chaos and confusion of conflicting ideologies.

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## THE PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN THE SELECTED NOVELS OF SHASHI DESHPANDE

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### **Abstract:**

*Shashi Deshpande, the prominent author of Indian English Literature has always focused on portrayal of Indian middle class woman and her sufferings. India is a country which has tremendous influence of traditional and patriarchal norms for women as compared to men. Women have occupied submissive status in Indian social milieu. Therefore, Deshpande tries to capture the attention of her readers to the burning issue of women sufferings in Indian social contexts through her novels. The author of this paper attempts to reveal some of the dilemmas faced by Indian women.*

**Key Words:** *dilemma, sufferings, patriarchy etc.*

The feminine dilemma of tradition and modernity is seen in the novels of Shashi Deshpande. It is a life observed of a lady from girl to woman who found herself in a black box as helpless in the dilemma of traditions and modernity. In fact, while pointing out the rights of women in India, Shashi Deshpande has focused feminine struggle for her identity. Her struggle has brought forward the conflict between traditional and modern views but in Indian society yet there is no clear line that can sort it out. In such conflict the dilemma of women in traditions and modernity, Indian woman is not able to prove her modern and anti orthodoxy role. In the novels of Shashi Deshpande such women are protagonists. In fact they are the exposure to prove the confusing image of women in the novels of Shashi Deshpande.

An award winning Indian women novelist, Shashi Deshpande was born in 1938 in Karnataka and got educated in Bombay and Bangalore. Her first publication is a collection of short stories. Her first novel is *The Dark Holds No Terrors*. She received the Sahitya Akademi Award, for the novel *That Long Silence*. Her novels trace out the complex relationship of men and women living together, moving across life in their different age groups, classes and gendered roles. The old tradition bound world conflicts with the modern leading to create unforeseen gaps and disruptions within the family fold.

Shashi Deshpande an eminent novelist has emerged as a writer possessing deep insight into the female psyche focusing on the marital relations. She seeks to expose the tradition by which a woman is trained to play her subservient role in the family. "Her novels reveal the man-made patriarchal traditions and uneasiness of the modern Indian woman. Shashi Deshpande uses this point of view of present social reality as experienced by women. She tries to present the world of mothers, daughters and wives along with the fathers, sons and husbands. She reveals the relation between men and women, as well as between women themselves. Her young heroines rebel against the traditional way of life and patriarchal values." (Dr. Nidhi Bhatt, 45).

'Since time immemorial the terms 'Tradition' and 'Modernity' are forever and a day lured many intellectuals for fresh debate, when the subject matter is of 'woman' and specially redefining women's role in the society. Tradition and modernity have been interpreted through masculine microscope and often have been used as apparent bandaging to cure wavering inner feelings of women. However, oscillating between Tradition and modernity most of the women, make self compromise.' (Santoshkumar M. Patil, 77).

Shashi Deshpande observes that in the ancient India, the roles of man and woman were clearly marked. Woman was kept ignorant of all field of human life as political, social and economical affairs. There were the domains of man and woman learned early in the life not to encroach, "there is a tradition, perhaps not only in India, that women should not be worried, that the best way to ensure this is to keep them as far as possible in ignorance" (Sharma, 99). It was in Indian tradition that woman was assigned a subordinate role as she was involved in housework, preparation of food and care of children which was regarded as unproductive labor. It was the twentieth century since the women writers, in India, taking up the cause of the woman who is searching for ways to assert her selfhood in a society that is prejudiced in favour of man. By projecting the pathetic condition of women resulting from the conventions of traditional society, these writers are trying to emancipate their women. They give their heroines new challenging perspectives that enable them to emerge out of their dominancy into the openness of assertion. They are courageous and well informed enough to renounce and restructure the pattern of female expression set by age-old patriarchal codes of behaviour and tradition in India.

Shashi Deshpande tackles the basic themes that centered her major women character caught between the modern trends and the traditional practices. 'A middle-class educated woman In *Roots and Shadows*, Indu, a young ambitious girl, working for women's magazine, is confused about her concept of love, marriage, career and her own life. She marries for love but is she not sure whether it is real love or just attempts to show the elder people how correct she was in taking a decision for herself. Shashi Deshpande's keen observation of the dilemma of Indian middle class women made her to present Indian women entrapped in tradition and modernity in her writings. Her heroin, Indu in '*Roots and Shadows*' fell in love with a young man who seemed to be modern and gets married with him. In due course, she realized that her freedom was illusionary. She has exchanged the orthodoxy of the village home for the conventions of the 'Smart young set' of the city where material well-being had to be assured by sacrificing principles, if necessary. Her great aunt dies. Indu returns to her house after the absence of twelve years. As she attempts to take change of her legacy, she comes to realize the strength and the resilience of the village women whom she had previously dismissed as weak. Defying the traditional role she is expected to play. Indu seeks fulfillment in education and career. She works as a journalist for a woman magazine but gives it up out of disgust for writing only about women and their problems and start writing for another magazine. As Indu explains the reason for her shift:

Women, Women... I got sick of it. There was nothing else. It was kind of narcissism. And as if we had locked ourselves in a cage and thrown away the key. I couldn't go on (*Roots and Shadows*: 78).

Shashi Deshpande pictures the agony and suffocation experienced by Indu in a male dominated and tradition-bound society. Indu lands herself in great mental trauma when she refuses to play the straight jacketed role of a wife, imposed upon her by the Indian traditional and male oriented society. To her great disappointment, the man after her heart, whom she has married, turns out to be no different from the less educated and very conservative Indian men. She is even more saddened when she understands that she herself has all along been involuntarily aping the role of the ideal, tradition-bound Indian wife. On her search for her own identity she even gets into an extra marital affair, and finally she realizes that it is possible to exercise autonomy within the parameters of marriage. (Vimala V.)

The novel *The Dark Holds No Terrors* analyzes the complex relationship between a successful doctor, Sarita (Sam), and her professionally frustrated and irritated husband. Just because the wife has a better job, there is very obvious tension between them, which subsequently leads them to separate from each other. In the novel *That Long Silence*, Jaya, the protagonist, is so much confused about the whole set up and the happenings around that she finds no other way but silence as her means of communication.

Shashi Deshpande in her novels as - *The Binding Vine*, *A Matter of Time* and *Small Remedies*, gives an insight into the middle class Indian women, who feel oppressed by their patriarchal influence and socialization. Here she tries to provide new ideas for better man-woman relationship, and bring about a

balance between tradition and modernity as a working philosophy for the contemporary woman. She tries to show this through the characters of Sumi in *A Matter of Time* and Urmil in *The Binding Vines*; and the characters of Madhu, Savitribai Indorekar and aunt Leela in *Small Remedies* that modernity is the assertion of the independent individual identity. After having passively played out their socially ordained roles her protagonists move out of their cocooned cloistered selves to assert their individuality as women with empowerment. In these novels, it is notable that the men characters expect submissiveness from their spouses.

Without mentioning and discussing the matters, they take for granted that the women will follow them. For example, in *That Long Silence*, Mohan, Jaya's husband, takes it for granted that Jaya is going to follow his decision. When caught in malpractice, he makes the wife and children responsible for it. Showing that he cares for them so much that he went out of his way to get things done:

"I've always put you and the children first."

Mohan explains to assume Jaya's company with him but he never looks into her demands and neither does she communicate anything directly to Mohan and hence there always remains a gap between husband and wife and silence prevails in the house. Here we find the role of Jaya accepting traditional image of Ideal Indian Wife, in true sense. Being a good and creative writer she gives up her modern image and accepts traditional role of Indian Women. In fact, she deserts the modernity of women for the sake of husband to follow Indian traditional patriarchal culture.

In fact it is noticed that she is not able to choose her role. Here, clearly we trace out the dilemma of Indian women in tradition and modernity. It is just due to the cultural conflict aroused in Indian women presented by Shashi Deshpande in her novels.

The narration of Shashi Deshpande highlights women in dilemma of tradition and modernity moving from present to the past covering the whole life span of the Indian middle class women. All the time they are brooding over their fate, questioning themselves, what they really are and ultimately trying to adapt themselves to the surrounding. She ends her novels with an optimistic note with the hope of some positive action in the future. For example, Sam in *The Dark Holds No Terrors* waits for her husband to come to take her back and start their life afresh; Indu in *Roots and Shadows* plans to go back to her husband and tell him everything about herself, and Jaya in *That Long Silence* interprets Mohan's letter in positive terms and hopes for the better.

The six women protagonist- Indu, Sam, Jaya, Urmil, Sumi and Madhu find themselves trapped in the dilemma of tradition and modernity in their roles assigned to them by the society and attempt to assert their individuality.

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## ASSERTION OF SELF IN MAYA ANGELOU'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY *I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS*

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The autobiography examines the ways Angelou perceives and portrays her diverse and varied experiences as black woman from her own geographical locations. By the exploration of her 'self', Angelou is concerned with the situation of African-American black women. Through her own experiences, she examines the socio-cultural conditions, practices and beliefs which disadvantage and oppress women. She challenges, with justification, the secondary status of women in her society. Like many other black women writers, her narratives re-write the lives of black women, thereby revealing the 'concealed histories' of women. In exploring personal issues such as marriage and motherhood which are regarded as vital to women's identity, Angelou reveals the complex realities of her life. She is not afraid to expose moments of difference and contradiction in her life. By illustrating her experiences of oppression and marginalization, she shows that these problems are not specific to a particular age, class or situation. The autobiography *Caged Bird* deals with Angelou's 'assertion of self'.

At the age of eight Maya and at the age of nine her brother Bailey both were shifted to their Momma Henderson (maternal grandmother) at St. Louis. It was a much heard life to Maya and Bailey. At St. Louis church and different parties affect the children very differently. At certain movement Maya was raped by her mother's friend Mr. Freeman. He threatened her to dumb the incident otherwise he will kill her brother Bailey.

After the trial, Freeman dies after being violently beaten, evidently by Maya's uncles. Maya is indeed silent, mute. She cannot speak. The silent Maya returns to Momma Henderson, remaining speechless for five years until, she recovers her voice through the patient help of her grandmother's friend, Mrs. Bertha Flowers. As Maya arises from the traumas of childhood, she gains strength from reading literature, and graduates, with honors from the eighth grade.

Soon after graduation she and Bailey move to San Francisco, where their mother, Vivian, was living with her new husband, Daddy Clidell. There, Maya simultaneously attends George Washington High School and on a part time basis a Marxist labor school.

At the later, she takes courses in dance and theater that will prove invaluable in her career. Maya records her separation from her mother and father, and her strong religious and communal connections, shared with her paternal grandmother.

Maya is southern African-American woman writer who narrates her life as a child, adult and a mother herself. In Maya's case, the story is told from the unlikely perspective of a Black Southern female whose chances to be someone was dreadfully limited, due to something that limits placed on the lives of African-American people. And yet, she is intelligible and able to express ideas clearly and effectively in writing, sarcastic, upsetting not all the kind of self that a frequent reader of autobiography expects.

From the first moment, she records being underprivileged, an undesirable outsider. According to Sidonie Ann Smith, any Black autobiographer will reveal his or her oppression in those earliest moments "in black American autobiography the opening almost invariably recreates the environment of enslavement from which the black self seeks escape" (1973:367).

Maya feels ugly, awkward, and is poorly dressed throughout the entire first volume, although, she does have flashes of self-pride, for example when she believes that Momma Henderson is rewarding good

behavior by putting her and Bailey in the front pew of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, generally, though she considers her Black 'Self' to be the cage that catches her.

Similar negative self-perceptions are frequent in Black female autobiography. It is in the raw of the dead-seeming cold rocks, and it is the certain moments which have become a proper guidance to develop her 'self'. She learns to appreciate more fully her changing character. In her evaluation from child to woman, Maya fills the reader's imaginations as have very few similar characters in American autobiography.

Alfred Kazin (1964) argues that recreating those early years offers the autobiographer the greatest motive childhood. He states, it is the perfect perspective for revealing the 'self' in part because the narrator derives pleasure from transferring the informed thoughts of an adult into the imaginative visions of a child. Although, he is not writing about Maya, Kazin's remarks fit her perfectly.

Maya's character as a child and young adult, with attention to how she acts and is acted in three specific areas in the family, in the Black community, and in the White community. Maya's performance in these areas reveals the diversity of her character and gives a sense of the various moods, attitudes, and strategies involved in her survival as a Black child in a world exploited by images of Whiteness.

Autobiography is a genre designed to be a revelation of the 'self', as shaped through personal attachments, often with present or absent family members. In *Caged Bird*, Angelou's interaction with mother, brother, son and grandmother listen to order and set her experiences. Although these are all strong relationships, Maya's ties with her grandmother are doubtless the most important in forming her character. Of all the Black residents of Stamps, the one person Maya treats with respect is Mrs. Berth Flowers; Maya calls her the "aristocrat of black Stamps" (77).

A self-supporting, independent, graceful woman, Mrs. Flowers gently nurses Maya through her years of silence by reading to her and loaning her books so that Maya's love of literature makes her want to speak it. Maya has observed a pattern in women's autobiographies in which another woman a mother, a daughter, a grandmother, a friend helps the subject identify her 'self' as a writer.

This pattern certainly holds true for Mrs. Flowers, whose encouragement is a major factor in Maya's development as reader, autobiographer and poet. A cage, as Georgia Douglas Johnson states that discipline is not only the Black body but also the female Black body. Black woman is doubly portended because of her race and gender. The 'self' is a concept, so forceful. It harms the autobiography.

It is portrayed fairly briefly in the text. Maya's two sexual experiences with Mr. Freeman, both scenes are created in metaphors. She describes her pain without having to directly speak/write about what she feels. Unable to understand the reality of her situation, she discovers comparisons that sound like dirty jokes because they really are dirty jokes, shown by an obstructed father substitute on an innocent girl.

'Self' is a system of thought that is focused on women's rights. It insists on equality of women in the home, the market place, and in those institutions that control women's lives, education, medicine, government, and so on. One basic 'self' assumption is that women are victims in a patriarchal society, in which power is held by the father or by his male representatives in the community and in which all important decisions are made by men. Women strives those decisions in the quest for social change is 'self', whether it identifies with the term or not. Most Scholars trace the origins of feminism to the Industrial Revolution in Europe and America in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

As large groups of working men experienced democracy and freedom for the first time "women began to require similar privileges the rights to vote, to own property, to control their bodies and their minds" (1992: 98-99).

In America, the feminist movement grew and then settled in the 1920s after women won the right to vote. A second wave of feminism began to increase in America in 1970, the year *Caged Bird* was published. It was called the New Women's Movement. This growth of feminism was recognized to its grassroots appeal. It is a strategy for social change.

After a number of Black women refused to accept lower positions in SNCC and the CORE the two leading civil rights groups, a separate occurred along gender lines. Many Black women separated

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themselves from male authority, and formed their own organizations on a certain campus and in the community.

The heroine of *Caged Bird* arrived on the literary scene in 1970, at the very moment, when women in America were creating Black sisters or forming small discussion groups to share their experiences of oppression under the patriarchal order. A year before the publication of *Caged Bird*, Black poet Sonia Sanchez introduced a course, 'The Black Women', at the University of Pittsburgh, the first college course to concentrate on the experiences of Black women in America.

Emerging American feminists were getting ready to learn, to discuss, to listen. The time was mature for *Caged Bird*. Maya herself worked with pro-African women's groups through her affiliation with the CAWAH.

Women of CAWAH organized a sit-in at the United Nations Building in New York after Patrice Lumumba, the prime minister of Zaire, was assassinated. Angelou also accepted a leadership. She invited a part of in freedom of sex, race and religion also. It is unlikely that she affiliated with groups defined as feminist. When asked if she is a feminist or if she supports the feminist motive, Angelou has been vague.

She told Jeffrey M. Elliot that she thinks Black women to be more self-reliant than White women. She also trusts in "equal pay, equal respect, and equal responsibility for everybody" (1989:93).

As for her being a feminist, Maya has a practical but elusive comment "I am a feminist I've been female for a long time now I'd be stupid not to be on my own side" (1989:162).

A 'self' reading of *Caged Bird* raises a number of questions relating to women and their social conditions. First, does *Caged Bird* develop themes of specific relevance to women? Second, is *Caged Bird* centered on a strong, aware female character or characters? Third, do the women characters bond with other women in an effort to change conditions under the patriarchy?

With the regard to the second question the central female character of *Caged Bird* does not focus a strong, positive image of women. In one of the most quoted phrases from the volume, she describes her 'self' as an "ugly black dream" (2).

Unfortunately, Maya shows a lack of respect for her 'self' in the part of the autobiography that take place in Stamps and St. Louis for reasons that have to do with her racial and sexual attitudes.

When she is raped by Mr. Freeman, Maya's self-esteem burdens to the point, where she refuses to speak, until, she regains her voice. Maya moves to California to develop her sense of self-worth. Although Maya is some degree of negative character, she is also a potential of feminist because she is aware of the forces in society that are working against her.

On a personal level, there are significant bonding relationships among women. The bonding that takes place between Maya and Mrs. Flowers clearly supports the reading of *Caged Bird* as a model for feminist autobiography.

Mrs. Flowers is the first example of feminism in Stamps: She is independent, she has the economic resources to survive on her own, she respects her 'self'; and she cares about other women, to the extent that she takes control of Maya's education, helping her to read and regain her own voice. Without her Maya would never become a writer.

At seventeen, Maya is looking for a job that will bring her recognition, money, and independence, but she lacks the necessary skills to achieve it. Maya does many jobs to attain her destination goals. She must leave her mother and stepfather, who have helped her, and define a new life for her 'self'.

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**QUEST FOR CULTURAL IDENTITY IN IMMIGRANT LAND IN CHITRA BANERJEE  
DIVAKARUNI'S *THE MISTRESS OF SPICES* AND *THE QUEEN OF DREAMS***

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**Abstract:**

*This paper explores the elements of 'quest for cultural identity in immigrant land' in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's novels. Many of her works revolve around Indian-born women negotiating old- and new-world values. This paper brings out the condition of characters who feel Tug of Cultures and their struggle to create their own individual and cultural identity in the host land. The focus is laid on the theme of Indian immigrants wavering between old beliefs and new found desires in United States.*

*Immigrants condition in a Western country like United States is absolutely disturbed in mind as they are caught between two cultures 'restricted but comfortable Indian culture and independent but ruthless Western Culture'. Intriguing incidents from the two select novels reveal us how critical it is the lives of immigrants abroad who long for cultural identity in immigrant land.*

**Key Words:** Immigrant, Culture, Quest for Identity.

**Introduction**

The psychological term 'Identity Crisis' is defined as 'a period of uncertainty and confusion in which a person's sense of identity becomes insecure, typically due to a change in their expected aims or role in society. Ericson, a German born psychologist and psychoanalyst known for his theory on 'psychological development of human beings,' coined the term. Experiences of the crisis and contradictions give birth to the concept called Identity which every individual had to overcome, in order to rise to the next development phase.

The question of identity has remained a source of conflicts and has led to wars in history. The quest for identity has been a persistent journey all the way through humanity's history, defined and explored in literary works in an elaborative way.

Dreams would not come to me in California because it was too new a place. Its people had settled there only a few hundred years ago, and neither its air nor its earth, the elements from which we most draw sustenance, was weighted yet with dreams. Yes, there had been old inhabitants, but they had been driven from the land, and in going had taken with them, along with their hopes, their ways of dreaming. (QOD 177)

Explaining the process of displacement and migration, Oliver Blackwell has stated "Both migration and displacement can be understood as processes which bring about changes in people's physical locations as a result transform economic, social and political relationships."

Departure from the homeland integrates with the arrival in the host land but it also leaves a void and emptiness. Though the characters transpose from one nation to another, the landscape of memory lends colour to the canvas of life. Distanced physically, they are hit by the changes in everyday realities but the impeding experiences are transformed into reassuring certainties. 'Past' becomes a positive stimulant and it serves to reformulate and transform the present. Push and pull between expectations and aspirations, tradition and modernity also can be seen.

One finds an entangled relationship between history, time and place which develops into a reflexive condition and it opens up debates on the issues of 'identification and affiliation' and 're-invention of cultural traditions in the New World Order'.

### **Quest for Identity**

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni by the words of Mrs. Gupta has summarized the underlying deep seated anguish and anxiety of a displaced person. Dislocation has a significant impact and it takes many forms like migration, exile and diaspora where the movement is either forced or voluntary. This feeling of displacement has been extensively explored in literary texts. However the concept of 'displacement' has far reaching effect as it can never be really traced as to when it happened and it is related often to self-perception according to critics. In this world of globalization marked by social integration this process has acquired an added significance.

Divakaruni's novels manifest migration, mobility and diaspora in its varied forms. The reason for settling abroad also varies. It delves into the difficulties inherent in adjusting to a new land but it also creates a perception of the land left behind in all its neutrality. The characters engage themselves in an active process of remembering. Tilo, the mistress of spices, chooses America and voluntarily helps the people open up their treasured thoughts and tries to heal them.

Spice shop, for instance, created in *The Mistress of Spices* as a setting serves to bring the displaced people together and tries to offer them solace. Divakaruni has depicted the bond of friendship which the fellow migrants develop.

A bent old woman with skin the colour of old sand, behind a glass counter that holds mithai, sweets out of their childhoods ( ... ) it seems that I should always have been there, that I should understand without words their longing for the ways they chose to leave when they chose America. (MOS 4-5)

The way they share their secrets, tragedies and concerns with an old lady Tilo and open their hearts, show their longing to be heard and their deep seated thoughts which they feel cannot be understood by the people of that land.

Shell within shell within shell ( ... ) today I plan to stretch my wings, to crack perhaps the shells and emerge into the infinite spaces of the outside world. It frightens me a little ( ... ) Outside America is flinging itself against the walls of my store, calling in its many tongued voice. (MOS 125)

Growing globalization has created a social and cultural impact and along with this, it has also resulted in the dissemination of cultural identities. Alienation experienced, encountered and enamored is projected by the diasporic writers and the novels 'authenticity gets heightened by the fact that it is based on writer's own experience.

This novel picturizes the story of many Indians who live as immigrants in the US but jostle with their inner voice to whole heartedly accept the new land. It is Tilo who mentions, "For even her in this new land America, this city which prides itself on being no older than a heartbeat, it is the same things we want, again and again." (MOS 4) Youth, teenagers, adults and oldies all are brought together on one platform that has their own shades of anxieties, tension, apprehensions and concerns. The resolution to adjust and accommodate can

|| (Oju 157) Kolekar

and Annie in their paper on Indian Diaspora have mentioned,

Diaspora is a scattering of the seed in the wind, the fruits of which are a new creation and a fight to survive. Every diasporic movement holds a historical significance, as it carries within itself the kernel of the nation's history. (3)

The dilemma of the people who migrate is this that though they change their place but the heart remains in the things of the past. The store where the entire community tends to relive their experiences caters to the small little cravings of Indian community. Be it the Indian sweets or various kinds of pulses,

video tapes, music cassettes the visitors' choice in buying the retail products point at the sense of nostalgia and longing. The things help in mediating, enacting and circulating the culture in motion.

People living in diaspora have to cross various hurdles and they make an effort to adjust and accommodate with the linguistic, cultural, racial and national differences. The writer in her novel has compared their life to the "bitter slight aftertaste in the mouth when one has chewed *amlaki* to freshen the breath." (MOS 4)

The identity becomes a projection of shared culture held in common by certain people, but it also represents the deep, significant differences between people. It is in the novels that we find that India is related with a lot of metaphorical possibility and it does not merely remain a kind of 'geo-political' presence. Nation acquires for the characters their tradition and culture and it transforms their present and thereby it becomes a 'set of social-formation'.

Situated within and across a range of nations, the characters come to embody a set of disconnections between place, culture and identity. However it also proposes that a whole range of life experiences lie outside observed geographical boundaries. The interplay of material, spiritual, ideological, practical and discursive phenomena find an expression and it tends to comprehend the effect of social, political and cultural change.

Since the characters in her novels generally tend to move to the USA on their will, it is the internal condition of the mind in comparison to that of external condition which they grapple with. If Tilo is alienated from pleasure, Panchaali from peace, R

essness that it will not kill me." (MOS 299) The binarisms of life 'here and there', 'now and then', 'anywhere and everywhere' almost haunt the people in *The Mistress of Spices* as they live in a diaspora and all this has got an expression in her writings through the characters who visit her spice store. The narrative in the novel dangles between mystical and understood. In the words of Zupancic Metka:

The characters in these novels are placed in social settings where the 'supernatural' is a commonplace and a regular companion to the daily events, although the humans who hold power continue in their endeavors to bend these powers so as to use them for their personal gain. The struggle between the ego, the pride, the greed, and the need to better understand the extemporal, the all-pervading, remains at the centre of Divakaruni's reinterpretation of old traditions and her projection of how the future could be shaped if humankind achieved the necessary transformation toward love and understanding. (115)

The most striking fact about the novel *Queen of Dreams* is the inner alienation which Rakhi experiences just because her mother does not share much about the land of her origin. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni through the use of dreams has tried to enter into the realm where things are difficult to be understood but still it has a value and a reality behind it. Diasporas often feel that they are away from their homeland and that is the price they have to pay for the future prospects and a better life. The Dream Journals of Mrs. Gupta become symbolic of the thought process of her wish to project the bitter truth before her daughter. It is her portfolio of memory lodged in a book which is later used as a tool for re-discovery.

Mrs. Gupta's character to me has been envisioned to bridge the gap between dreams and reality, fantastic and ordinary, imaginations and facts. The constant reverberations of lines from Brihat Swapna Sarita are recited by Mrs Gupta as she understands the supernatural as natural. She says, "My life is nothing but a dream from which I will wake into death, which is nothing but a dream of life." (QOD 19) The transitory nature of life, unpredictability of the situations and momentary setbacks is all bundled up in the lines mentioned above and the positive note of optimism resonates even in the most negated word 'death'.

Singing songs and playing music is like discovering their roots and their origin. The pleasure to play and participate in musical delight gives them a chance to feel like discovering their talent which for

them is not less than prodigious endowment. This state of theirs is well put in Rakhi's words, "...their joy at discovery, like an unexpected oasis tucked into an arid stretch of dunes, something they thought they'd never find here in America. It's a pleasure to watch their pleasure."

### Conclusion

Divakaruni's stories deal mainly with the clash of a primitive way of life with the western ideals of high culture. Her protagonists, mainly immigrant Indians, dream of walking past their lived experiences and practices to experience exotic land, and explore unknown realms. For the immigrant Indians, the past and its associated traditions have their own beauty and assurance, in spite of their limitations. This realization, which comes with the experience of freedom, makes one sympathetic towards one's own prejudices against one's own culture and tradition.

The quest for identity as an incessantly altering world is a daunting task for the immigrant. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni has explored in several ways the difficulty of reconciling cross-cultural rituals. She has tried to answer all these questions in Indians at heart, having familial ties, bonds that last long than all the physical relations they build around themselves.

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## HUMAN ENCOUNTERS WITH WILD CREATURES IN THE SELECT SHORT STORIES OF RUSKIN BOND

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### **Abstract:**

*Humans belong to the earth in much the same way as wild animals do. As they are interrelated, it exposes the relationship between animals and humans. Ruskin Bond is such a vibrant writer whose dominant theme centres around ecology and environment. Through his works, he emphasizes on the kinship between humans and non-humans the environmentalist that he is. Ruskin Bond skillfully handles the issues on man's harmony with environment which includes the flora and the fauna. This research paper is devoted to an analysis of the conflicts faced by the humans and wild animals for their survival. The forest is the natural habitat of animals. The conflict arises between man usurps the animals of their living area by their enthusiasm. The researcher is highly impressed by the behaviour of wild animals in the forest as mentioned in the tales of Ruskin Bond. But look at the situation nowadays, forests are being destroyed by the trespassers without concerning the animals and birds and its place of abode. The part of Nature (Animals and Birds) has to be appreciated for the goodness done to human beings and Ruskin Bond depicts through the following stories. In a nutshell, this paper concentrates more on the insights into the perspective of wild life.*

**Keywords:** *Ecology, environment, wild life, flora and fauna.*

Man in the ages that went by enjoyed a close kinship with Nature. There is archeological evidence that Indus Valley culture practiced worship of the five elements of Nature. But his symbolize relationship between Man and Nature has deteriorated over the years has caused tremendous environmental hazards. Ruskin Bond is firmly of the view that whatever spells charges to ecology predicts the prediction of Man.

Ruskin Bond's celebrated short stories *Panther's Moon and Other Stories*, is a collection of ten animal stories, projected against the Himalayan background where aggressive animals are still found. These tales typically express the various kinds of relationships between humans and animals. The researcher has selected the short stories "Panther's Moon" and "The Leopard" for the study. These stories evoke a sense of compassion in the young generation because the protagonists of these stories have experienced the painful feelings for animals and wild life. The stories also bring out the rapacious nature of animals that fight for food exclusively.

The stories in this collection are for sheer entertainment. The readers are little worried by the extent of the blood and violence that commonly arise between the human beings and the wild animals in the forest. In some cases where a tiger or a panther is killed or wounded, it is inferred that humans who live near forests and mountains need to defend themselves. One cannot afford to romanticize the wild without accepting its harsh realities. However, Bond also makes us conscious of the need for humans to stop deliberately baiting and antagonizing these animals, and seems to indicate that many of the sequences which end up in the destruction of a "man-eater" along with injuries are provoked by men themselves.

The titular story, *Panther's Moon*, narrates the heroism of a young boy Bisnu as he manages to kill a

panther that is stalking his village, it exposes the present danger that hangs over his predicament. The reader cannot doubt that the happy end to the story could just as well have been a pitiful one. There is also a useful lesson embedded in it, that a shikari is responsible for turning this panther into a vengeful man-eater.

In this short story, Ruskin Bond obviously illustrates that Panthers turn into man-eaters because of the hunter's greed to sell their hide. By the total destruction of a dense forest by cutting down trees, humans encounter wild animals and violate the trust placed in humans by Nature. Ruskin Bond, a favourite writer of Nature, describes the problems faced by the school boy Bisnu and his companion Sheroo, a big hill mastiff. While describing the day to day life of Bisnu, the author fabulously explains the scenic beauty of the hills and the wild man-eater, a Panther. Because of inhumanly hunters shoot lots of leopards and panthers in the nearby forest, so that the panther enters the dwellings of humans.

Ruskin Bond creates a bond between Nature and humans through the words he uses in his stories. While reading the stories, the readers enjoy and recognize the liveliness of nature. In the story "Panther's Moon", he depicts the human encounter with the panther from angle of the protagonist Bisnu. His dog, a big hill mastiff called Sheroo accompanies him when he goes to have his bath in a small stream at the dawn. He has a sister named Puja who helps her mother in the house and also in the fields. She does not go to school and learns something from his brother when he teaches her in the evenings. Though Bisnu's father is no more, he considers himself the head of the family at the age of twelve.

Bisnu used to go to school by walk, some five miles away from his village. Before he leaves his small house he prays to Lord Ganesh to invoke his blessings for help to lead a happy life with his mother and sister. Puja insists on buy a pair of bangles for her. Bisnu carries his bag and starts his journey towards his school. His village called Manjari has no school because it consists of only five families. There is a school situated at Kemptee, a small township in the district of Garhwal. Not only Bisnu from Manjari but also other students go to school from long distances.

In the village, Bisnu is the only one who goes to school. Nobody compels him but he wants to read and write so that, "the world that seemed to begin only where the mountains ended" (31). He is far away from the outside world because he stays in his small village. Bisnu has the courage to travel along unfriendly path to Kemptee because he is in need of learning things from school so that he is unmindful of thinking about the man-eater prowling about here and there. When he leaves the village and his fields, Bisnu climbs up the hillside and he is accompanied by Sheroo.

While travelling to his school, he happens to see the rivers, trees, hills and enjoys the charming beauty of his village that lies right at the bottom of the mountain.

Emerging from the trees, Bisnu crossed a small brook. Here he stopped to drink the fresh, clean water of a spring. The brook tumbled down the mountain, and joined the river a little below Bisnu's village. Coming from another direction was a second path, and at the junction of the two paths, Sarru was waiting for him (32).

Bisnu has to pass a crowd of langoors living in the oak forest. He is familiar with the path so that the red monkeys do not threaten him and they simply watch him patiently. The oak forest provides enough food for the monkeys so that they need not migrate to the nearby town. On the way to his school, Bisnu crosses a small brook where he stops for some time to drink the uncontaminated water. Bisnu is accompanied by his friend Sarru who is waiting at the junction of two paths.

Sarru is older than Bisnu and he carries two large milk cans from his town and sells it at the school and to Mrs Taylor, the lady doctor of the small mission hospital. He informs that a panther entered his village the previous day. Due to the scarcity of prey, the panther strays in the outskirts of the village and kills a dog or a goat for its prey. It happens only because of the hunters wound its leg. To quote Ruskin Bond:

'It could be the same. It has a bullet in its leg. These hunters are the people who cause all the trouble. They think it's easy to shoot a panther. It would be better if they missed altogether;

but they usually wound it.'

'And then the panther's too slow to catch the barking-deer, and starts on our own animals' (32-33).

Man is the one and only enemy of the wild animals because a shikari wounds the panther's thigh with an old bullet and it is not able to hunt the animals like deer so that it enters the village. Here, the human beings start the problem and after sometime they face the problems by the wild animals and finally both die in the battle of survival. The researcher brings out the eco-friendly approach to the animals especially living in the dense forest and creating awareness in the humans to encourage afforestation and not to disturb the parts of nature in any aspect.

In this collection of short stories *Panther's Moon and Other Stories*, Ruskin Bond creates a world in which men and wild creatures struggle to 'survive' than 'living'. There is a clash between these two creatures because the human beings trespass the places of wild beings. Ruskin Bond has a passionate love towards nature; he starts his career by writing short stories and novels. His writings mainly focus on the voice of nature to the human world to change their attitude and preserve forests and their wild creatures. Ruskin Bond's animals and birds are more humane than human beings. A shikari wounds the panther's thigh with an old bullet and it is not able to hunt the animals like deer so that it enters the village. Here, the human beings start the problem and after sometime they face the problems because of the wild animals.

On the way to school, Bisnu happens to meet Mela Ram, the postman and Dr Taylor who is working in the mission hospital. She has spent her days in India for twenty years and she knows the familial background of Bisnu and admires him for his interest to get education. She greets him and helps his dog by providing bones. When the school bell rings, Bisnu hurries towards the school gate and Sheroo settles on the grass of the compound.

On the day, Mr. Nautiyal, Bisnu's school teacher is in a bad temper because his roses have been consumed by a herd of goats in the garden. He is also upset that he has entered the school without his breakfast. Bisnu is one of the best students in the classroom but sometimes he irritates his teacher by raising too many questions. After the school is over, Bisnu accompanies his dog and he did not want to go home late. He used to reach his home when it is getting dark.

In the evening, on his way back his home, he feels that he has forgotten to buy bangles for his sister. At once, a noise comes from the bushes and he comes to know that his dog is in trouble. Bisnu fastly approaches the slope towards the bushes but he is not able to find his dog Sheroo. He sees a little bit of Sheroo's blood stained collar on the earth. He understands that a panther has attacked his dog silently and carried away its body without any struggle.

Bisnu is not able to sleep that night and he is restless to think about his dog. He never concentrates on his usual duties. When he passes the mission hospital gate, Dr Taylor asks for Sheroo. Bisnu simply says, "A panther took him" (37). Dr Taylor understands nobody could solace Bisnu because he is closely associated with his dog. In order to forget the intolerable incident, Bisnu gets into a fight with one of his schoolmates.

One day, a man-eater ruthlessly attacks a nine year old boy Sanjay who is the son of Kalam Singh. While he is sleeping near the door, nobody could listen the fast approach of a panther. There is a panic sound where Sanjay cries with pain and the panther drags him from the home. On hearing the terrific sound, the family and the entire village wake up and want to drive away the panther from the village. Kalam Singh is assisted by the village men and the panther rushes towards the forest. Sanjay is lying on the floor and the side of his head has been totally swallowed by the panther. The head is lying on the blood stained floor.

There is no medical facility in Manjari, so they take care of Sanjay for the rest of the night. He starts lamenting and recovers to consciousness, Kalam Singh is optimistic that Sanjay will recover from his deep injury. In the morning, he takes a stout stick in his hand and carries Sanjay on his shoulder and goes through

the rocky mountain track to reach the hospital at Kempsee. Dr Taylor discovers that Sanjay is terribly injured and she dresses the wound with motherly care. Sanjay slowly recovers and his friends Bisnu and Chitru spend some time with him.

Two days later, Bisnu goes to school and he is warmly welcomed by his friends and Mr Nautiyal. His teacher encourages him to study hard and offers to help him by teaching the lesson after the regular hours. When he returns home, Mela Ram informs him the panther has left another district and therefore there is nothing to fear. Ruskin Bond is objective to create awareness in the public to save wild life. In order to insist the valid point, he has stressed the serenity of nature and in the words that follow:

There had been a thunderstorm and some rain a short, sharp shower which gave the villagers hope that the monsoon would arrive on time. It brought out the thunder-lilies pink, crocus-like flowers which sprang up on the hillsides immediately after a summer shower (42).

The rain has picked up instantly and Bisnu takes shelter in a small cave because he knows the rain will not stop at once and it will continue for some time. He stays there and he whiles his time, by doing some homework, and draws some figures on the wet earth with the help of a stick. Ruskin Bond magnificently showcases the beauty of nature so that we could know the importance of its activities and we should not feel perturbed at the progress of science and technological development. It is stated thus:

When the rain stopped, he came out from the cave and continued down the path. He wasn't in a hurry. The rain had made everything smell fresh and good. The scent from fallen pine-needles rose from the wet earth. The leaves of the oak trees had been washed clean, and a light breeze turned them about, showing their silver undersides. The birds, refreshed and high-spirited, set up a terrific noise. The worst offenders were the yellow-bottomed bulbuls, who squabbled and fought in the blackberry bushes. A barbet, high up in the branches of a deodar, set up its querulous, plaintive call. And a flock of bright green parrots came swooping down the hill, to settle in a wild plum tree and feast on the under-ripe fruit. The langoors, too, had been revived by the rain; they leapt friskily from tree to tree, greeting Bisnu with little grunts (42).

Bisnu virtually crosses the oak forest and he happens to hear the bleating sound of a little lamb. He also hears the snorting of a panther two hundred yards away and he wonders what to do next. He takes up the little goat and runs towards his home. It is not an ordinary panther but a man-eater and it will not scruple to kill Bisnu for its prey. Bisnu makes up his mind to climb the tree instead of running towards home and finally he chooses a spruce tree which is flexible and easy to break. He is a good climber. He climbs the tree with confidence and reaches half-way up the tree. He could see the sinuous physical beauty of the man-eater and he shivers on seeing the gorgeous appearance of the panther.

At the time, the little goat starts bleating; the panther sees them on the crooked branch and makes its thunderous sound but Bisnu firmly grabs the support of the tree and embrace the lamb in his arm. The panther disappears into the shrubs for some time and suddenly reappears on the ground. The man-eater is disappointed on seeing the boy on the top of the tree, starts scratching the bark of the tree and Bisnu shouts for help.

Meanwhile, Bisnu's mother and sister are anxiously waiting for his arrival but he has not yet returned. Kalam Singh enquires about Bisnu and Puja replies, "No, he hasn't arrived. We are very worried. He should have been home an hour ago. Do you think the panther will be about tonight? There's going to be a moon" (44). A group of menfolk gather together and go in search of Bisnu. Puja also accompanies them with the lantern. They could hear the high-pitched outcry of Bisnu in the air. Bisnu also hears the helping voice from his own people and strengthens himself by their fast approach; he starts throwing small branches at the frustrated animal. Knowing the inhuman attitude of the humans, the panther shows its hatred and vanishes into the bushes.

After a few days, Chittru who is in search of collecting ripe bilberries in the day time happens to see Mela Ram's mail-bag lying on the ground. There is no sign of the post man but he sees a track of blood through the bushes. The menfolk join to find out Mela Ram but they could see his bloodstained clothes but not his body.

After sometime it is heard an old woman's throat was seized by the man-eater and she could not live long; her lungs collapse and she died. In Sarru's village, a woman was vehemently attacked by the panther. The villagers go to the magistrate's office at Kemptee and beseech the officials to provide for their livelihood. Ruskin Bond quotes:

An old woman was sleeping with her head near the open door of her house. She had been advised to sleep inside with the door closed; but the nights were hot and anyway the old woman was a little deaf, and in the middle of the night, an hour before moonrise the panther seized her by the throat. Her strangled cry woke her grown up son, and all the men in the village woke up at this shouts and came running (47).

In the meantime, Bisnu worries that he could not go to attend his classes and Ruskin Bond records that, "when you are living in a remote village in the mountains, and having an education is the only way of seeing the world, you look forward to going to school, even if it five miles from home" (48). Puja cheers her brother that the panther will get rid of the place once the rain has broken. His mother also solaces him that, "Our prayers will be heard, and you shall go to school and pass your exams" (48).

On that night, the home is engulfed in darkness and someone woke him up. Bisnu's mother and sister are sleeping on the cot. He is not superstitious and he can hear someone scratching at the door. He meticulously observes the rubbing sound and it is the impact of the paw. He knows it is a man-eater that scratches the door with its heavy paw and in the middle of the night, Bisnu does not want to disturb his people in the village and he grasps a long bamboo stick with a sharp knife tied to one end and wants to strike the panther's body. He throws the homemade spear through the window and strongly hits the panther's head. With a terrific roar, the animal goes down from the doorsteps and vanishes into the darkness.

Ruskin Bond obviously explores the natural behaviour of a panther and it is not easy to understand its manners. Sometimes it proves it is the most cunning animal and on some occasions it behaves like a hare in a cowardly manner. Ruskin Bond states:

It is not often that a panther is taken by surprise, as his powers of sight and hearing are very acute. He is a master at the art of camouflage, and his spotted coat is admirably suited for the purpose. He does not need heavy jungle to hide in. A couple of bushes, and the light and shade from surrounding trees, are enough to make him almost invisible (50).

In the midnight encounter, Bisnu attacks the man-eater severely; it shows the careless attitude of the panther and we cannot come to a conclusion it is a foolish panther. It has its own strength and power of sight and fortunately Bisnu is strong and confident enough to assault the man-eater with his spear. In the villages, it is usual to have an encounter with the wild creatures because nowadays the forests are destroyed by the humans for the development of technology. But they do not mind about the impact on the livelihood of the villagers.

Bisnu and Puja are working in the field and in the afternoon, the sun glitters on the small stream. It is the time, man-eaters deliberately expose themselves. Bisnu is able to see the panther approach their field from the hill. He knows that the panther is close to his sister and ready to take her for its prey. He shouts harshly and with his presence of mind, he makes his sister fall into an irrigation ditch. The crouching panther misses its prey and Bisnu shouts for help across the field. Bisnu gets ready with his weapon and Sanjay's father arrives with his long spear. He throws the spear into the panther's neck and the man-eater disappears into the bushes and crosses the stream. The rocks are bloodstained and the water in the stream becomes blood stained and the men cautiously follow the panther and it lies on the embankment of the river.

Sanjay's father finds out that the panther which has taken many lives in the surrounding villages. In clear, Kalam Singh decides to hold a feast to celebrate their achievement and he warmly invites all the villagers to attend the party. He also decides to give the claws of the panther to Bisnu and he politely accepts three claws for his family. Kalam Singh kills his skinny goat and shares its meat with the villagers.

After some days, Bisnu sits for his exams and he becomes famous in his school because he is considered as a hero for his part in killing the man-eater. But Ruskin Bond believes it is not the fault of the panther to have become a man-eater. It is only because of the humans hunting the animals in the forest and it is suggested through the protagonist Bisnu thus: "We should be safe as long as a shikari doesn't wound another panther. There was an old bullet-wound in the man-eater's thigh. That's why it couldn't hunt in the forest. The deer were too fast for it" (54-55).

Ruskin Bond suggests humans should preserve the wild creatures and it is their duty to allow them freedom to lead their life in the forest. If they are disturbed through the destruction of nature, ultimately the wild animals are forced to turn into man-eaters and enter the dwellings of humans and both suffer a lot due to the danger posed on to the wild creatures. In Bond's stories, he focuses upon the extinction of tigers and leopards. He strongly believes that the wild animals are not as dangerous as man of the plain thinks of them. It is only when some bullet wounds them and they are unable to prey, they attack human beings and they become man-eaters.

Ruskin Bond, a great supporter of afforestation, he writes about the trees destroyed by the humans to construct multi-storied buildings, and to lay new roads etc. This issue is brought home in the story "The Leopard". The people in Mussoorie forget to realize that to conserve nature in their hands but they destroy it for their selfish purpose and live a sophisticated life. The story depicts the horror of hunting solely for monetary profit such an act smacks of the unfeeling attitude of humans towards animals in the forest. This anthropocentric attitude towards nature has been addressed in the story. Anthropocentrism is a belief that places humanity in the centre and it has authority of over the earth. It is an approach that legitimizes man's dominion over everything on this earth.

The story "The Leopard" brings into contrast the essential goodness in animal world against the cunningness in the world of man. The story represents the ruthless killing of a leopard in the forest only for its hide. The narrator is roaming around the forest alone without any protection. For the first time, he sees the leopard when he crosses a stream at the bottom of a hill. The leopard is twenty feet above the narrator and he sees a sinewy, orange-gold leopard on a rock.

It is a habitual duty of the narrator to see the stream every day because he has lived in cities for a long time and returns to the hills to renew his association with Nature. He suggests, "Once you have lived with mountains for any length of time, you belong to them, and must return again and again" (62). As a regular visitor of the forest, soon the birds and animals closely associate with him. They even recognise his footsteps and they think that he will never disturb them. The narrator develops a mutual understanding with the beasts. He likes the presence of the magnificent leopard crouching on the bank of the river and in return the beast too, seems to recognize his visit in a friendly way. They have met face to face a few times and parted away with mutual compassion.

From the very outset, he is accustomed to the forest. All the birds, animals, trees and the other natural elements accept him as a part of them and a friendly harmony started between them. The author expresses his real concern for the animal:

The leopard, like other members of the cat family, is nearing extinction in India, and I was surprised to find one so close to Mussoorie. Probably the deforestation that had been taking place in the surrounding hills had driven the deer into this green valley; and the leopard, naturally, had followed (63).

The primary purpose of the narrator for visiting the small stream is to relinquish his mental stress so that he could attain fine words to write tales. He admits that he is fortunate to find out such a green pasture, a

small pool and wild animals where no one is unable to visit the place. He believes:

“He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadth me beside the still waters.” Perhaps I, too, would write good words. The hill-station's summer visitors had not discovered this haven of wild and green things. I was beginning to feel that the place belonged to me, that this dominion was mine (63).

The narrator is greatly annoyed at the presence of merciless hunters eagerly waiting to kill the leopard for handsome money. Ruskin Bond expresses the desolate human behaviour and criticizes human ignorance of non-human resources. He quotes:

They said they knew there was a leopard in the forest. Leopard skins, they told me, were selling in Delhi at over 1,000 rupees each. Of course there was a ban on the export of skins, but they gave me to understand that there were ways and means...I thanked them for their information and walked on, feeling uneasy and disturbed (65).

Ruskin Bond has crafted the words in his writings with the sheer help of the difference between the children's thoughts and the adult's notion. Children love nature and they love birds and animals. This inbuilt quality naturally comes to them. There is no place for ulterior motive in their innocent minds. They can never ever think of harming the animals or exploiting them for their personal gain. It is juxtaposed that the adults are solely driven by mercenary considerations. If a leopard's skin can fetch them a good price, they would not think twice before killing him. Compassion, trust and love mean nothing to them. An idyllic world stands shattered because of this selfish cruelty.

The tale “The Leopard” claims to revise the injustice done to an innocent leopard because at the end, the sinless leopard is killed by the shikaris. The speaker feels sorry for this cruel act because even a wild life trusts man in its dwelling place, but ill-mannered humans protrude into the habitation of wild animals and seek to kill the leopard pitilessly. The story depicts the gorgeous figure of the leopard and after sometime it is the victim in the hands of hunters. Bond undoubtedly shows the pathetic death of a wild creature in the forest and it is revealed:

Next day, coming up the path from the stream, shouting and beating drums, were the hunters. They had a long bamboo pole across their shoulders; and slung from the pole, feet up, head down, was the lifeless body of the leopard, shot in the neck and in the head (67).

The tale is not only of cruel hunting but also of violation of trust; due to anthropocentric mode. It is not acceptable that Ruskin Bond is against development. He knows very well about the progress of life. He is not able to tolerate the thoughtless pursuit of materialism at the cost of environment. The illegal poachers for skin, the increase of worldwide demand for meat and biomedical research, the shortage of habitats and conservation are some of the key environmental issues taken up by Ruskin Bond; to criticize the lack of greenery proves widespread destruction on both human and non-human beings. The maltreatment meted out to the leopard, as mentioned by the narrator, not merely shakes the ethical value but also asks the entire academia for active consideration. Ruskin Bond's blunt opinion is that wild animals are not an object of entertainment or amusement. Every other species like him has a right to exist. They deserve equal right to lead a liberated and happy life like human beings. Bond has propounded the stance that nature is not to be taken unconscientiously; its degradation is dilapidation of humanity as there is interdependence and interconnectedness between man and of nature. The story depicts a serious concern for wildlife, and Bond's rebellious protest analyzes the notion of anthropocentrism directly.

There are quite a good number of stories which convey Ruskin Bond's knowledge and deep affection for animals it shows his concern about the annihilation of wild creatures due to the random slaughtering of the animals by human beings that adversely affects the ecological balance. In the collection of short stories *Panther's Moon and Other Stories*, Ruskin Bond acts as a true environmentalist and brings out the extinction of rare species such as tigers, panthers and leopards.

Ruskin Bond's honest opinion is that wild animals deserve the equal right to lead a free and happy

life like human beings. This paper laid emphasis on saving wild animals in this world. Ruskin Bond's perception about wildlife is that raptorial animals are part of the duality of nature; therefore, one must protect them and let them live on the earth.

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SYMBOLISM, IRONY AND HUMOUR IN GIRISH KARNAD'S PLAY *TUGHLAQ*

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**Abstract:**

*Girish Karnad is a modern Indian playwright who draws the contours of contemporary reality upon the mythological canvas. Drawing the plots of his plays from Indian history, myths and legends, he presents them in such a way that they assume contemporary significance. As a modern playwright the urgency of exploiting the incommensurable and inscrutable impels him to negotiate a novel dramatic form, characterization, organization of incidents and their dramatic representation. In order to constitute the desired form, he explores the devices of his own land and those of the west as well. However, he makes bold experiments with the folk and classical devices but the modern devices like use of symbolism, irony and humour remain an integral part of his dramatic technique. In this article we will focus only on Tughlaq. This play presents the story of a monarch who came to throne by murdering his father and brother and ruled over India for about twenty years. In the play he is depicted as a wise and foolish, kind and cruel, impulsive and farsighted emperor in one breath. His two major decisions-shifting of his capital from Delhi to Daultabad and change of currency- backfire and render him and his subjects homeless. In order to prove himself a just and kind emperor sometimes he behaves in an unjust way. He kills some of his associates including his step mother, thinking, they are traitors to him. At the end he is totally shattered as a ruler. The characters like Aziz, Aazim, the step mother and the Prayer Scene are the dramatic inventions of the playwright designed to match his purpose.*

**Keywords:** Symbolism, Irony, Humour, Characterization, Contemporary, Religion.

**Introduction:**

The first scene opening in front of the Chief Court of Justice in Delhi and showing a crowd of Muslims and Hindus, becomes the microcosm of the contemporary Indian society comprising mainly these two communities. The opening sentence of the play, "God, what's this country coming to?" brings out the present scenario of India when almost every Indian who believes in its rich cultural heritage carries this question in his mind. The feeling of brotherhood and unity that stood its ground in the face of the foreign ruler began to vanish under the regime of their own. The drift of the present from its cultural past is a matter of concern for everyone. Hence, the question 'What this country is coming to?' gathers immense significance. The Old Man's lament, "I don't know. I have been alive a long time, seen many sultans, but I never thought I would live to see a thing like this" (147), becomes relevant in the present context.

For his hypocritical attitude towards religion and religious practices Muhammad Tughlaq stands for the contemporary ruler of India. Like an Indian ruler he uses religion for his political motive. In the first scene of the play the Young Man defends Tughlaq for his being a staunch believer in Islam as he has made prayer a must for every Muslim. Tughlaq tries to look like a true Muslim by making five times prayer a must for everyone.

The fact, on the contrary, is that he has killed his own father during prayer and announced that it was an accident. Moreover, he has put all the Sayyads and the Ulema behind the bars. But to his subjects he says, "I have never denied the word of God. Because, it is my bread and my drink" (164). But when his murder was attempted, he bans prayer (only to revoke the ban afterwards) which shows he is very

opportunist. His innovative plans to introduce new currency and shifting his capital from Delhi to Daultabad have close parallelism with the schemes launched in India after independence. Tughlaq's idealism and the resultant disillusionment is identical with the mood of disillusionment which followed Nehru's era of idealism.

The atmosphere of violence, bloodshed, treachery and corruption spread throughout the action of the play is suggestive of the contemporary Indian socio-political scene. The people of independent India confronted two major problems: poverty and violence caused by the wrong political policies. If Tughlaq's subjects run from Delhi to Daultabad with new hopes, the Indians too had high hopes when they shifted from the British Rule to the self-rule.

Game of Chess which Girish Karnad first used in his play *Yayati* is a recurrent symbol in the play. In both *Yayati* and *Tughlaq* the game of chess stands for existential feeling of alienation and complexity of human relationships. Symbolizing the inner alienation of Tughlaq, the game of chess in *Tughlaq* also stands for the complexity of the character of the emperor. For him life is like a chess board where man's only aim is to win. In Scene II Tughlaq tells Barani that he has invited Shihabudin- the Prince of Shampanshahar. When Barani questions it, 'Forgive me. I let you down Barani, but I must play this game my own way' (160). Caught in his deft move, Imam- u-din too pleads, "Don't play any more games with me" (166). Barani, who is a historian, is interested only in playing chess "with the shadows of the dead", and, Najib is a politician who wants "pawns of blood and flesh" (156) Similarly when Aziz shouts at his counterpart not to call him by his name, the helpless Aazam retorts "I am fed up of these games". A critic rightly observes, "Chess symbolizes Tughlaq's game approach to life wherein he regards the other people as pawns to be manipulated for his own advantage" As it demands isolation and aloofness from others the game of chess can also be equated with the rose garden in *Tughlaq*. Both are Tughlaq's love and can be viewed as his desperate effort to get rid of his inner alienation.

### **Symbolism:**

Forests, jungles and gardens serve as a symbol of self-searching after disenchantment with life. In Karnad's *Yayati* the king leaves for the forest after getting disappointed. The forest life of renunciation and search is suggested to him by his maid turned queen when none of the subjects of the King Yayati comes forward to make a sacrifice for him. Similarly, apart from serving as a symbol of dreams of Tughlaq, rose garden also serves as a symbol of search and introspection. After his plans to make his state a welfare state have dashed to the ground, Tughlaq is seen roaming at night in the rose garden as a dejected man. The rose garden which ends up as a "rubbish dump" is suggestive of the burial of Tughlaq's dreams. He is found strolling alone at night in his garden. There is a heap of currency coins symbolizing Tughlaq's grave (a raised place) which he sees with his own eyes.

The rose-garden which becomes a rubbish dump is a perfect objective correlative of Tughlaq's idealistic aspirations meeting with defeat. It becomes an image of the absurd, the unbridgeable gulf between man's expectations of orderliness and the chaos and irrationality which confronts him in the universe. There are empty court yards, locked houses and deserted temples and palaces working as symbols in Karnad's plays. Rani, the central character in the play *Nagamandala* is locked in a house where nobody lives. The temple in *Hayavadana* and the house in *Nagamandala*, both wear a deserted look symbolizing the vacuum in the life of the major characters- Padmini and Rani respectively. In *Tughlaq* there is a fort in Daulatabad which if seen at night, becomes the symbol of a puzzle the emperor is embroiled in, after leaving Delhi.

The fort, like the self of Muhammad and his rule, has strange and frightening passages within it. The guard rightly says "if it ever falls it will crumble from inside" (192) and that indicates crumbling of the emperor from inside. The description of the fort by the guard turns it into a fantastic image of the rule of the Tughlaq. The guard says that the road coming to the fort appears like a "thin snake" when the fort is like a "rising anthill". The old guard agrees, "Yes, it is a long passage, a

big passage coiled like an enormous hollow python inside the belly of the fort. And they shall be far happier when that python breaks out and swallows everything in sight every man, woman, child and beast”(193).

Animals, birds and insects also figure in almost every play of Karnad. Characters are compared with birds and animals. Tughlaq's step mother calls him a pompous ass and says that he doesn't wish her fate even on a dog. Even the road to Daultabad looks to him as a “snake” and the old man calls it the “eagle's nest”(192). If the passage in the fort is like a python and the palace is full of flies, the people around him appear to Tughlaq as vultures. After issuing order for the death of his mother, he feels himself as a pig rolling in the gory mud.

### **Irony:**

As regards the use of irony in *Tughlaq* it begins to appear from the very beginning of the play. In the opening scene Tughlaq's proclamation, “My beloved people, you . . . have seen for yourself how justice works in my kingdom without any consideration of religion and creed” ( 3). The situation turns ironic when we learn that the winner against the king is not Vishnu Prasad but is Aziz disguised as Vishnu. This situation turns comic when Aziz mimicking a public announcer says, “Henceforth the people may file a suit against the Sultan for the misbehavior of his officers. . . .Justice will be done”(152).

His comments arouse laughter when he justifies his disguise before Aazim. A Muslim plaintiff before a Muslim king. Where is the question of justice? Where is the equality between Hindus and Muslims?, he enquires ? (153). Thus the disguise of Aziz ironically puts the whole administrative system of Tughlaq upside down. His tall claims of justice and equality sound comic to the audience.

The play presents the best example of irony through comparison and contrast. On one hand is Tughlaq who is a king and is the main character of the play and, on the other, is Aziz- a washer man- who is a minor character but assumes importance when juxtaposed with the character of the emperor. If Muhammad is an idealist who wants to shift his capital and change his currency for the welfare of his subjects, Aziz is a realist and is a practical man to the core. If the court's judgment in favour of the disguised Aziz makes a mockery of Muhammad's slogans of secularism and justice, the underground life of Aziz and his associate Aazam mounts a parody of Muhammad's ideals about the welfare state. The appearance of Aziz and Aazam in the camp on Delhi -Daultabad road and their daily routine of cheating others pooh-poohs Muhammad's claims of an ideal king of an ideal state.

If Muhammad is very manipulative, witty, imaginative, secretive and ruthless, Aziz provides his ironic parallel .Like him, from the very beginning Aziz is clear about what he is to do in future (when he reaches his destination). In pursuit of realizing his dream to be rich by hook or crook, he manipulates the decision of the government giving compensation to those whose land has been confiscated by the state. He is a Muslim but in order to get the compensation he disguises himself as a Brahmin. Thus he punctures the balloon of the king's welfare policies .If Tughlaq is confident that everything will be settled after he reaches Daultabad , Aziz is also confident of his plans. He tells Aazam, “There is money here . We will make a pile by the time we reach Daultabad”(155).If Tughlaq has disguised his true self and poses to be a very religious and benevolent king, Aziz is disguised as a Brahmin( though he is a Muslim washer man). Ironically, he appears as a Brahmin and ends up as a special messenger to the king. He becomes an instrument in exposing the cruelty and corruption prevalent in Tughlaq's regime when he refuses to help a woman with a dying son in her lap and pleading for help for his medical aid. Aziz expects money from her knowing well that her husband is bed-ridden and she is helpless. Asked by Aziz why he doesn't let her go to the doctor, very stoically he says, “ It is a waste of money. I am doing her a favour” (188). For Muhammad and Aziz politics holds a common interest. Aziz's comments about politics are ironically true:

...Politics ! It is a beautiful world- wealth, success, position, power-yet it is full of brainless people, people not with an idea in their head. When I think of all the tricks in our village to pinch a few torn clothes from people if one uses half that intelligence here, one can bet robes of power. It is a

fantastic world. (190)

Like Muhammad he also makes use of religion and caste for his personal gains. He knows that even if the Hindu woman is not allowed to leave the camp, she can't complain against him as she takes him for a Brahmin. Complaining against a Brahmin to a Muslim, according to a Brahminical dogma, will send her to hell which she never desires. Furthermore, he is cruel like Muhammad in taking life of someone. He kills Ghiyas-ud-din and starts dancing after that which shows that he has no regrets of any sort after killing someone. His singing and dancing over a dead body reminds us of the neurotic self of the emperor. After killing Ghiyas-ud-din and putting on his robes he asks the horrified Aazam, "How do I look, eh? The great grandson of the Khalif. Laugh, the fool you laugh. Celebrate! What are you crying for? . . . Dance, dance. (sings)"(201).

When he is to present himself before the king, he aptly defines himself, "I am your majesty's true disciple" (216). Indeed, Aziz appears as his 'shadow' or the 'other Muhammad'. It is perhaps because of this parallelism between them that Muhammad pardons him even for his grave misdeeds. Similarly, Aazam who is a simpleton in his behaviour represents the coward and the foolish in Muhammad. Despite taking adventurous and bold decisions Muhammad appears as a scared man. We see him bowing before his subordinates and beseeching them to pray for his success. Aazam resembles Muhammad in his frank confessions. He admits that he is a common pickpocket and is not of sharp intellect. He, like Muhammad, looks like a helpless person. Being a coward at heart many a times he disapproves of Aziz's behaviour but doesn't leave his company. Finally when Aziz kills Ghiyas-ud-din he literally starts crying and laments, "God, God why did I stop him? Why didn't I not let him go?(201), and "I will die of freight here" (212). Aazam's silly act of bribing the two servants of the palace to bring two horses so that he and Aziz could run away, angers Aziz.

#### **Humour:**

The Prayer Scene in which the attempt is made to murder Muhammad also provides the irony of situation. It is Muhammad who has made prayer mandatory for every Muslim. But the same prayer proves a threat to his life. Moreover, it becomes a reminiscent of Mohammad's action of killing his father during prayer. Similarly, the encounter between Mohammad and Aziz, when the latter is disguised as Ghiyas-ud-din illustrates the irony of situation and comedy through contrast. With his presence of mind and witty dialogues, Aziz appears to eclipse Muhammad's intelligence. When Aziz realizes that he can deceive Tughlaq no more, he reveals his identity at once. When Tughlaq questions him who he is, Aziz retorts, "I am a Dhobi from Shiknar. My first name was Aziz. There have been so many since then"(215). At Muhammad's warning that he should not overreach himself, he says, "I don't. But since your majesty came to throne, I have been your most devout servant. I have studied every order, followed every instruction, considered every measure of your majesty with great attention . . ." (216). Keeping in view his past Aziz's views are highly ironic and comic too. Tughlaq's every ideal including his plan to introduce new currency stands ridiculed right under his nose. Finally when Muhammad abuses him calling him a "dhobi" (washer man) very smartly she reacts, "What if I am a dhobi, Your Majesty? When it comes to washing our filth no saint is a match for Dhobi"(218). Ironically, the king is so much impressed by a washer man that he has to confess that "This man is a genius"(218). Irony is that nothing fascinates the emperor so much as does a criminal washer man. U.R Anantha Murthy puts it thus:

He is aware of the irony of his life when Aziz, the only character in the play who has skillfully used all the schemes of Tughlaq for his own designs, kills Ghiyas-ud din and comes in his guise as a holy messenger of peace to purify land and revive the banned prayer. The irony is deeply tragic. In the end Tughlaq and his kingdom are one in their chaos, and he knows it. (Karnad, Tugh. IX)

From its inception humour is inextricably associated with theatre. Even the early theatre in the

form of primitive tribal ritual and magico-religious ceremonies had elements of humour. Recreation and magic were also aspects linked with humour to the early manifestation of ritualistic drama. In this regard Karnad's plays are no exception. In *Tughlaq* the conversation between Aziz and the man who acts as the guard for the dead bodies in Muhammad's palace has a woman and six kids with him. When Aziz asks him what he is going to do till the Sultan arrives in Daultabad, the man's innocent and humorous reply is that first of all they would get married because they could not get time for marriage in Delhi.

At the next moment, he laments why he is a thief and can't live in peace like others- the comedy takes a tragic turn reflecting the fate of a common man who is sometimes forced by circumstances to be a criminal. The verbal irony becomes a source of comedy in *Tughlaq* when Aziz asks Aazam if he has heard the royal performance the other day. Aziz answers back, "Which one? There are so many" (152). About Shihabudin's compliment to Muhammad that he is just and impartial, Rattan Singh says, "Yes indeed, who can deny that? He is impartial . . .Of

course Hindus as well as Muslims are dying with absolute impartiality" (172) .Sometimes the sarcastic comments of the characters about the policies of Muhammad become comic too. About heavy taxes levied on the people, a character says, "Look at what is happening in Delhi. Just look at it. You cannot take sleep without tax for it . . . You can't even cheat without having to pay" (174).

Though the play is based on an historical event, Karnad's adept use of symbolism, irony and humour makes it a modern play. It is because of these modern devices that the situations and the minor characters in the play dramatize the contemporary socio-political scenario in India. It is solely because of these dramatic techniques adopted by the playwright Tejwant S Gill observes, "No wonder, the life, rule and time of this charismatic and erratic emperor have past significance, the present meaning . . .is getting more and more pronounced with the passage of time"(57).

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## EFFECTIVENESS OF MULTIMEDIA TOOLS ON SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS AT COLLEGE LEVEL

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### Introduction

Language education using multimedia tools is viewed as the positive exploitation of technology. Second language learners have a positive attitude towards the internet. Multimedia-based language education is considered modern when compared to books. Multimedia and internet are useful when the teachers/trainers are in distant places, and their travel time and cost are saved.

As the materials are standardized, all the learners get uniform quality education. Multimedia resources can be used anywhere, anytime (Dean 1992). So the students can learn during their convenient time. According to the difficulty levels, the students can adjust their learning pace too. They can use them just with the help of a computer and internet connection. They consume no paper and are environment-friendly. As the multimedia lessons are interactive, they motivate the students and bring out better learning outcomes.

Though most of the people have started using the multimedia resources, there are a few who remain unexposed to Gif, Java. and Flash animations which are available as free clip arts on the internet.

### Language Games

Boredom and anxiety are the chief enemies of learning. Enjoyment and relaxation allow the students to have more learning and acquisition (Lee 1979). Students like to play games in the computer. The teachers can use computer games to teach English grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, etc. Students enjoy playing them and learn the language unconsciously. Games initiate and encourage language education. Internet provides a lot of games for free.

### Multimedia and Kids

Kids see and imitate; hear and repeat. They learn language best when it is fun. As we all know, the most difficult job of a parent is to make a kid eat. Nowadays, parents use their children's favourite TV programmes or CD songs to make them eat. Doing this, knowingly or unknowingly, they are promoting their kids' language learning. To be specific, parents who show selected educational programmes and play CDs with abc songs, animated rhymes, and interactive stories help their kids learn language as a fun.

Kids are introduced to multimedia even before their birth. Mothers watch TV, hear songs, and use computer/Internet, and the influence is evident in their kids. After birth, kids are left before the televisions or computers, and they hear/see the programmes. Many parents show cartoons, animated rhymes, interactive stories in CDs/DVDs, and the kids begin to imitate the cartoon characters and try to recite the rhymes. There are websites like starfall.com with abc games and picture activities. Some kids use the computer and Internet to draw pictures, watch animations, and play games.

Many researchers do not recommend computers for kids under age three (Hohman 1998). Children of three and four years of age are developmentally ready to explore computers, and language teachers see the multimedia as a valuable tool for language learning. With the help of the multimedia tools, kids develop their language skills, motor skills, etc. They develop interest, involvement, and concentration in learning. Multimedia materials develop long-term memory and creativity in kids.

Research has shown that three and four year-old children who use computers and multimedia tools show greater improvement in intelligence, nonverbal skills, structural knowledge, long-term memory, manual dexterity, verbal skills, problem solving, abstraction, and conceptual skills when compared to the students who do not use multimedia materials in the house or classroom (Hoagland 1992). However, kids who use computers very early begin to wear glasses for short-sight or long-sight. They develop less interest for physical or outdoor activities. They get chronic head, neck, and hand pain even in the young age.

### **Multimedia And School Children**

Most school children in India are not exposed to the multimedia tools. Only a few have computers at home. Even the few who are aware of the technology use them only for playing games. There are video games like Contra and online game like Age of Empires which are widely used by school children. (Rajesh 2009)

The school children in Western countries are well-exposed to the internet. They attend virtual classrooms to develop their speaking and writing skills. There are hundreds of companies working on multimedia content for school children. Even in India, there are cassettes and CDs/DVDs available in the market.

Many websites provide puzzles, exercises, games, etc. which concentrate on language development. Certain websites allow school children to write and illustrate their own stories. But most of the parents and students are unaware of them. There are also parents who think children are learning a lot at schools and there is no need for additional tools like internet for them. They are afraid that Internet may corrupt their children.

Multimedia materials are a great way for school children to practice the skills they have learned in schools (Scott 1992). So the parents or teachers should identify good Internet materials for their children to develop their language skills and motor skills. The children should be taught how to use a computer for basic applications like creating/saving/deleting files, folders, etc. They can be encouraged to post their creative works on blogs or forums. At the same time, as there are potential threats for the Internet using children, parents or teachers should take the responsibility and monitor the children's use of computers and Internet.

### **Multimedia And College Students**

Art and science colleges do not have multimedia facilities. Engineering colleges have language labs which use audio streaming, CDs/DVDs, multimedia presentations, etc. Students make use of them to develop their language skills. Teachers or trainers use PowerPoint presentations to teach complex concepts and long texts in bulleted points so as to make the teaching and learning easier. Students also use PowerPoint presentations during seminars.

Business schools with branches throughout the country world use web conferencing to show useful lectures to all these materials because of the high cost. Non-availability of projectors, Audio /CD/DVD players, computers, internet, etc. restrict the use of multimedia materials in schools and colleges. Some teachers and students are reluctant to use them. As there is no definite standard for writing or designing the content, some online materials are incorrect or pedagogically unsound misleading the teachers and students.

Audio streaming, songs, videos, PowerPoint presentations, simulations, animations, games, etc. which promote language education are available in the internet. English is a universal language, and it is learnt for many reasons (Harner 1991). The effects of multimedia tools on English language learners vary from person to person. Factors like availability, computer literacy, learning styles, etc. influence the effects.

### **Audio Streaming**

Audio Streaming is a multimedia tool used in language education. Within the context of the

language lab, the instructor would present the correct model of a sentence. The students would have to repeat it. The teacher would then continue by presenting new words for the students by providing sample in the same structure. Audio lessons along with sub-texts are available in the Internet. Students use them and get a lot of exposure to develop their English.

### **Songs**

Students find it easier to remember words if they are set to music (Li & Brand 2009). It is because songs are emotionally engaging; the lyrics are structured in a way that makes it easier to segment the information and store them in memory. Classical background music, traditional songs, pop songs, etc. can be downloaded from the internet. This helps in motivating the students and developing their language skills.

### **Videos**

Students enjoy language learning with video. Video creates an attractive and enjoyable learning environment. It is an effective Way of studying body language. It helps the students to learn about the world around them. By watching a video several times, students can learn language by absorption and imitation (Murphy 1992). Video Communicates meaning better than other media. Visual clues help in better understanding. A variety of videos can be downloaded from the Internet for language development.

### **PowerPoint Presentations**

PowerPoint is a type of presentation software which allows one to show colored text and images with simple animation and sound. PowerPoint Presentations are easy to obtain, modify, or create. They are versatile and a great asset to any classroom. Good Presentations may take time to produce or adapt, but they can be shared and used year after year. They can be used for whole class Presentations, reviews, drills, etc. PowerPoint presentations are available online. Teachers and students can download them freely from the internet and use them effectively in language classrooms. (Rajesh 2009)

### **Simulations and Animation**

Animation is popular among children. It combines the physical and virtual worlds. It strengthens the creative mind. It can be included in a regular teaching situation because it does not take up a lot of space. Verbal and visual information are interrelated; One gives cues to the other. Simulations can be used to explain, elaborate, and illustrate objects, processes, concepts, etc. Lots of students across the branches. Virtual classrooms enable students to communicate with trainers or teachers on the other end of the country. Blogs and forums help the students share their thoughts and ideas. (Rajesh 2009)

Most engineering college students use audio streaming. However, the effect of multimedia is not uniform on all the students. Above average students use it with ease, but below-average students find it uninteresting or difficult to use. This is because of the accent, vocabulary, and speed of the speaker. PPT and multimedia presentations make the learning process easier than ever. Web conferencing and virtual classroom enable teacher-student interaction across the borders more affordable and convenient. Availability and usability play important roles here.

### **Multimedia and Professionals**

Companies conduct training programmes for fresh candidates and existing employees. To ensure quality and consistency, they use PPT (PowerPoint), CBT (Computer Based Training), and WBT (Web-Based Training) materials. Online materials are preferred as they can be used any time, and the professionals can refer the materials, study or work out, and complete the assessments during their free time inside the company. They use interactive methods like bulletin boards, chat rooms, instant messaging, videoconferencing, and discussion threads. They utilize online testing and evaluation also.

### **Conclusion**

Kids see/hear imitate and learn fast using the multimedia resources. School Children who are exposed to selected educational programmes or games develop good language skills. College students use audio streaming for pronunciation practice, PPTs during presentations, and videoconferencing / web-

conferencing for instructor-student interactions. They use illustrations, animations simulations, and games for interactive learning. Multimedia helps a lot in language education and shows varied effects on kids, school children, college students, and professionals.

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## STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF SELECT WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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### **Abstract**

*William Shakespeare (1564-1616) is one of the greatest men of genius who have ever been born in the world. The bulk and richness of his plays are wonderful source of delight and knowledge. His works have been read and studied with great interest even after four, hundred years. There are (37) dramas, two long poems and 154 sonnets to his credit. This makes him the emperor of the realm of literature. In his writing style Shakespeare moved between verse and prose to give his characters more depth and vary the overall rhythmic structure of his plays. His treatment of prose is as skillful as his verse. His style was borrowed from the conventions of the day and adopted to his needs. Shakespeare, first plays were written in the conventional style of the day. He wrote them in a stylized language that does not always spring naturally to the needs of characters or the drama. The poetry depends on extended, metaphors and conceits and the language is often rhetorical written for actors to declaim rather than speak. Soon, Shakespeare began to adopt the traditional style to his own purpose. The opening soliloquy of Richard III has roots in the self-declaration of vice in medieval drama. No single play marks a change from the traditional to the freer style. Shakespeare standard poetic form was blank verse, composed in Iambic pentameter with clever, use of puns and imagery. This means that his verse was usually unrhymed and consisted of ten syllables to a line, spoken with a stress on every second syllable. After Hamlet, Shakespeare varied his poetic style further, particularly in the more emotional passages of the late tragedies. Thus, Shakespeare's style is grand, compact, noble and sublime.*

### **King Lear:**

King Lear, like Shakespeare's other plays, is written in a combination of verse and prose how we talk every day.

### **Verse:**

Reading King *Lear* often feels like reading a very lengthy poem and that's because Shakespeare's characters often speak in verse.

Also it is incredibly beautiful and difficult.

But we digress!

What kind of verse do they speak? Well, the nobles typically speak in unrhymed "Iambic pentameter" (also called blank verse).

What is Iambic pentameter?

A "lamb" is an unaccented syllable followed by an accented one. "Penta" mean "five" and "meter" refer to regular rhythmic pattern. So, iambic pentameter is kind of rhythmic pattern that consist of five lambs per line. It is the most common rhythm in English Poetry and sounds like five heartbeats.

ba-Dum,ba dum, ba-Dum,ba-Dum , ba-Dum

since NOW/we WILL/divest/us BOTH/ofRULE (1.1.54)Shakespeare king Lear .

Every second syllable is accented so this is classic iambic pentameter when the lines have no rhyme scheme ,we call it "unrhymed" iambic pentameter, which is also known as "blank verse".

### **Blank Verse :**

as we're said, is typically reserved for the nobility and other important characters since it is kind of formal way to speak. In the first half of the play, king Lear speaks almost entirely in blank verse, which is

befitting of his social station AS Mr. king.

### Quotes of Shakespeare's blank verse:

('Not men, or gods, or even booksellers/ put up with mediocre verse; I'm sorry! Couldn't find an opposite English Tag that starts in the middle of line.)

### Quotes, of Shakespeare rhymed verse. Sonnet 18 is in this form.

Shall, I compare thee too a summer's day?

Thou art lovelier and more temperate.

Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,

And summer's lease hath all too a data.

Sometimes too hot the eye of heavens shine's.

And often is his gold complexion dimmed.

### Prose:

Not everyone in the play king Lear speaker in blank verse, which we have established is an elegant, high class way of talking. In Shakespeare play's characters lower on the social skill don't talk in special poetic rhythm; they just talk.

In king Lear , it's worth nothing that prose speech is often a sign of madness. When Lear goes insane, he often rants in prose and then switches back to eloquent blank verse, which alerts the audience to the fact that Lear is losing his mind.

Rumble thy bellyful! spit , fire! Spout, ram !

No rain, wind, thunder, fire are my daughters.

I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness.

I never gave you kingdom, called you

Children;

### Puns

#### Quote of Shakespeare use of puns

Shakespeare loved puns and used them as a powerful method of making meaning. A pun is usually we find as a play onwards, or play upon words , it would be more accurate to describe punning as playing with the sound of words to achieve particular effects.

Shakespeare's plays and his sonnets are crammed with puns. Example the opening line of Richard III (Now is the winter of out discontent made glorious summer by the sin of york; where the speaker , Richard , is referring to himself , a son of the house of york.

By using that pun Shakespeare transforms the season of winter and summer into the idea of bleak and good times.

### Metaphor:

#### Quotes of Shakespeare metaphor

A metaphor is a figure of speech in which a term or phrase is applied to something to which it is not literally applicable in order to suggest resemblance

- Examples of Shakespeare sonnet 18. 4 and 5 sometimes to hot the eye of heavens shines and often is his gold complexion dimmed.
- How shaper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child. Shakespeare “king Lear act one scene four“

### Conceit:

It is a figure of speech in which two vastly different objects are linked together with the help of similes or metaphor.

Shakespeare makes use of conceit in act , 3 , scene 5 of his play “Romeo and Juliet” Capulet come to Juliet's room after Romeo has left. He finds her weeping and says “Thon counterfeit's bark , a sea, a wind

; for still thy eyes , which I may call the sea, do ebb and flow with tears ; the bark thy body is sailing in this salt flood; the winds , thy sigh ; who , raging with thy tears , and they with them , without a sudden calm ,will oversee Thy tempest tossed body”.

Hamlet is doing double speak the whole the conversation with Polonius act 2 , scene 3, alternately trying to make polios think that he is mad , Hamlet; excellent well. You are Fishmonger.

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## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN DEVELOPING READING SKILLS OF ESL LEARNERS AT TERTIARY LEVEL: A STUDY

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### Introduction

English is not the most widely spoken language in the world in terms of the number of native speakers. There are many more Chinese speakers than native English speakers but Chinese is spoken little outside of Chinese communities. However English is the most widespread language in the world. It is difficult to estimate exactly how many English speakers there are, but according to one estimate there are more than 350,000,000 native English speakers and more than 400,000,000 speakers of English as a second language or foreign language. The importance of English is not just in how many people speak it but in what it is used for. English is the major language of business and government even in some countries where it is a minority language. It is the language plays in every man's life directly or indirectly and it becomes men's inevitable language besides having every ones mother tongue. This paper aims to improve the reading skills of the English learners at college level through the use of technological aids, especially computer.

### Skill of Reading

Reading is mainly a receptive skill and a decoding process.

Encoder (Writer) ----- Message ----- Decoder (Reader)

The encoder encodes the message and the decoder decodes it and understands it. Reading activity involves perception, recall, reasoning, evaluating, imagining, organizing, application and problem solving. The goal of all reading is the comprehension of meaning. Effective reading includes not only a literal comprehension of an author's word, but also an interpretation of his mood, tone, feeling and attitude (Dechant and Smith, 1977, P. 237).

Gray (1967) opines that when people read something, they understand it at three levels. First, the purely literal responding to the graphic signals only with a little depth of understanding, the second level at which the reader recognizes the author's meaning, and the third level where the reader's own personal experiences and judgments influence his response to the text. These three levels can be summarized as "Reading the lines, Reading between the lines and Reading beyond the lines."

Reading aloud is closer to pronunciation than to comprehension. The reader shares information that the members of the audience want. The "real-life" purpose of reading aloud to others is to convey information to them, to entertain them, or to share a good story that they do not have (Zintz and Maggaut, 1989, P. 425). Silent reading is considered to be a "see and comprehend process" rather than a "see, say and comprehend" process. Buswell (1947) noted that silent reading should be a process of association between perceptual stimulation and meaning "without a mediating sub vocalization." Silent reading focuses on comprehension based on background information, some visual data, and predicting and confirming strategies.

Skimming and Scanning are two important and useful advanced reading skills. Skimming is a reading skill which demands top most speeds. It is a method of quickly gathering information from the

printed page (G. C. Ahuja and Pramila Ahuja, 1987, P. 69). Learning to skim is a valuable academic exercise. In scanning, the reader runs his eyes down the page with the purpose of finding an answer to a specific question. (Dechant and Smith, 1977, P. 284). In skimming the reader does not try to find out the answer to any question. Skimming is a rapid reading technique and scanning is a technique to find the facts in a very fast manner.

### **Aims of Teaching Reading**

Reading is a decoding process. It is very complex and involves many physical, intellectual and emotional aspects. Reading in English should be started only when the child has been given a thorough practice in listening and speaking skills. The child should have a command over the oral practice of the text that he is to get for reading. Reading skill consists of three important components.

1. Recognition of the graphic marks
2. The correlation of these with formal linguistic elements and
3. The correlation of these with meaning.

The script in English presents several obstructions in reading. The child should be equipped with the necessary skills of identifying different kinds of scripts available in the language. A perfect reading indicates one's knowledge of the language. It is a source of recreation. The following are the aims of the teaching reading

- To enable the pupils recognize words
- To enable the students read with correct pronunciation
- To enable the students read with understanding
- To enable the students infer the mood of the writer
- To encourage the students to have habit of reading

During reading, the meaning of a text is achieved and manipulated by the reader according to his/her purpose of and preparation for the reading. A reader's knowledge, experience and schemata play a vital role in manipulating the meaning of a text because these things are influential. Efficiency of a reader largely depends on pre-requisite knowledge and sufficient experience about facts and happenings in real life. Moreover, proper schemata are also important to reach the appropriate meaning of the text.

According to Williams, the elements a reader should bring with him/her are-

1. Knowledge of the writing system
2. Knowledge of the language
3. Ability to interpret
4. Appropriate knowledge of the world as assumed by the writer
5. A reason for reading that determines his style

### **Use of technology in developing reading skills**

The history of language teaching presents a fascinating variety of methods. There should be an awareness of various approaches, but finally the teacher need to use their discretion in deciding on what method to use and when. Any method that works is good. The objectives of teaching English as Second language must be achieved. All the choices which are made must ensure that the learners achieve second language competence. Approaches are concerned with the theory of the nature of language and language learning. The use of computer is widespread method in language teaching throughout the world.

Even many researchers began to work on it, viewing computer's use Riel and Harasim rightly says 'other researches, particularly those arguing for example that 'the whole educational context that is created online .... needs to be the focus of analysis' in research on gating contexts of computer use emphasizes the significance of the process through which linguistic interactions help to construct the qualitative research methods. In short, some evaluation perspectives that are relevant to CALL have originated in the field of educational technology'. Make use of the computer in education which helps the learners to learn anything accurately, clearly and in stipulated time, besides it provides many platforms for the learners in different

ways. Since it is a world of science and technology the CALL is suitable for language learners in the present scenario. Comparing with the traditional way of learning and teaching the CALL will be far better than that.

### **Conclusion**

Communication is an essential tool to convey information. Reading skill is one of the communication skills in English. When students possess good reading skill, they can easily acquire the information through reading. Traditional method of teaching may not develop reading skill effectively among college students. Hence there is a need for introducing new approaches, Task-based opportunities to all students to develop reading skills in English. In this paper, the investigator made an attempt to find out whether the CALL is effective in developing reading skill in English among college students.

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## MOHARE HANUMANTHARAYA'S CONTRIBUTION TO HYDERABAD-KARNATAKA'S LIBERATION

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Mohare Hanumantharaya is great name in the history of Indian journalism. He edited a weekly Karnataka Vaibhava (1921-1933) and was editor of Samyukta Karnataka kannada daily during India's freedom struggle (1933-1958).

Mohare Hanumantharaya knew the importance of a daily for India's freedom struggle. After independence princely states like Hyderabad preferred to remain independent. The Nizam's soldier's Rajakars assaulted the Hindus. Nizams's 53 rules known as 'Kalagapti' gripped the people. Mohare paper published news about the Nizam's atrocities: the latter prohibited the circulation of the paper in his province from 7<sup>th</sup> may 1940. Then Samyukta Karnataka was one of the few newspapers to be read in the Nizam's province.

The Princely State of Hyderabad was the largest of 600 such states in 1947. If a Hindu king ruled a Muslim majority princely state of Kashmir, a Muslim king ruled a Hindu majority princely state of Hyderabad. The British ruled the Nizam, the Nizam ruled the Jahagirdars and the latter ruled the people. The Hyderabad state suppressed the Hindus. If a Hindu wanted to celebrate a festival or conduct a procession of marriage he had to seek the Nizam's permission.

None protested against the Nizam until the seventh Navab Mir Usman Alikhan Bahaddur came to power in 1911. This nizam still implemented many welfare programmes upto 1929. Of course, his alliance with the English affected the Indians' feelings. Worse than that, the Nizam became fanatic. His 500 people called Dinadars converted the people to Islam. Its leader Hazar Malana Siddiki assumed the name of Chennabasava as if his avatar and proclaimed himself as Hazarat Maulana Siddiki Dinadar Chennabasaveshwar Khilla Band; and his four disciples called themselves as Vyasa, Krishna, Narasimh and Virabhadra's avatars; and they called the Nizam as Dharmaraja's avatar. (139, SK, 17<sup>th</sup> Sept 1998, page-1). When the State Reforms Committee in 1931 tried its session the Nizam banned it. The rebellion of the same that took place in Gulbarga in 1922 shocked the Hindus. Mahatma Gandhi said, 'Gulbarga has gone mad'. Nizam's 1929's Kalagapti, a string of 53 rules affected the people's complete freedom.

Hyderabad State Congress came to power in 1937. Govindrarao's Committee had five members. Nizam Karnataka Parishat came to power in 1934 in B. Kishanrao's house when Kannada Sahitya conference took place in 1934 in Raichur and then it was presided over by Panje. Caravan Krishnarao was its president. Its first session took place in Raichur in 1937 and Kishanrao himself was its president. The Nizam banned the Congress in Hyderabad believing that it was anti-British. Later Swami Ramanand Teerth led it until Hyderabad liberation.

The provincial governments came to power everywhere except in Hyderabad in 1937. This affected Hyderabad. The people pressed the Nizam for a responsible government. The latter that rejected the demand constituted a Reforms Committee under the presidentship of Armadu Ayyangar. The Committee that was in favour of the Nizam rejected the popular demand. Still Kashinatharao as its member made his own report in favour of responsible government.

India got its independence on 15h August 1947. However, the British gave the princely states of India an option for remaining independent. The evil consequence of which was that some of the states

preferred to stay independent. Nizam Mir Usman Alikhan said that his Hyderabad which was bigger than Switzerland with the railways and aeroplane could remain an independent country. He invented the Muslim leaders of the north for preparation. They arrived there. The Nizam assigned them posts like tehsildar, DC and police officer. He preferred Muslims avoiding the Hindus. The old Muslims who had preserved communal harmony were removed. This angered them (140, SK, 17<sup>th</sup> Sept 1998, page-2.). The first Muslim to rebel against him was his own attender Turreban Khan. The others followed the suit. Even Kashim Rajvi did the same, though it was all hidden. The Rajakars, as the fanatics troubled the Hindus thereby going against Islamic ethics. Kasim Rajvi as a leader supported the Rajakars who were anti-social. However, the Hyderabad Congress unit, which knew of Nizam's evil plot began its struggle for independence on 7<sup>th</sup> August 1947. Many organizations supported the cause.

India got its independence at the midnight of 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947. The Madras-bound Bombay train that arrived in Gulbarga was decorated with flowers. The passengers said, 'Bharata mataki Jai' as soon as they alighted the train at 12.25 that day. The ajakars, present there and then, got angered. They beat the people. They removed the flowers from the train.

The Rajakars looted the train stopping it at a place between Ganagapur and Kulali. Some passengers were killed. Some women were gang-raped, or killed. Lastly the said train stopped going this route for one and half a month. Once the train continued, it had a police coach. The Rajakars continued looting villagers in Kalaburgi region. They would collect sheep and goats for meat. They would, in drunken mood, rape women. (142, SK Sept 17-1998, p.4). Thus they sowed the seeds of fear in the masses.

The Nizam of Hyderabad had these Rajakaras led by Kashim Rajvi, besides the police and military. If any people hoisted the national flag, wore Gandhi topi and sang the national anthem, it was a crime. A man who hoisted the national flag was awarded a three years jail punishment. The editor of *Imraj*, an Urdu newspaper of Hyderabad by name Shoyibullakhan wrote against all this. He published a series of articles against the atrocities of the Nizam and Kashim Rajvie. This *Imraj* was quite popular then. As a Gandhi follower, he enlightened the people for nationalism. This shocked the Nizam too. However, Kashim Rajvi got the editor killed on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1947. So Soyibullakhan became a martyr.

Once the Rajakars became too violent and brutal, Mahatama Gandhi called for a military action against him. So the Congress workers and people had arms for facing them later. These camps were in the border being called 'border camps'. They had the support from Andhra, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.

### **Ban On Samyukta Karnataka:**

*Samyukta Karnataka* played a vital role in the liberation of Hyderabad as in the liberation of India. *Samyukta Karnataka* was the only daily of the 3-4 Kannada papers in Hyderabad. Mohare Hanumantharaya wrote an editorial on 5 Nov 1938 called "The Objectives of Hyderabad Satyagrah," and thus enlightened the Hyderabad people for liberation. The Nizam banned the paper there. The *Samyukta Karnataka* editor wrote on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1940 of how the police checked the parcels. The posted parcels too got back. Why it all happened was not clear, as there was no notice. Thus Hanumantharaya enlightened the Kannada people and the Indians in Hyderabad state.

### **Samyukta Karnataka Reporter In Hyderabad:**

V.H. Desai of Koppal of Raichur district joined Quit India Movement when Mahatma Gandhi called for it. He left the college. He first served as the staff of Deccan Chronicle in 1943, and then joined *Prepress Journal* edited by S. Sadanand of Bombay. He was its reporter in Hyderabad until 1946. He would also write for *Blitz*. He befriended Ranganath Divakar when the latter visited Hyderabad in 1946. This made Desai familiar to Hanumantharaya. So the latter appointed Desai as the *Samyukta Karnataka* reporter in Hyderabad (146, Interview: V.H. Desai, President, Freedom Fighters' Association, and Hyderabad). It seems till then *Samyukta Karnataka* would rely on people or the Reuters for the news of Hyderabad. Desai encouraged *Samyukta Karnataka*. Hanumantharaya would report Rajvi's words as spoken by him. The Rajakaras created violence in public life. The Hindu's condition was worse. The

Rajakars who would gather at midnight in the maidan called Gosamal in Hyderabad would shout Allahu Akbar Ittadadul Muslim Kayatulla Zindabad. Desai would report it. (148, Interview. V.H. Desai).

The office of Karnataka Mitra Mandal was just before Desai, room in Hyderabad. The activities for Hyderabad liberation would take place there. One of its members Dr Davutar cautioned Mr Desai to attend Rajvi's meeting in pyzam as if a Muslim. Desai did not bother, it seems. One day, Nizam's spies noticed Desai. So Desai began wearing Muslim clothes. One day he stopped going to the meetings. Later a telegram worker would help him send the news (Ing: interview of V.H. Desai).

The Rajakers' brutality and the freedom fighters' movement appeared in news daily. The Nizam banned all the newspapers one day. Still *Samyukta Karnataka* managed to send 200 copies there daily. The people would circulate it and read it avidly. (150, *Samyukta Karnataka* special issue, 17<sup>th</sup> Sept 1998, p.2). This helped to build the tempo there. V.H. Desai too came to limelight. One day, the Depart of Publications asked him for tea. Already the intelligence had alerted Desai about arresting. Still Desai attended the party and answered the queries over there. But Desai did not say anything about *Samyukta Karnataka's* distribution in Hyderabad and about his writing for *Blitz* and *Prepress Journal*. Then Desai decamped. The police checked his room the following day, and got nothing. But the Police arrested Desai at his friend's house. The next day the Urdu papers wrote the headline "Khataranak Hindustan Jasuj Pakadagaya Usaka nam V.H. Desai tha". (151, V.H. Desai, Chief Secretary, All India Freedom Fighters Assn, Delhi).

At the same time, K. Achyutarao was the leader of Vande Mataram group in Hyderabad. He thought of finishing the Nizam. Narayanrao Pawar and his two allies thought of bombing Nizam when he would go for namaj.. Once a bomb fell on Nizam's residence though it did not kill him. The three were caught and jailed. V.H. Desai was arrested the next day only. The police punished all of them in jail. But Desai was put in European ward, where the Congress leaders stayed (152 Interviews of V.H. Desai). Nizam Karnatak Parishat worked in Hyderabad for the sake of Kannada concerns. But the Nizam exiled its President Krishnasarma. So the council stopped its activities.

*Samyukta Karnataka* insisted the Kannadigas of Hyderabad to persuade the Nizam to lift the ban on Krishnasarma. (153, SK, 30 July 1939, P.8). Perhaps then the Kannada people were illiterate in Hyderabad region. They would use Urdu heavily. *Samyukta Karnataka* goaded them for using Kannada. The Rajakers' violence, rape and arson were as terrible as the violence that was there during the World War II. Lakhs of people migrated just in order to escape from this violence. *Samyukta Karnataka* reported as to how the Rajakers disturbed the people in Gadag, Koppal, Raichur and Bellary. There were refugee camps in Gadag and Bijapur. The refugees would come to Hubli. Jayadevitai Ligada arranged gruel camp for them in Solapur for four months. People under the leadership of Sharanagouda of Gulbarga attacked the Rajakers. *Samyukta Karnataka* reported such things vividly. The Nizam police would arrest the folks if they saw *Samyukta Karnataka* with them. So *Samyukta Karnataka* was read secretly in Kalaburagi, Manvi, Gangavati, Koppal, Raichur and the surrounding towns.

The Congress Committee's main office for Hyderabad-Karnataka region was in Gadag, Hanumantharaya had a good rapport with Gadag. *Samyukta Karnataka* published a special news bulletin called 'the News for freedom struggle' of Hyderabad-Karnataka region. Kashim Rajvi did not budge about the freedom struggle in Hyderabad-Karnataka region. He made a lecture on 11 June 1948 thus: "Let India's Government invade Hyderabad and see our bravery. We'll show our military strength. New states cannot budge to India Govt. Let it bleed. We'll invade north and south and hoist our flag at the Red Fort in New Delhi." Kashim Rajvi's madness, appeared thus. Nizam wrote a letter to India Government for extending one more term of peace. The letter reached the Home Minister Vallababhai Patel. The Minister said to the Hyderabad official: "An action is initiated". (154, SK, 30 July 1939, p.5). Accordingly the military forces under the leadership of Maj Gen Jayantanath Choudhuri reached by rail all the sides of Hyderabad on 3 Sept 1948.

The military action continued for five days. One military force passed from Pune to Hyderabad via

Hubli and Gadag. *Samyukta Karnataka* reported it all. There was a clash between the military and the Rajakars at Munirabad on Tungabhadra. *Samyukta Karnataka's* distribution was extra 20,000 on the day the Nizam surrendered to the India Government on 12 Sept 1948. *Samyukta Karnataka* would not supply to the readers' demand that day. R. K. Joshi, "SK's Achievements." Ed. Surendra Dani.

### **Mahare Hanumantharaya as the Pioneer of Kannada Journalism**

(R.K Joshi & Surendra Dani, *Kannad Patrikodyamada Harikara Mohare*, Karnataka Patrika Academy 1996. P. 164). Kashim Rajvi was arrested. He was put on trial at Red Fort, where he had dreamed of hoisting his flag otherwise. The Hyderabad liberation was a great thing for people. Hanumantharaya fought against the Nizam's misrule for ten years. *Samyukta Karnataka* aimed at "free India and United Karnataka". He published of his candid views about Hyderabad as a cancer in India. V.H. Desai was shifted to a jail in Gulbarga in 1948. He was released on 22 Sept 1948. Hanumantharaya sent Desai through R.K. Joshi the honorarium for a year and the SK issues for a year as a token of honor. (156 Interview of V.H. Desai). Thus, *Samyukta Karnataka* would remember the reporter's service.

### **Hyderabad Liberation and Samyukta Karnataka's Views:**

**Hyderabad-Liberation Movement's Objectives:** It seems some people misinterpreted the objectives of Hyderabad- liberation movement's objectives. The Congress Committee has spoken of its objectives clearly. Then the Nizam citizens had no fundamental rights and duties. They had no political, economical and social participation. Their life was wretched. Then Muslim official of the state called the liberation as caste-based phenomenon because they would lose their privileges on 5<sup>th</sup> Oct 1938 itself. Hanumantharaya wrote that the Nizam should establish a responsible Government.

### **Hyderabad Liberation and the People's Duties:**

The so called Hyderabad liberation was peaceful. "The freedom fighters fought for a responsible government. The Nizam's view of caste politics is far from truth. In fact, the Congress Committees from Karnataka, Andhra and Maharashtra took part in it for Hyderabad liberation."

### **Narendra Protection Act for Hyderabad:**

*Samyukta Karnataka's* 27-11-1938 editorial refers to All India Freedom as people's liberation (but not as the north India's liberation).

### **Nizam's Farman:**

"The Nizam's move to curtail the people's freedom was regrettable. The Ayyengar Committee reported about the people's rights. The Nizam deprived of the people's rights, while British India gave it year after year. Why did this happen. It is too difficult to protest in Hyderabad region." Thus Hanumantharaya wrote in his editorial of *Samyukta Karnataka* on 8<sup>th</sup> Sept 1938.

### **Lack of Progressive Attitude of Hyderabad:**

The Hindu students of Osmania University were subject to utter humiliation. 500 of them then shifted to Nagpur University later. Mostly the educationists and Government of Hyderabad never thought of this disaster. Meanwhile, the Divan sir Akbar Hydari in a letter to the Governor of Central Province asked him not to admit the students there. The Governor refused this request, however. *Samyukta Karnataka* criticized Hydari's fanatic attitude.

### **Nizam Karnataka Council:**

"*Samyukta Karnataka* reported that All India Nizam Karnataka Council conducted its second session under the President of Desai Janardanaraya in Bidar." It was a success.

### **Search for the Nizam:**

The Nizam of Hyderabad postponed the idea of joining India. The Muslim rulers thought of independence. The Hindi people of the north knew about how the princely states acted in favour of the British. Worse still the Nizam felt that the freedom movement was caste-bound. The Nizam through his religious institute of Itihadulmu Salmin contacted the governor of Pakistan.

**Nizam Kannadigas' Condition:**

The case of Hyderabad Kannadigas is not much different from Hyderabad state itself. The Nizam's only asset was his gems and jewelries. The entire state was backward. There were no civic rights. None had freedom of expression. Hyderabad Lawyer's Association was denied an opportunity to honor such a great man as Chulabai Desai. *Samyukta Karnataka* wrote of this in its editorial on 3 Feb 1940. It exposed the Nizam's link with Pakistan ideology.

**Nizam's New Arms:**

It seems Hyderabad State Congress Committee began shocking the Nizam. The Nizam ordered the fouzudar to shoot at sight in political crises. The freedom fighters knew it.

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**MARY, A SCHIZOPHRENIC CHARACTER IN LESSING'S  
THE GRASS IS SINGING**

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**Abstract:**

*Doris Lessing is one of the most celebrated postcolonial writers. She made her debut as a novelist with *The Grass is Singing* (1950). The novel examines the relationship between Mary Turner, a white mistress, and her Black African servant in Rhodesia. The novel deals with racial politics between whites and blacks. It also explores Feminist issues. However, the primary cause of her break-down is a failed and forced marriage. Thus the paper examines the females' journey from bad to worse and worse to worst in which the overall social and political aspects are responsible. Finally, she is a prey to mental disturbance and murder by a so called caring black servant.*

**Keywords:** *Postcolonial, schizophrenia, female.*

*The grass is Singing* traces the story of Mary turners a conventional white lady. She is a South African woman, as her personal vulnerabilities intersect with the repressive soul and psychological pressures of her environment. The novel begins not with the unfolding of her private and domestic life but the newspaper headings of her death at the hands of her black, servant Moses. Than the real story slowly uncoils the facts and the readers later understand the objective and subjective reality Mary's life and death. Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in the 1940s was a British colony with a white government and a colonial mind that made the relationship between whites and blacks tense. It was the time of the *apartheid* system, and therefore, black people were treated, if any, as servants, and in most cases, natives were isolated in compounds. It was in this context that a newly-wed Mary arrived at Dick Turner's "farm and was driven slowly off balance by heat and loneliness and poverty".

*The Grass is Singing* is a novel of colonialism, human degradation, and an uncomfortable view of the prevailing attitude of a time and place, and yet, to me it was more so a powerful portrait of a crumbling minds. Mary Turner is a hideous woman; bitter, cruel, entitled. What started out as a woman's resentment over a boring farm life and a distant marriage soon turned into something deeper and much more unsettling. Sometimes people are broken so early in their life that it's impossible to ever be whole, and at her core, Mary Turner was ruined long before adulthood and her neurosis was merely the lid on a simmering pot of rage and hurt. The book opens with her murder; we know she's doomed. We watch as she flails and unravels and in the end, perhaps, finds some kind of distorted relief. This is Lessing's portrayal of a woman without a choice; a child without a choice; a people without a choice. The farm fails, the marriage fails, and Mary Turner's brain fails.

Apartheid fails. The atmosphere in this book is sweltering, suspenseful, and hypnotic. It's all unrelentingly heat and blinding sun and unbearable tension. Something's got to give. The ineffectual trying trying trying... Mary Turner tried, but she never stood a chance, not with that husband, not in that country, not with that childhood, not when she was destined to brood away all her days inside her head, the frustration a ticking time bomb. This is what happens, Lessing said, when women can't choose. This is the outcome, she tells us, when you enslave people. This is unnatural and wrong and this is what you get.

Frequently, incidents in Mary's life become the cause of her break down and she proceeds towards

insanity. This entirely, works as catalyst for her schizophrenic turnover. The major irritating factors were heat, the primitive bathing facilities, the neighbours, and Dick's failures as a farmer, her uninteresting and forceful life in village and her hate towards black community, Dicks forced black servant, Moses on her. All these factors are totally a cause of her failing sanity. Roberta Rubenstein rightly observes that *The Grass is Singing* "concerns with social, economic and political structures, with being female in a conventional man's world"

The novel is the portrayal of Mary's disintegration and death because of her unhappy marriage. She was an amiable woman who was forced into wed locks after the malicious remarks made by her friends, 'She's not fifteen any longer. Someone should tell her about her clothes' 'How old is she?' Must be over thirty. She was working long before I was, and that was over twelve years ago. 'Why doesn't she marry? Surely she's had plenty of chances.' They viewed that marriage is the sole justification of her life. Society, since beginning whether British or Indian, is bound with traditional thoughts and our belief that we must follow our tradition.

Accordingly, woman is bound to be married and it has been, justified through religions too. After a hastened courtship with Dick, they tie their relation into wed locks. She marries him who also needs her company to do away his own loneliness. Loneliness was the only common point between them. Rather than that they have different parts, experiences and backgrounds. As for instance, Mary love town life while Dick dislikes the town culture. Later, remains busy in his farm. It is important to see that the seeds for Mary Turner's eventual psychic breakdown are sown years earlier, in her progressive alienation from herself. They had no change in life no caring and nothing. Once, Mary realizes that motherhood can give her some happiness and fulfillment and she talks to Dick about having a child to which he refuses on account of his poverty. She submits herself at the hands of circumstances. The woman once, lovable to society now becomes disqualified because of her unpolished manners and appearance.

Now Dick is in fact an incompetent farmer who has created their economic misery by mismanagement. He is like "A Jack of all trade, Master of name." His mismanagement at farm created a kind of rudeness for him. Paradoxically, having played a major role in reducing him to that state through her sexual and psychic frigidity, she still unconsciously craves submission to "a man stronger than herself." Hating him, she began to hate herself. Later Moses enters her life as a servant, black. She is gradually drawn towards him. She is split between Dick's orders not to lose Moses and her highly charged emotional ambivalence Mary feels towards him, her Psychic energy is progressively consumed.

The signs of schizophrenia began to reflect through her character as she begins to lapse into apathetic sentences in the middle of sentences, sweeps at the smallest provocation, neglects households. Only her relationship with Moses retains a negative vitality. Once, he recognizes her frenzied state of mind, and steers her to bed to rest. He looks after her tenderly when she falls ill. He feels her need for warmth, which Dick has failed to provide. His dreams haunt her with images of her submission to Moses' control and kindness. This relationship deposes in microcosm several forms of power relationships. On the political level it duplicates the imbalance between the oppressive white minority and black majority in South Africa.

Here it is proved that many psycheshave split into two aspects that are conscious and unconscious where the theory of consciousness of Carl Jung can be applied.

I observed that Mary has faced sufferings, sacrifice, and loneliness. It is believed that destruction brings regeneration but here it proved to be false. Finally, Mary is the only character in the novel that faced a tragic death at the hands of her black servant, Moses perhaps, being realized of the approaching death. However, he is self-conscious of the facts of her personality. For Mary the reality she is forced to confront is that of Moses. In her mind confusion has formed, making her both the powerful and the powerless. For, powerful she feels queen while for powerless she is the colonized.

And the Grass is singing for many reasons as for rain on Dick's farm. The title is taken from a long

poem by T. S. Eliot called *The Waste Land*. These lines are at the beginning of the book and describe India, but generally South Africa is nearly the same. Water has a different meaning for the people of South Africa. They do not take water for granted because there is not much of it. Water is the basic of life; without it everything dies. Grass may be a symbol of all the things that need water for survival. I think 'singing' can be dealt in both the senses as pleasure and woe and here Mary's heart is always singing woefully.

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## A CRITIQUE ON ECOFEMINISM

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**Ecofeminism**

“Theory the seeing of patterns, showing the forests as well as the trees- theory can be due that rises from the earth and collects in the rain cloud and returns to earth over and over. But if it doesn't smell of the earth it isn't good for the earth”.

ADRIENE RICH

The women's movement in the 1960 was not of course the beginning of feminism. It was a renewal of an old tradition of thought and action already presented in classic books which has diagnosed the problem of women's inequality in society. Mary Wollstonecraft's “A Vindication of the Rights of Women (1792) Oliver Schrciner's “Women and Labour” and Virginia Woolf's “A Room of One's Own” (1929) portrayed the unequal treatment given to women. In 19<sup>th</sup> century women began to identify themselves as an oppressed group which found expression in feminist movements and feminist writings. There are several different types of feminism and feminist movements have explored the significance of women presented in literature. German Greer (The Female Eunuch) Kate Millet (Sexual Politics) Simon de Beavoir's (The second Sex) portrayed the silent voices and oppression of women. John Stuart Mill (The Subjection of Women) 1869 and Fredric Engles (The Origin of the Family) 1884 also contributed to the tradition of Feminist Writing.

In the present research article an attempt has been made to explore various critical connections between Feminism and Ecofeminism. Ecofeminism is a theory which emerged from feminism, Ecology and Socialism. To understand the Ecofeminism as a theory and as an interdisciplinary approach it is very much essential to study the philosophical foundation of feminism and feminist movements. The first part of this research article deals with an enquiry of feminism and second part deals with a study of ecofeminism.

The feminism is concerned with 'conditioning' and 'socialization' of womenfolk in society. The terms 'Feminist', 'Female' and 'Feminine' are related to conditioning and socialization of women in society. To understand feminism it is essential to know the meanings of those terms. Feminist is related to political position, 'female' is a matter of Biology and 'feminine' is a set of culturally defined characteristics. Thus the terms female and feminine are very crucial to understand the force of feminism. Thus in feminist criticism the major efforts were taken to expose the mechanism of patriarchy that is cultural mindset of society which perpetuated sexual inequality. The feminist believe that in order to understand women's position in the world one has to understand the system of patriarchy. Men all over the world looked at women from their point of view and they have also taught and compelled women to look at themselves from male point of view. Feminism is a critique of patriarchy. It is a complicated and often contradictory body of research aimed at examining gender in society. Through history and tradition the myth of male superiority has been reinforced and maintained in the society. The women have been subjugated, oppressed by male dominated social institutions and value systems.

Feminism can be thought of as an ideology that has operated in political and social theory,

psychology, spiritual and religious studies, cultural studies and literary theory and criticism. Feminism is a political and cultural movement for change in women's situation. Feminism advocates emancipation of women at social, political and economic level.

Feminism is the byproduct of the awareness and revolt of women against gender bias and prejudice in social, cultural, religious and political spheres. John Stuart Mill who had published "The subjection of Women". He advocated the emancipation of women from social bondage. He emphasized the importance of equality of men and women in private and public life. There was also a plea to consider women as an "essential half of society". Feminism is the outcome of new approach, a revaluation and a revolution challenging the traditional outlook towards women. Feminism is a process of questioning the fundamentals of culture. Literature written from female point of view raised women's consciousness of gender defined roles. Feminist writings highlight the agonies and frustration, despair of women in a world governed by men. The social conditions of women like "interior colonization" resulting in exploitation, oppression and victimization by men. Feminism is an ideology which put forth/presents change related to the advantage of women.

Milton's line-

"He for God only, She for God in him". This is the well cited example of assumption that man's purpose in life is to serve God, the state, society while woman's purpose is to serve man. Man is seen as the norm women as the 'other' not merely different but inferior, lacking. Personality traits are also referred as polar opposites of masculine and feminine. Men are considered to be bold strong, independent, rational, logical and women on the contrary are considered to be timid, gentle, dependent, self-sacrificing and emotional. Thus all the cultures are praising and value the 'womanly' quality but at the same time they are placing the women at secondary level. According to Simon de Beauvoir women become the second sex. Though the biological distinction between male and female is an accepted fact the notion that women are inferior to man is no longer acceptable to women in general and feminist in particular. Simone de Beauvoir says that "one is not born but becomes a woman". The concept of 'gender' is typically placed in opposition to the concept of 'sex'. Sex is a matter of Biology; gender is the matter of culture. Thus patriarchy is the central cause of women's exploitation, subjugation and marginalization.

Ecofeminism is an activist and academic movement. There are critical connections between the domination of nature and exploitation of women. It is a blending of ecological concerns and feminist concerns. Ecofeminism is based on the insights of Ecology, Feminism and Socialism. Ecofeminism is an umbrella term that is related to various social system of domination especially those related to women and nature. The term 'Ecofeminism' was introduced by Francoise d Eaubonne, a French Feminist in 1974. Ecofeminism movement gained international recognition as a grass root movement for peace, women's status, pollution, environment protection and green earth planet.

Ecofeminists believe that patriarchal system and power struggle is responsible for both environmental degradation and women's oppression. Karren J. Warren, a leading ecofeminist of the present generation has argued that the exploitation of women and nature are the outcome of historically sanctioned 'Patriarchal Conceptual Framework". Thus Ecofeminism is simply defined as the relationship between women and nature. Ecofeminists relates the oppression and domination of all subordinate groups such as women, people of colour, tribes etc. and the oppression and domination of nature, animal, water, land, air. This entire subordinate group has been subject to oppression, domination, exploitation, colonization from patriarchal society. Thus nature and women have been victimized by the rulers (colonizers). There has been close similarity between nature and women, both are responsible for regeneration, procreation. The values like nurturing and co-operation which are omnipresent in women as well as nature.

Women and nature both are the symbols of Beauty and Serenity. Romantic poets William Wordsworth, P.B. Shelley, S.T. Coleridge, and John Keats were inspired by nature. Nature is the source of

inspiration and living force for them. The images, metaphors, similes, personification used by poets and writers are basically derived from nature. William Wordsworth's "Lucy Poems" are about the beauty of nature as well as women. The titles of such poems are very much symbolic and significant like 'To the Skylark', 'On the West Wind', 'The Solitary Reaper', and 'To the Cuckoo'. In this poetry poets talked about only women, nature and spirituality. Since the dawn of civilization nature has provided food, clothing and shelter and the women have also been playing the role of homemaker in a literal sense. But due to power game and patriarchal oppressive framework we have disturbed nature as well as women-folk. The beautiful green planet has been exploited by the male dominant force. They have created borders and have been fighting for natural resources. The Beautiful Green Planet is the symbol of mother. It is also been termed as Mother Earth and Mother nature but unfortunately she has been exploited by male dominant force.

Ecofeminist advocates that the ideology that authorizes oppressions based on race, class, gender, sexuality, physical abilities is the same ideology which sanctions the exploitation and degradation of nature. Ecofeminist also argued that no attempt to liberate women or any other oppressed group will be successful without an equal attempt to liberate nature. Early ecofeminist propagated that the paternalistic capitalist society has led harmful split between nature and culture and this split; rift can only be healed by the feminine instinct of nurture and holistic knowledge of nature's process. As women are the homemakers and caregivers in society they are also a source of strength and at the same time nature is also in its full abundance providing everything to humanity. Thus ecofeminists argued that the affinity between nature and women is a source of strength needed to make the world peaceful and harmonious.

Ecofemiism has ethical, metaphysical and religious dimensions. There are ecofeminist's utopias that human should recognize themselves as they are part of nature and they are not separated from it where social relations are not hierarchical. Ecofeminist's contribution to moral theory and practice is that every human being needs to look at the earth with love, affection and compassion. The sense of 'self' is more common in men while an interconnecting sense of self is more common in women. The separate self is always related to the rights or justice while the interconnected self makes moral decisions on the basis of responsibilities or care. Though both the sexes have an ability of moral reasoning but particularly men tend to focus on rights where as women tend to focus on responsibilities. It is essential to recognize the connection between right and responsibility. Thus there has been a continuous struggle between right and responsibility. Feminist ethic about women is the understanding of Responsibility and Relationship. Thus sense of self is the root cause of all kinds of dominations and oppressions. Ecofeminist projects that women are linked with nature, environment because of their physical differences like birthing, lactation. Their traditional role as a nurture and caregiver make them more connected with nature than men.

Ecofeminism is an awareness about the exploitation of nature and it has been closely linked with the western man's attitude towards women and tribal cultures. The western intellectual tradition also devalued whatever that is associated with women like emotion, nature and body and they have elevated the things that are associated with men reason, culture and mind. Thus Ecofeminism is a movement working against the interconnected oppressions of gender, race, class and nature.

In the past humans were more connected with nature and also dependent on nature later men were separated from nature due to industrialization and development. The earth must be valued because people are dependent upon it for life. Women are hurt most by the exploitation of the earth because their household work is associated with nature in patriarchal society. Women have been suffered a lot because of the degradation of the earth. Women are capable of taking and maintaining strong stands against the further exploitation of the planet. The ecofeminists's vision is 'Live and Let Live' living in balance with harmony with nature. The main value of this vision is that justice for all. While present world only allows justice for those who are in power. In the past people lived in balance with nature and also value its resources. Due to the capitalization the development and people in power broke the link and the earth planet's resources were

exploited and the earth was wasted. A great poet and critic T.S. Eliot wrote a poem 'The Waste Land' The title of the poem is very symbolic now at present this beautiful planet, mother Goddess has become barren, sterile, waste due to the insensitivity towards nature, women, subaltern groups. Thus there is no hope for regeneration, pro-creation and rebirth. The land became infertile due to the greedy and mechanical approach towards nature and women. The great novelist Joseph Conrad also talked about the exploitation of nature in his novel "Heart of Darkness". Joseph Conrad portrayed the picture of unjustified exploitation of natural environment.

Val Plumwood an ecofeminist commented "When the four pillar of liberation concern with gender, race, class and nature stand together the structure of oppression can be shaken". Thus ecofeminism is potentially a global movement founded on common interests and celebrates the diversities, plurality, multi-culturalism and opposes all forms of domination and violence. Ecofeminists advocate that women are more able to connect to nature because the conditions of their existence allow them to know nature in different ways. The men experience the world in terms of dualism and division while women experience it in terms of continuity and unity. Women's work such as child parenting and creating home with life is firmly rooted in nature. The division of society into culture/nature, male/female, reason/emotion and civilized/primitive also became the major factor in the domination of both women and nature.

Patriarchal system gave rise to unfair practices which are unhealthy for humans and the planet. Ecofeminist state that as long as men hold the social and economic power women will be discriminated. There is a need to destroy system of male domination. Human beings need to connect themselves to nature and understands its true value in their lives. So it is a need of the time to eradicate all 'isms' of domination and to create a harmonious peaceful co-existing world. Globalization is an outgrowth of capitalism and it is patriarchal in nature. Now a days women have been occupying an important positions in various sectors, today we have women Presidents, Scientists, Commanders, Administrators, Business heads etc. The time has come to give judicious share to women in power. If there will be an equal power sharing to men and women the picture will be changed. So the opportunity should be given to women to rule the world with sensitivity, affection and compassion. Thus ecofeminism is inherently democratic political vision and democratic politics. Ecofeminism is founded on a democratic desire to expand the process of democratic questioning.

According to Indian mythology the nature comprises of five basic elements fire, air, water, earth and the sky. In India women all over the country from ancient times worship plants, tree, rivers, mountains and animals. A careful study of our traditional customs and rituals shows that Indian women worship the elements of nature as a part of their culture. Women at present time are ahead of men particularly in the matter of prevention of pollution and protection, preservation and conservation of environment.

Women are the extraordinary "Home Managers". They know the art of home management as well as relationship (domestic and public) management. Women have been managing their needs and making judicious use of resources in everyday life. Womanly qualities like emotions, affection and compassion along with reason and logic are also important in ruling the government. Thus women's basic nature would be useful in establishing co-operation and relations from local to global level.

Women have been doing household work which are endless but the low significance has been given to their work by male dominant force and that's why it is unrewarding and thankless job. The glorification of femininity is motherhood. Women find fulfillment in child bearing and bringing up child thus womenfolk are taking care of future generations. The working women simultaneously doing their jobs as well as playing the role of Good Mother.

The goal of feminist movement is consciousness, raising awareness to vital issues and rejects passivity and subjection. Women are not subordinate by birth but complimentary to male. Thus ecofeminism and feminism opened up the new avenues, all the professions to women and acquired a new significant tradition. The nature is always a source of inspiration and joy for the poets and the writers. The

concept of beauty is also derived from nature. Nature has given us natural colours, greenery, beautiful planet rivers, forests, seas etc. Most of the metaphors, images, similes used by the writers, poets critics are borrowed from nature. Women's beauty has also been celebrated. There has been a glorification of women's body and beauty. The nature has provided all the most beautiful things to human beings. So it is the prime duty of every human being to protect, preserve and conserve the beautiful planet. To save this mother earth there has been a dire need to establish a green earth with ecologically sustainable society rooted in environmentalism, non-violence and social justice and grass-root democracy. To establish a green earth ideal state/nation and government it is essential to provide civil liberties, social justice and the assurance of non-violence to the citizens. Green theory is an answer to the outgrowth of industrial revolution and globalization. Thus it is the duty of every citizen, nation to establish green world with ecological wisdom, social justice, grassroots democracy and the principle of non-violence.

The world should seriously follow the ideology of Rousseau (Go Back to Nature) Thoreau (Naturalist) and Mr.M.K. Gandhi. Green country, planet can be again established by decentralization of power, equal power sharing to men and women, respect for plurality, diversity, multi-culturalism and the sense of global responsibility. To avoid the manmade disasters such as climate change nuclear war we have to follow the green ideology with participatory democracy and global (thinking globally and act locally) thinking. Thus ecofeminists reject the 'Development Model' based on uncontrolled technological advancements, mass consumerism and unrestrained economic growth at the cost of democracy and human values. Feminine principle that should serve as principle of activity and creativity in both men and women. This principle is based on inclusiveness and includes nature as a living entity. Thus this is needed for non-patriarchal, non-gendered, non-violent society.

Feminist writings force the reader to see through her eyes and find deep in her heart “exquisite sensibility”.

What can I offer you, but that  
stale word 'love' which now needs  
to be revised. Adrienne Rich said  
'revised'. Let's revise everything,  
let's create a new world, let's  
inaugurate a new tradition.

- Kamla Das

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**JHUMPA LAHIRI'S STORY: INTERPRETATION OF MALADIES:  
AN ANALYSIS**

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It is a story entitled “Interpreter of Maladies” consisting of 26 pages. Regarding this title story Lahiri says that “When I was putting the collection together, I knew from the beginning that it had to be the title story, for I think it best expresses, thematically the predicament at the heart of book- the dilemma, the difficulty and often the impossibility of communicating emotional pain and affliction to others, as well as expressing it to ourselves.

Jhumpa Lahiri got the idea of the phrase “interpretation of maladies” in her conversation with a person in Boston in 1991. She says: “I asked him what he was doing and he said that he was working as a translator of a doctor who had a number of Russian patients who had difficulty explaining their ailments in English. I had never heard of a job like this, but realized that it was necessary in places where doctors and patients didn't have a common language”. The story moves around the character of Mrs. Mina Das, who is 28 years young, fashionable Indian-American woman, who is by birth of second generation of Indian immigration. Mr. & Mrs. Das both are proud of the fact that they were born in America and raised there only. The other significant character is Mr. Kapsi a 46 years old tourist-guide-cum translator. For the last five years he is a tourist-guide to Konark-sun Temple on Fridays and Saturday. He had another job during the week. He worked in a doctor's office. The doctor does not know Gujarati but he has a number of Gujarati patients. The doctor employed him to interpret i.e. translate what Gujarati patient say Mr. Kapsi's father was a Gujarati and as such he was knowing Gujarati language. In fact he was an ambitious man in his youth. He was self-educated man but he was not satisfied with his present job. The present job was a sign of his failings. In this youth he'd been a devoted scholar of foreign languages, the owner of an impressive collection of dictionaries. He had dreamed of being an interpreter for diplomats and dignitaries, resolving conflicts between people and nations, settling his marriage and at one point in his life he was confident that he could confer, if given the opportunity, in English, French, Russian, Portuguese and Italian, Hindi, Bengali, Orissa and Gujarati. English was the only non-language he spoke fluently anymore.

Mrs. Das is rather a sensuous woman, who at the age of 28 has already fallen out of love with life (60). She lived with family husband; two sons and a daughter in New Brunswick, New Jersey, United States of America. She was working woman and she was a middle-school science teacher<sup>5</sup>. She is a fashionable woman wearing 'a red-white-checked short skirt above her knees', shoes with a square wooden heel, a close fitting blouse, which was 'decorated at chest-level with a calico appliqué in the shape of strawberry'. She was a short woman with short hand; pink finger-nail painted to match her lips and was slightly plump in her figure. Her hair was little longer'.

Mrs. Das was taking interest in Mr. Kapsi, Whose personality not only attracted her but she felt an appeal- Lahiri narrates about the fascination of Mr. Kapsi for the beauty of woman's body. Thought Mr. Kapsi: “Gazed at the topless woman, that he had never seen his own wife fully naked. Even when they had made love she kept the panels of her blouse hooked together, the string of her petticoat knotted around her waist. He had never admired the backs of his wife's legs the way he now admired those of Mrs. Das, walking as if for his benefit alone. He had, of course, seen plenty of bare limbs before, belonging to the American and European ladies who took his tours. But Mrs. Das was different. Unlike the women,....Mrs. Das had taken an interest in him.(58).

The Das family had come to see the Konark Sun Temple. Mr. Das was busy in taking photographs. Mrs. Mina Das had an opportunity to have a conversation with the Tourist-Guide-Cum-Translator. She told him about his marriage that: "We married when we were still in college. We were in his school when he proposed. We went to the same collage, of course. Back then we couldn't stand the thought of being separated, not for a day, not for minute. Our parents were best friend who lived in the same town. My entire life I saw him every weekend, either at our house or theirs. We were sent upstairs to play together while our parents joked about our marriage, imagine! They never caught us at anything, though in a way I think it was all more or less a space. The things we did those Friday and Saturday nights, while our patents sat downstairs drinking tea. . . .I could tell you stories, Mr. Kapsi.(63)

They were sitting in the bulky white ambassador car and then she reverted her secret to Mr. Kapsi that: Bobby was conceived in the afternoon. She made no protest when the friend touched the small of her back as she was about to make a pot of coffee, then pulled her against his crisp navy suit. He made love to her, swiftly, in silence, with an expertise she had never know, without the meaningful expressions and smiles Raj always insisted on afterward. He was married now, to a Punjabi girl, he was Bobby's father.(64).

It was a great shock to Mr. Kapsi, he asked Mrs. Das: "{why she told him this information? Mrs. Das further told that he an interpreter. Mrs. Das continued that "About what I've just told you. About my secret, and about how terrible urges, Mr. Kapsi, to throw thing away. One day I had the urge to throw everything I own out the window, the television, the children everything.(65).

Mr. Kapsi told her that he is tourist guide but she reminded that her there job is as "interpreter." He replied that they don't face language barrier. Mrs. Das wanted that Mr. Kapsi should suggest some remedy so she told him.

"I'm tired of feeling so all the time. Eight year. Mr. Kapsi, I've been in pain eight years. I was hoping you could help me feel better, say the right thing. Suggest some kind of remedy."(65)

It is worth pointing that Kapsi rightly calls Mrs. Das great sin of adultery as "her common, trivial little secret". His remarks throw light on the life styles of Americans as well immigrants Asians including Indian-Americans. According to Justice Dept. Of U.S.A. the official figure of rape in American in 1996 is 2730 every day. One can guess the figure adultery, incest and sexual offences every day. In American the rate of sexual offence is on increase. Americans are proud of the fact that an individual citizen enjoys maximum freedom. Mr. Kapsi perhaps wanted to advise Mrs. Das. "To confess the truth to Mr. Das Honesty was the best policy. Honesty, surely, would help her feel better, as she'd put it. Perhaps he would after to preside over the discussion, as a mediator."(66) He wanted "To get to the heart of the matter(66) and as such obviously Mr. Kapsi asked had a remedy for Mrs. Das guilt but he could not communicate her. Mrs. Das is an educated modern Indian- American woman and she is science teacher and her problem is of sin and guilty-conscious. Her mind is fully of scorpions like Lady Macbeth's Mrs. Das is mentally tortured and tormented by the sin for the last 8 years.

This title story has attracted much criticism but there is so through critical analysis of the character of Mrs. Das. A Critic says that. Mrs. Das's seeking of Mr. Kapsi's help is a kind of searching for expiation of soul from guilt. She has realized anything secret in sex other than her husband is unhealthy. Though Mr. Kapsi doesn't find a chance to convey his remedy. "Honesty is the best policy" to Mrs. Das, the solution to the crises is successfully conveyed through the interpreter of maladies" to the readers. Other critic point on that: Mrs. Das "Wanted a readymade answer, a cure for her malady. But the malady is deep rooted and Mr. Kapsi, the interpreter, is no psychiatrist or doctor to cure her of her malady. Lahiri seems to suggest that most of the emigrant Indians suffer from different types of maladies and as Indians they unable to get rid of their Indian consciousness that they should be honest and their married life. The concept of chastity fidelity, loyalty (without understanding) haunts them like a ghost at noon. At the same time they cannot be completely westernized in their thoughts and feelings. This dichotomy is the predicament of the Indians settled abroad.

In brief, the story converts definite psychic-state through the presentation of minute routine details, along with an awareness of the basic inadequacy of each individual. A Critic has analyzed Mrs. Das in a testimony of Lahiri's maturity in handling the craft of fiction. Their alienation from their cultural roots and bondages to the connections of a different society is presented with a strong under-current of irony. Their external glamour is contrasted with their inner claustrophobia and emptiness. This contrast, at times, becomes comic and the paths of that comedy arise from their inability to grasp, in broader or profounder terms, what it is which significantly constituted freedom and happiness in life. This contrast also conveys the gravity of the syntactic, haunted loneliness which Mrs. Das had endured half-consciously. She is depicted as a woman, who at the age of thirty has "already fallen out of love with life". (60) She had living with the secret guilt that her second son was born out of a momentary and purely sexual relationship with her husband's friends. Her lack of protest at the advances of the friends has to be understood in the context of her overwhelming tiredness and withdrawal. At a very tender age, she had been burdened with a child. Separated from her family mind friendless, she feels continually tired and cross. The sexual closeness to another individually cloud as well be a means to over-come this situation. But her Indian psyche transforms a single isolated events into a gigantic burden she is forced a carry throughout her life."

To comprehend the story in proper perspectives there is necessity of psychoanalytical study of Mrs. Das's character. Jhumpa Lahiri is too young to understand the real nature of woman though she has portrayed Mrs. Das character and her problem. Ongoing though the story it is revealed that she has failed to understand and present woman's real psychology. It is universal truth that no married woman and particularly Indian woman would never disclose her sexual affairs (before and other marriage) which is her "Secrets of Heart" to anybody, may be mother, sister or bosom friends!

The only remedy for Mrs. Das 'malady' was that she was on tour to Indian and according to her religion she should have taken bathy in any holy river or Ganges and washed off her sin performing Hindu religious rites. Only religion provides the remedy for sin which is confession, repentance, penance and redemption.

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NEW WOMAN IN HENRIK IBSEN'S *A DOLL'S HOUSE*

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**Abstract:**

*From 1890s a group of all the rage English writers focused on women's issues, about the careers, education, alternatives to marriage and motherhood, and freedom for women to express their sexuality. These writers' works feature on women who take advantage of the changes in the nineteenth century and adopted nontraditional roles? As new women. They had emphasis on all acceptances of women's psychology and sexual behavior at opened areas that had been taboo and had a profound impact upon modern English fiction.*

*Favorite subjects for these writers are the ways the feminine role (to innocence about sexuality, marriage, and motherhood and subordination to men) oppressed women. Thus, works by new woman writers show women fascinated in unhappy marriages and innocent women and children destroyed by venereal disease as well as more sensational subjects, including adultery, free love, and prostitution.*

*In addition, Olive Schreiner, Thomas Hardy, George Meredith, and George Gissing are sometimes classified as new woman writers because they treat the same subjects and focus on the same kind of heroine.*

**Introduction:**

The mainstay of the Victorian novel were courtship, heartbreak, reconciliation, and of course, the inevitable marriage. The novel ends, but the characters are directed forwards into a certain future of domestic securities including caring for the children and creating concord in the home. Female authors of the time were expected to only be interested in writing romances and the heroines of these books were often portrayed as needing men in their lives to identify themselves.

But such characters are also represented in some Victorian plays also. These writers had made new types of plays known as open ended plays. The originator of such plays had known as Henrik Ibsen. He had also use heroines as a new woman in his plays. Henrik Ibsen once said: "A woman cannot be herself in contemporary society, it is an exclusively male society with laws drafted by men, and with counsel and judges who judge feminine conduct from the male point of view," and because of his wonderful playwriting as work in the name of female equality, it was also once said by Max Beerbohm that "the New Woman sprang fully armed from Ibsen's brain":

*A Doll's house (1879):* woman character Nora Helmer is a fully capable woman, so capable; that she must hide that she has been supporting her family through her husband's inadequacies to maintain the harmony in their household. A harmony dependent on the husband's supposed superiority and Nora's adorably-helpless-wife act. After the secret had revealed and Nora had confronted with the reality of the male ego, she decides that she cannot continue playing the part for her marriage if she is truly going to live to her full prospective.

The theme that is more interesting to him in this play is the duties towards oneself and achieving the individuality and individual rights in the society. Indeed, in a patriarchal society which is controlled by men's rules, this is woman, who should try to get her rights: "*What duties do you mean? Nora: my duties towards myself*" (*Doll's House* IIIrd Act, 68).

*A Doll's House* is a tragedy in which Nora leaves her house by slamming of a door to the world of

new possibilities. She is going off to know her own responsibilities towards herself. This kind of self-realization, which usually leads to a new beginning, is one of Ibsen's main ideologies posed in his play. Nora opens her eyes and observes that her individuality and freedom have been taken in living with Torvald Helmer. Nora is a woman who will not go on living her life on illusions and with a strange man anymore.

The play deals with the issue of the position of woman in marriage and in the society. In Ibsen's time the wife is more a servant than a helper. She only states indirect suggestions about home policies and decisions. Her husband is the leader of the family and she is obliged to follow him; hence, she is just like an attractive instrument in her husband's hands to be loved and cherished but nothing more.

At the end of the play, Nora shows many traits of a new woman. When Torvald finds out about her unlawful deed, he blows up on her to show her what she has done. After the long time she had to think about what she had done (time before he blew up on her) she finally took the responsibility to let him know and take full blame for her acts. She showed characteristics of a "new Woman" in this instance because she owned up to her flaw and told Torvald the truth instead of hiding behind her lies and acting like Korgstad had it out for her. Also following the blow up, Torvald obtained another letter from Korgstad explaining that they didn't have to pay back the bond and sent the bond to them. Even though Nora and Torvald knew everything would be ok, Nora took it upon herself to realize she would be in guilt her whole life knowing what she had done. She refused to stay with Torvald and left the house to find herself. She had a quote that stated: "I believe that before all else I am a reasonable human being, just as you are or, at all events, that I must try and become one." This quote stands out to me that she is declaring independence on the fact that she is not just a woman, but that she is also a human being and should not be treated like an insubordinate person that is looked down upon. She knows that she has more potential than to just be a mother and a wife and that she wants to seek that out without being with Mr. Helmer.

#### **Conclusion:**

Nora resists and rejects the domestic role and acts in opposition to the social conventions and morals. The problem portrayed in the play is about women's rights, as human's rights. It is about the need for every woman to find out herself and stand on her feet in order to recognize the truth about herself, her life and her society.

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## MULTIPLE VOICES OF FUTURIST SOCIETY IN KIM ROBINSON'S *MARS TRILOGY*

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“...the boundary between SF and social reality is an optical illusion” (Haraway, 1991:66)

Science Fiction (Sci-Fi) is the new version of social realism. SF writers of the 1950s and 1960s emphasized this view that science fiction carried multiple aspects in respect to human life as well as society. It is pretty clear that Science Fiction explores facets of modern and postmodern life. It has the potential power to see the transformation concerning the life of human being in the future as Robert Heinlein traces “*It is the only fictional medium capable of interpreting the changing, head-long rush of modern life.*” (Heinlein 1964: 53). Science fiction primarily describes futuristic literature, which is one of the prominent literary movements of the post-modern era. It is a distinct genre which is unique and seminal in literary world. Dr Faustus' scientific power of disappearing at the end of the play, the aware of Cosmology in Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*, Laputa as the floating island of magnetic levitation in Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* are some basic roots of Science Fiction in English literature. *The Centre for Future Consciousness*, USA, traces the significance of Sci-Fi that Science fiction is the most visible and influential form of futurist thinking in contemporary popular culture. Science fiction motivates and stimulates us to see the multidimensional aspects of human life in the near future as well as it encompasses the societal, political, socio-economic, technological, psychological, ethical, cosmic life of the prospective human generation. There is a close and inevitable relation between the sci-fi and future studies. Past ideas, happenings encourage to form the quintessence of the science fiction. Therefore, it is pretty clear that sci-fi has an indispensable connection with the social transformation as well as it is predominately about the future of technology and science. Sci-fi explore numerous areas which are delved into the future of society, culture, the environment, war, feminism, and also spiritual and religious topics.

Jayant Narlikar, scientist, world-renowned astrophysicist, champion of models alternative to the Big Bang theory and Padma Bhushan, Padma Vishushan winner, prefers science fiction which envisions the futuristic society as he looks at Science fiction “...in the vein of Jules Verne and HG Wells, grounded in the science of their day, but ones that foresaw the future that was to be or will be.” (Shenoy, 2016) We come across the development of science fiction and its critical accompaniment in the context of social dimensions. Science fiction is the fusion of the rational and the marvelous which challenges various notions of reality in the society.

Darko Suvin, in *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction* (1979) argues that SF is an epistemological genre which criticize bourgeois ideology as well as an inciter of social enlightenment. Some influential social theorists adopted science-fictional tropes to elucidate contemporary social life. Donna Haraway, one of the major social theorists, in her thought-provoking words “A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century” (1985),” refits the oft-used SF figure of the cyborg into a feminist political myth of post-human network-beings who reject the oppressive Western ontology of techno-science. Early 19<sup>th</sup> century sci-fi writer began to depict the nature of future societies where they focused on the plausibility and concreteness for the depiction of imaginary world. The area of social possibilities and its consequences play an important role in sci-fi as *Istvan Csicsery-Ronay, Jr.* in *A Companion to Science Fiction* comments about John Campbell, the American editor of science

fiction magazine as “Campbell, even more than Gernsback, conceived of SF as a social practice, and of SF writers as having professional affinities with the engineers and scientists that he considered the true target audience of their writing”. (Istvan Jr. 2005:48) It is very important that during the late 1950s and early 1960s, a few prestigious literary figures proposed that SF played an important role in revealing the social unconscious of the postwar world. Frederick Jameson applies the concepts of simulation and simulacra which are genuinely science-fictional ideas to social theory. Therefore we need to accept and underscore the statement of Haraway's dictum “the boundary between SF and social reality is an optical illusion” (Haraway, 1991:66)

In the present research paper, I'm going to explore the prospective and future society depicted through the prognosticative signs and signals of Kim Stanley Robinson's Mars Trilogy (Red Mars (1993), Green Mars (1994), and Blue Mars (1996)) where the new and future society is introduced as “... in Robinson, nanotechnology longevity treatments, but also the digital uploading of 'dead' individuals into either cloned or machine bodies, and the transformation of human beings into a new kind of digital 'posthuman' electronic subject, the Fast Folk.”( Phillip Wegrter, 2009:138) The present trilogy is chiefly connected with the futurism, one of the prominent features of the Science Fiction in which the time travel plays the dominant role to see the life of human being in near future, because apart from the content, the virtues of imagination, fantasy and fancy explore the world of science fiction as “Science-fiction has the interesting characteristic of causing its own predictions to come true” because future scientists “will have read the magazines, seen the stories, and recognized the validity of the science-fiction engineering!”(Campbell, 1948:5,6) Kim Stanley Robinson has jolted the world of science fiction with their monolithic ideas of the future society and human life. His trilogy explores the cosmic consciousness and future awareness. Science fiction throws light on multiple technological, societal, economic, political, educational issues in the contemporary society and how the cyberpunk depicts a future society which is ruled by capitalist multi-nations. Here, post-industrial power where the information serves the most influential trading commodity of the business industry as well as the relationship between the capitalist and the proletariat are also major areas of science fiction as “...the Mars trilogy of Kim Stanley Robinson, one of the few sf writers who treats Marxist and utopian ideas as having vitality in the future.”( Istvan, 2003:121) Most of the novels and stories written by Kim Stanley Robinson carry ecological, cultural and political themes, economic and social justice. Robinson's *The Mars Trilogy* attempts to explore diverse alternatives to modern capitalism and he introduces the future alternative where is the powerful democratic economic system. Kim Stanley Robinson is “generally acknowledged as one of the greatest living science-fiction writers.” (Kreider) Robinson's *The Mars Trilogy*, which is under the study is a series of award winning science fiction explores the life in near future which has the multifaceted face of nature and culture, ecological sustainability, egalitarian, economic and social justice, the moral responsibility of the scientists, sociological and scientific advances made on Mars, while Earth suffers overpopulation and ecological disasters. The texts which are taken for the research project also explore the handling of Space and Time, the handling of characters with superpower, machineries, robots, space voyages, space-ships combined with realism, cyberspace and cultural mongrelization, etc. Robinson has depicted numerous episodes concerning art forms in *Blue Mars*. These art forms include architecture, film, theatre, opera and dance. Here, the some arts demonstrate significant utopian dynamics. It reflects over the ideal society where an imagined and ideal society possesses highly desirable or nearly perfect qualities for its citizens. Nirgal one of the major characters is a native-born Martian who loves the natural world as possible. In *Blue Mars*, Robinson is faithful to the social relations concerned to and required by the artificially re-enacted primitive mode of production. The idea of feral music focused by Robinson emerges in a non-commodifiable form which demarcates hierarchical social status. The present novel also throws light on the utopian integrity with respect to the arts. In the future societal practices of the novel, how some groups share non-capitalist as well as non-hierarchical social relations are powerfully depicted. In this novel,

Robinson intends to explore the future society where is the newly emerging political sensibilities on Mars. In connection with this, William J. Burling comments, "Robinson's depiction of music, in contrast, tentatively but more fully achieves the goal of historically legitimate utopian innovation. His sense of a post capitalist form of art in a changed society' of the sort practiced on Mars might never come to pass." (Burling, 2009:63) *Red Mars* which opens in 2026 and *Red Mars* which is set in the dawn of the 22nd century are complete with the technological, moral, social and political evolution. The Trilogy spans 200 years of future societal, political history. Kim Stanley Robinson, one of today's finest *sf* writers and critics, in his *Red Mars* novel explores the world of spatial, psychological and sociological.

In this way, Robinson's *Mars Trilogy* envisions rich, multidimensional possible future human society. Multiple prognostications of *Mars Trilogy* create fully realized, multidimensional visions of the future life as well as prospective society. Thus, the movement futuristic life in science fiction assists to bring about some visionary and innovative transformations in the society.

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## NAMITA GOKHLE'S *PARO: DREAMS OF PASSION* A SYMBOL OF DELIVERANCE, SELF QUEST AND ANGUISH

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### **Abstract:**

*Namirta Gokhle is a well known Indian English writer she creates a sensation's as an Indian novelist with presenting the various unknown aspects of women's personality in her first novel "Paro dreams of passion" apart from staying on the issues relates to women and society she writes a different points of view about life liberation and suffering with full conviction Namita occupiees a distinction place with realism liberation ,fantasy ,self quest, sexual autonomy and human relation. she provides an image of new women in Paro dreams of passion she merged the themes with urbanization of India and also tries to project the difference between the East-West the main idea of this paper is to present how the singular mind portrayed many women characters and presented it as symbols of multiple themes Paro Priya and narrator mother three takes as a symbol of deliverance self quest and anguish*

**Keywords:** *Emancipation, Quest for self, suffering, women as a center.*

Namita Gokhale received status as an Indian woman writer in English with her first debut novel *Paro: Dreams of Passion* (1984). she creates an impression with her open projection and reacted as bold for its use of erotic language and depiction of extreme sex. It was an instant success in India and abroad .It was a love story with erotic overtones. It is also set as an antecedent to many writers on sexual satires and urban life style. It is a satirical writing on social and cultural structure of Indian especially urban areas like Delhi. This novel concentrates with gender and class dynamics in dealing with issues of Indian women.

In an interview to The Tribune, she reveals her views about her debut novel "*Paro: Dreams of Passion*". She says-

Well, every novel has a life of its own, a sort of Autonomous existence."Paro "reached out to a lot of people ,and I'm grateful that people still remember it so many years later. Yet I do feel that I've grown as a writer.(1)

Her characters were actually union of two or three women whom she knows. She compares her role was merely that of narrator, Priya,Paro,Priya and narrator mother created different images of women which reflect self-liberation: Self quest and suffering .Namita's characters always present a message through their lively presentation in the novel and always stands as a symbol of success in their premises and shares a ranking of success. Her character Paro stands as a figure of lust with her extreme liberation and individuality. With her passion she enjoys a lot with her status and it shows the different classes in the society. This character develop a new perception on woman character .Paro, a special female in the works of Namita Gokhale and whose life is set as a symbol of inhabitant rich of Bombay and Delhi, through the world of privilege and scotch. She is closely watched by the narrator Priya, who lost heart to the sewing machine magnet B.R.to Paro .She has seduced many Lenin, the Marxist. son of a Cabinet Minister :the fat and Sinister Shambhu Nath Mishra, Congress Party eminence grise;Bucky, Test Cricketer and Scion of princely family, Loukas,a homo sexual Greek film director and very nearly Suresh, the lawyer on the make

whom Priya has married. Priya fantasizes about impudent.

It also reflects the social life of upper class nature. I saw B.R. and Paro walk into the room ... She was wearing a silver tissue sari, and positively glittering with diamonds....". (Page- 9)

Sometimes the narrator, Priya describes her fantasizes of appropriating the sexuality of the other. The below statement is clear that there is a similarities between Paro and Priya, it distinct between reality and dream. At certain situations we can treat Priya character as a shadow of Paro. "I did not fantasize, but sometimes I become Paro...." (Page 55) Paro, the beautiful woman, find expression by donning the character of the more sexually liberated woman. Paro confesses herself as a beautiful woman and investing a lot of time and money in maintaining physical attractiveness. As she begins to age and put on weight, Paro tries various things like salads and yoga to maintain her figure as the body is integral to herself image. The middle aged Paro admires Mishra. "I am Paro, and this is my party.... My party is the congress party .... Like a cat in heat". (Page 73) Paro belongs to the elite class and her modern society allows her to take advantages and use men for her personal benefits and try to find her true love and is very self-centered and ambitious. Paro is the product of her own circumstances. Her only fault is that, she fails to rise an appropriate occasion, and give way under the impact of factors beyond her control. She attracted towards the glamorous world outside like B.R., Marcus, Bucky Bhandpur, Suresh, Lenin, Shambu Nath Mishra, and Loukas Leoras. She always got attention and appreciation for her good looks and she achieved all her dreams too, at the end she left alone without saying anything before her death. Finally, Paro death gives a shape to the story. It projects as a mystery. Paro exploited her all lovers without any affection. This is a controversial point in the story. Paro's death leaves the readers in shock and even those who hated her for her frankness and carefree style of living must have certainly felt sad by her unexpected death. Priya is full of remorse and sorrow on Paro's death. Many memories relates to Paro's days gone by. Paro remembered for its sexual explicitness. "Paro was dead. I could not imagine a world without her. I sat and thought for a long time, but...." (Page 151-152) Priya, the Protagonist, who conquer her lower middle class struggle by the end. She maintains self-respect and individuality. The only characters which shows major development in the novel. She depicts the story as she is also a part of characters and eye witness to the situations. Priya's character can be compared with the role of author, at this situation readers never fide difference to authors voice to narrator voice. The novel starts with the statement:

"I am writing about them because I saw myself ...." (Page 1) She starts with an infatuation for her boss, the great B.R., owner of Sita Sewing Machines. The first time she went to his home and fascinated by the affluence and the quietness. She describes as it was a place of heaven in the land and compared herself as a princess and she forgets her surroundings and stars enjoying with her boss. "A strange beatification, a feeling of utter lassitude, overtook me, I forgot that my nails were as chewed and bitten...." (Page 3 & 4) But she was surprised with her boss marriage he married Paro, a daughter of a Brigadier (retd.). She distressed with that news and decided not to go for marriage but she develops eagerness with the tales of her colleagues about Paro's beauty and B.R.'s obvious infatuation. She attended marriage celebrations and describe Paro's personality and charm. With Paro's self-confidence and audacity nature Priya lost her confidence and accepted Paro as a symbol of affluence. She observed upper middle class social style and their polite vacant smiles. The below lines describes the felling of Priya about the nature of upper class social and cultural style: "Their faces, appeared in every way too and ordinary to have bred so exotica creature as the shimmering bride before them...." (Page No.9) Priya shared her life an uninspiring small time layer Suresh from Delhi. He is very sociable and entertained regularly. They enjoyed together in their two-bedroom rented flat. She shifted from lower middle class to middle class enjoyments with her marriage. "My marriage was a middleclass one, much as any other...." (Pg: 19) Priya has another brief experience with her boss B.R. she spent her days with him again in Bombay. She meets B.R. almost every evening and has dinner and wine with him with candle light to convert a romantic environment. At that moment she forgot her age and struggle to return to Suresh clumsy hateful arms. "It was a second youth, a middle-aged

revival of dreams. I had indeed never even dreamt of such passion, and kept delaying the inevitable return to Delhi and....". (Page: 34 & 35) Priya's extramarital affair with B.R damages her relation with Suresh. The struggle of Priya's character clearly exhibited throughout novel. This situation provides a drastic change in the attitudes of Paro and Priya. Paro enters into the personal life of Priya and also tries to change the mind of Suresh. This situation helps us to understand the real natures of the characters. When Priya returns to Delhi she received unusual welcome from Suresh with the interference of Paro in-between them. Suresh is very practical and a man with complete understanding of his wife. He tries to warn his wife when he heard about the relation between his wife and B.R. "I trust you absolutely. But even then it is not good for women from good families to be talked about,". (Page: 40) Apart from these, she was ill treated by her husband and Paro and sometimes beating up with a broom. Here narrator used simple kind of narration to express the nature of three uncommon characters. It reveals the insight of Characters.

"You little bitch.... When we returned home, Suresh was furious. For the first time in our marriage, he hit me. Again and again, angrily, relentlessly, he punched out at my face, my breasts, my thighs, and anything and everything....". (Page-44) She faced a pathogenic situation in her life and gets an abortion after getting Paro's gift. (Page: 64)

Though Priya hate Paro she expressed sorry as a woman with the similar ranking in the society at the end of the novel when Paro's body separated from her soul. 'Paro', I screamed, and rushed to her side. I splashed the watery ice on her wrists, and searched frantically for something to bandage her with....Paro was dead....". (Pages 151 - 152) Priya always fascinated for Paro in this novel. Her flow of narration is recognized as simple and explicit. She never recognized as passion for sex and with her flow of narration she framed some memorable dramatic senses. Priya once adopts a wrong path but correct soon to accept the traditional way of life with her husband Suresh and it leads a happy family life thereafter. Apart from the major characters like Paro and Priya, Namita portrays number of minor women characters like Ivy and Mary, friends and coworkers of Priya; Anita, B.R.'s private secretary and narrator's mother. Namita's understanding in the development of women is very convincing. She creates a pathetic situation of an Indian woman character like a widow. She is narrator's mother and nameless character in the story. She is like a Silver screen mother and compared as a particular model to the script writers. She faced a lot of struggles to lead her life. She lost her husband at early days and she had two children Priya and Atul. It set as a best example to understand the life of below middle class. This character creates a sense of sympathy in the minds of readers. She suffered with health problems for a long time and she lost her life after four years of Priya marriage. "My mother was still the same....that she died of, four years later....". (Page:21)

Namita Gokhale's *Paro* is a story of many women characters which reflects and shares their experiences. Paro stands as a symbol of over freedom and individuality. She was created with abandoned emotions and freedom and Priya stands as a symbol of Indian womanhood. She always quest for self-identity and she struggled with the differences of mind and heart. These two characters stand a difference between reality and fantasy. Commenting upon her fictional discourse, Namita Gokhale states-

It's strange, but often I write about things before  
They happen to me or to those around me. I used  
to get terrified by these coincidences until a very  
Intelligent woman explained to me that writers are  
Intuitive and often carry a field of prescient energy.  
Otherwise every writer I know cannibalizes  
Experience, its inevitable.(2)

Namita credited a remarkable reputation with not only in the creation of major characters like Paro and Priya but also able to depict minor characters with the same attention. Namita's art of story-telling, her deep understanding of human nature and her vivid expressions, have earned long-lasting place in Indian English fiction. She was treated as capable and sincere writer who treats her characters, with special

attention and sympathy. Her heroines have an obsession with painting nails and removing nail paints, they wish to wipe out memories and repainting them to start life again she takes a unique position with her characterization and simple narration among Indian English women writers.

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**THE INDIAN DIASPORA: SEARCHING FOR UPROOTED ROOTS**

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Writers of the diaspora often rewrite history, and frame new narratives of family, society and nation with a desire to revisit the past. It is here that memory and nostalgia play a very important role. The diasporic writer occupies a kind of space that is one of exile and cultural solitude. Homi Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* calls this space the third space, a wandering people of the diaspora marks a “shifting boundary that alienates the frontiers of the modern nation.” (P. 189-190, *Critical Responses to Kiran Desai*)

The present paper aims to examine the works of writers such as Salman Rushdie, Balachandra Rajan, M.G. Vassanji, V.S. Naipaul, Jhumpa Lahiri, Gautam Malkani, Shiva Naipaul, Tabish Khair and Shauna Singh Baldwin. These writers represent the traumas of Indian diasporas.

Diaspora is a dispersal or scattering of the individuals originated in India to the other land of the globe. In fact, it is writing of Indian expatriate that demonstrates literary traditions, culture within the Indian Diaspora. It shows deep affinity and nostalgia of an individual in terms of the nation, culture and tradition at large.

Such memories mirror the experiences in writing within and without. It is a journey from the presence to absence or vice versa. In this context, India is the presence in the form of memory, deeply resides within the individual and accumulates the cultural experiences in comparison and contrast with the other. The presence of India in the guise of an individual loss generates the corpus of Diasporic literature. It has really become an integral part of Indian writing in English, postcolonial writing. It can also be termed as the literature of exile and immigration. It goes back over to the postcolonial narratives of Indian diaspora sketched by diasporic Indian writers. It mainly focuses on the conflict of inner and outer experiences of an individual, migration, cultural hybridization and nostalgia and cultural alienation. The texts demonstrate the sensibility of the expatriate authors. In Rushdie, the readers simply notice individuation and self-definition whereas the conquest of rootlessness in Jhumpa Lahiri. One can also come across the cultural inbetweenness in B. Rajan and the diasporic sensibility in Naipaul. The different perspectives of diasporic writers make the literature unique in Indian Writing in English. The narration of migration cannot be a fiction but it is the factual experience of the expatriate. It is a product of individuation and self-definition. It is a kind of travel literature journeying from the past to the present or lingering nostalgia to the painful reality. Migration demonstrates a change wherein a change is inevitable for an individual. The change thus leads to the loss of the identity that gives a way to revelation and expression in Diasporic writings. It is an endless conflict of the individual between the self and otherness, his old and new identity and dream and reality. The migrant writer is not of any imagination and the fantastic world outside. He is to experience the world through imagination.

Indian Diasporic literature is a ubiquitous literary note in the World Literature today. Displacement and settlement of an individual elsewhere, that is, far away from the homeland plays a vital role in Diasporic writing. It is quite a natural thing for an individual to seek a job in the foreign countries for better prospects. This aspect enlarges the scope of Indian Diasporic literature. In the diasporic writings of Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, Jhumpa Lahiri and V.S. Naipaul, one comes across rootlessness and

homelessness. It is a search for uprooted roots, lost identity and self, ending in failure resulting into homelessness to nostalgia. Home instinct and transformation of the identities is a core all diasporic writings.

In the Post-independence of India, the Indian Diasporic community became cognizant. The writer such as Raja Rao was an expatriate even before the independence of India. On the other hand, Nirad C. Chaudhuri stayed in England. The literary contribution of Indian Writers like Naipaul and Rushdie is immense in this regard. Their theme of writings is deeply rooted into sense of displacement. They put forth a geographical dislocation, a socio-cultural sense of displacement, homelessness and rootlessness through diasporic writings. V.S. Naipaul epitomizes the term 'Indian Diaspora'. During the rule of British Empire, his grandparents were sent to serve as plantation workers in the foreign lands. The writer was born in the small town of Chaguanas on the island of Trinidad. He lives in England but it is a symbolic manifestation of an act of self-imposed exile on his part. Most of his writings deal with a sense of homelessness, unfriendliness and rootlessness. His most acclaimed novel *A House for Mr. Biswas* was published in 1961. Mr. Mohun Biswas is modeled upon his father Seepersad Naipaul in this novel. It presents his nostalgic memories of childhood. Mr. Biswas got free from the clutches of the extended Tulsi family and became a tragic character. Mr. Biswas's search for a new house is a search for belongingness, that is, unto uprooted roots. He is restless in an alien land. Cross-culturalism is the part of any diaspora and Naipaul proves no exception for this. A Caribbean writer with Indian origin living in England is an example of cross-cultural influence.

The diaspora has cross-cultural issues. It shows a stress between the source and the target cultures. Most of Naipaul's life deals with a young man recently arrived in the England of 60s to make his way in the world. Willie Chandran, the protagonist of the novel re-invents himself properly and attempts to "Re-learn everything he knew" (Naipaul 58). Willie's problems emerge out of his cultural displacement. He searches for the uprooted roots i. e. a sense of belongingness, not yet found anywhere due to alienation. This sense of alienation is apparent in his speech when he leaves Ana, 'I can't live your life any more. I want to live my own' (Naipaul 136). Thus, Willie has a psychological trauma of cultural displacement and a constant search for his own belongingness.

Rushdie was born on 19th June 1947 in Bombay but in 1967 his parents moved to Pakistan. The Rushdie has not accepted this drastic change. He belonged to three countries altogether but was rootless and directionless. A sense of displacement needs to be underlined in this context. His debut novel *Grimus* deals with the plight and predicament of alienation and a sense of estrangement. *Flapping Eagle* is a central character who acts like an immigrant. He newly arrived in a country, which is different from his native land. He experiences cultural dislocation and difference. He seeks to assimilate into the culture and values of the alien country.

Rushdie points out through his writings about the formation of a hybrid identity which is a product of cultural dislocation, inculcation of new cultural values into the mind. It is merged into the nostalgic memories of the native land and extreme unwillingness to be the part of adopted home. This is the point where the amalgamation and assimilation of new and old cultural values become impossible. Rushdie experiences the multiplicity of disparate cultural values echoing and directing towards the uprooted roots, i.e. belongingness, for instance, in *Midnight's Children* and *Shame*. In *Midnight's Children*, Saleem Sinai, the protagonist journeys through India, Pakistan and Bangladesh without settlement. The cultural dislocation causes numerous problems. The characters have an eternal quest of imaginary homeland. In a real sense, every diasporic literature longs for the lost homeland, trauma and nostalgia. It is a nostalgic journey from the attachment to the detachment, rootedness to rootlessness, belongingness to alienation and hopes to hopelessness. His *Shame* deals with the story of an expatriate. It presents the shamelessness and greed of the ruling elite. It is a trauma of being an outsider rather than an insider. It is a cultural, geographical change.

As Rushdie himself explained,

It may be that writers in my position, exiles or emigrants or expatriates, are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back, even at the risk of being mutated into pillars of salt. But if we do look back, we must also do so in the knowledge which gives rise to profound uncertainties that our physical alienation from India almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost; that we will, in short, create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind. (10)

Amitav Ghosh is a writer of the Indian diaspora. He is born in Calcutta on July 11, 1956, moves to Delhi for higher studies and lives in New York. In 2008, he published *Sea of Poppies*, the first part of Ibis trilogy deals with the colonial period of India and the novel describes migration of the indentured labourers. Deeti is the protagonist of the novel who destined to die in her husband's funeral pyre. She is rescued by Kalua. Later on, they eloped together to the land in a ship called Ibis. In this context, diasporic writing emerges out of forced or willing scattering of the people on the alien land. It poses a number of issues regarding to the plight and predicament of the poor people, laboring in Mauritius in the hope of a better prospect, endless suffering in the name of money, loss of identity and homelessness. Ghose writes about the historical records of the first generation of workers who leaves their native land but never returns. They finally settle in a foreign country where they lose their identity and the self. Thus, he presents the historical accounts of the *girmityas* in his writing.

Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Jhumpa Lahiri writes about the crisis of identity and belongingness in her novels. She was born on July 11<sup>th</sup>, 1967 in London and later her family moved to the United States. *The Namesake* (2003) deals with the life of Gogol Ganguli, the American-born son of Ashoke and Ashima Ganguli. The American society takes Gogol as its victim and he attempts to break free from the shackles of Indian traditions in order to be accepted by the American World. He is an American Born Confused Desi, who has no answer to the question: "Where are you from?" Here is a clash of cultures that results into the submission of loyalty to India and America. Ashoke and Ashima desire to cling to their roots for Gogol. As Lahiri opines,

Although he can understand his mother tongue, and speak it fluently, he cannot read or write it with even modest proficiency. On trips to India his American Accented English is a source of endless amusement to his relatives . . . living with a pet name and a good name, in a place where such distinctions do not exist - surely that was emblematic of the greatest confusion of all. (118). He continues,

He knows that *deshi*, a generic word for "countryman", means "Indian", knows that his parents and all their friends always refer to India simply as *desh*. But Gogol never thinks of India as *desh*. He thinks of it as Americans do, as India. (Lahiri 118)

Gogol is torn between India and America. It is an inner conflict between tradition and his individual self. In America, he feels himself absolutely alien. At the end of the novel, he realized his heritage and the value of his Indian identity. In her latest novel *The Lowlands* (2013) Lahiri seeks to portray a sense of dislocation. It is a story of Subhas and Udayan, brothers. Udayan gets involved in the Naxalite movement. Subhas goes to United States to pursue higher studies. Udayan is killed in a police encounter and Subhas marries Gouri, the young, pregnant wife of Udayan. Gauri, while living in Rhode Island never recovers from the guilt of marrying her husband's brother. Bela, the daughter shows nostalgia for the native language as she passes a group of Bangladeshi construction workers at the end of her street in Brooklyn. Home and dislocation become the central themes in the writings of Indian diasporic writers. Diasporic experience emerges from memory. It is a memory of loss, homelessness, a sense of alienation and detachment with the alien country. Diasporic literature bridges a gap between two disparate cultures, which never meets.

The essence of Diaspora literature is mirrored in the portrayal of home, nation, and nostalgic sensibilities of the writer who locates themselves in the new culture. The overseas Indians and the existence of Indian Diaspora play a vital role in the World literature today. Thus, the Indian diaspora acts as a bridge between two countries and strengthens their bi-lateral ties. India and its diaspora enrich mutual interest and a deeper understanding of the self and the other.

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## FEMININE FIRE IN THE NOVELS OF ANITA NAIR

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Freeman defines feminism as, “Practical as well as theoretical, it illuminates possibilities for the future as well as criticizes the limitations of the present” (Freeman XIX-xx). Feminism is a powerful tool for voicing some of the basic concerns and aspirations of women. It is a mode of existence in which woman is free of the independent syndrome. Feminism opposes women's subordination to men in the family and society. The recent trends in feminist literature pictures that it is possible for women to live independently in the world. Feminism is a powerful tool which voices against male chauvinism. It is not a question of gender equality but gender independence, not just women's liberation but women's autonomy. Many feminists portray vividly the problems of women. Anita Nair is one among them and her feministic perspective is an eye opener to all.

Anita Nair, a popular Indian English writer was born at Mundakottakurissi, near Shoranur in Kerala state and studied in Chennai. After that she returned to Kerala and completed B.A in English language and literature. Then she took up a job of a creative director in an advertising agency in Bangalore, where she wrote her first book, a collection of short stories *Satyr of the Subway*. Her works include *The Betterman* (2000), *Ladies Coupe* (2001) *Malabar Mind* (1997) *Where the Rain Born* (2003) *Mistress* (2005) *Living Next Door to Alise* (2007) *Good Night and God Bless* (2008) and *Lessons in Forgetting* (2010)

Anita Nair's novels represent a spectrum of women of the twentieth century India educated and uneducated, tradition and modern. She explores the strength of women characters and their struggle with challenges in creating their own identity. Her characters are realistically drawn. They are bold, courageous and daring and come out with full strength in order to free themselves from the oppressive society. They experience freedom and courage to find a new world for themselves. Anita Nair expressed in her novels hope never dies, happiness can be found through her characters.

Anita Nair deals with new themes and experiments with new techniques and approaches. This article *Feminine Fire in the novels of Anita Nair*, is an attempt to study Nair's voice against female oppression and the problems of women. She portrays different stories through her characters in the novel *Ladies Coupe*. She analyses six women characters in the novel. It discovers the inner source of dynamism and creative well spring.

Anita Nair in her *Ladies Coupe* pinpoints the sixth passenger as a feminist. She finds herself and takes upon herself the responsibility of her thirteen year old son. She tells Akhila that,

“Liberation is meaningful, if we donot confine women within the bounds of family. Thus marriages make women submissive. The ideal way of making her automonus is to sever this bond and make her empowered and brushes aside male chauvinism” (LC 46)

Anita Nair explores into the hearts of women in the novel *Ladies Coupe*. The women in this novel are silent in their male dominated homes but get a chance to communicate in the special 'female space' of the ladies coupe. It deals with the life of six Indian women belonging to different backgrounds in the train journey. They are women of different ages, experiences and social strata, Despite the different shades of experiences of their life, the overall conclusion is that women are secondary in their importance. They have

one thing in common as Janaki said,

“I am a woman who has always been looked after. First there was my father and my brothers, then my husband. When my husband is gone there will be my son waiting to take off from where his father left off. Women like me end up fragile. Since ages woman had been made to feel that they were inferior by nature. Though there are discussions and laws regarding equality, in reality it is a myth. Some men might be sympathetic to women's issues but only women themselves what they felt and wanted. The ladies in the coupe introspect and ask themselves and the answer is 'happiness'. Akhila's definition is “Happiness is being free to choose one's own life; to live it the way one wants” (LC 66)

The atmosphere in ladies coupe is very intimate and friendly. Akhila understands the meaning of life for the first time when she is with the other five co-passengers. Akhila's friend tells her that she has got the reservation in the ladies compartment where she would be “stuck with five other women who will all want to know the story of your life” to which Akhila replies, “that's what exactly what I need.” (7) The Passengers shed all their inhibitions and talk freely.

Each of the character narrates the story of her life as the train chugs a head. When Akhila's father dies the family responsibility falls on her fragile shoulders. She has been offered her father's post as a clerk in the income tax department. While caring for the family her own needs are shelved and put in cold storage. Her needs are taken for granted when her own siblings thrive like parasites on her. They milk every opportunity to benefit their lives through Akhila. Even her mother does not think of her well-being. Her brother Narayan joins the factory as a mechanic. Narsi, the youngest brother becomes a lecturer and marries the daughter of the college principal. When Padma, her younger sister grows up her marriage is planned but no one thinks about Akhila. She is the breadwinner of the family and bears the burdens of others like work horse.

Akhila's life is restricted. She lives not by her own desires but according to the expectations of her family members. Her life consists of office, home and nothing more. She becomes a creature of routine mechanical life, catching the same train every day, wearing a starched cotton saree each day and minding her own business. She is the eldest in the family, still she is expected to ask her brother's permission. Though she is financially independent she is tied up by her family member's decision. She is heavily loaded with the burdens of the family and experiences an erosion of life.

Akhila sorts out her own problems with clarity and arrives at the conclusion that she needs education, which can give her a source of firm footing. She understands her own needs and begins to take care of herself. Her 'self' begins to take form and shape. She decides to come out with a life of her own. She is the symbol of feminine strength and grace.

“On her thirty-fifth birthday, she decided to get herself an education. She enrolled in the open university for a Bachelor of Arts degree. Akhila chose history as her main subject. There is probably no one more suited to study history than a spinster, she thought. To trace the rise and fall of civilizations. To study the intricacies of what made a certain dynasty behave in a certain manner. To watch the unravelling of life from the sidelines. To read about monarchs and concubines; wars and heroes; to observe and no more.

Akhila's yearnings for tenderness and erotic fulfillment are never verbalized. They exist only in dreams and her unexpressed sub-consciousness. Her craving for physical pleasure is mirrored in her dream where she experiences the touch of male fingers. She is now emboldened to seek out emotional nutrients in order to cater to her sensational starved body. The passion in her catches fire when she meets Hari. She then experiences the flow of happy life. She yields herself to the feelings and emotions with Hari. For the first time in her life she enjoys the feel of being touched and fondled and gains a vein of strength. Akhila gradually discovers what love is and how it works out in her life. She is capable of building a new life for herself. She senses that she is very close to some deep experience and muses happily. She feels that she is successfully journeying towards the source of fulfillment.

When Akhila got off the train at Kanyakumari, she is new Akhila. The new found confidence makes her to book a call to Hari. Her decision is her rebellion against the society and its repressive forces. She loves Hari and desires life more. She expects that her life with Hari turns a new leaf in her better life. Thus the feminine fire in her transforms her to enter into a successful and harmonious life.

The character Margaret in ladies coupe experiences physical, mental and spiritual crises. She keeps on changing till she finds a state where she is happy and peaceful. Ebenezer, her husband loves her but does not give importance to her individuality. Initially she always pleases her husband without caring for her own desires. But she is jolted out of this role when she is compelled by him to abort her first child. He controls her completely and insists her to do B.Ed though she wants to do Ph.D. She has to work according to the wishes of her husband. He irritates her every now and then. He often nags her and finds fault in her house-keeping and cooking. He doesnot share any household chores. Though she is not satisfied with her marriage life she continues to live with him patiently. He plays a dual role by showing artificial politeness and warmth to her. His inner cruelty, ego and constant sarcastic contempt on her make her suffer intensely. She lives a routine, mechanical life. There is a change in her life only when she sees the death of James, the gold fish. This moment proves to be a turning point in her life. She begins to hate him for suppressing her life continuously. She tries to take revenge on him more and more.

Ebe is a lover of food and she pampers him with food and sex so that he becomes fat and loses his vanity and cruelty. As a result of it he depends on her more and more. In the beginning he controls her and dominates her whole being completely but now she holds him completely. She revolts, retaliates and refuses to be subordinate. She lives a life of her own. She gets a daughter and her life becomes happier. Finally she achieves her goal in life.

Marikolunthu in ladies coupe has been raped and it mars her life completely. Her life has been ruined by lust in one dark night. She is very poor and her mother works as a cook at the chettiyar's house. She becomes a child victim of economic repression and suffers a lot. Her mother looks after chettiyar's house and later Marikolunthu is employed to take the responsibility of Sujatha Akka's child. She adores the child and showers him with love and affection but hates her own child, Muthu, who is born after many attempts of abortion. He is the result of her rape by Murugesan. Eventhough her rapist is known he is not punished for it lifelong.

Sujatha uses Marikolunthu as a tool to quench her physical thirst during daytime and her husband tortures her at night. When sujatha understands her husband's illegal relationship with Marikolunthu, she throws her out from the house. She gets odd jobs and lives in Kancheepuram. There is a turning point in her life when she sees the dead body of Murugesan burning at pyre. When she sees Muthu left to tend the pyre she is shocked at the realization that she has reduced her son to a 'Chandala' for no fault of his. All the hatred she has felt in her life went up in the flames.

She feels guilty and loves her child. She decides to take care of him and helps him to progress in life for all she has lost. She fends for herself and takes upon the responsibility of her thirteen year old son. She faces life couragensly and it is revealed when she tells Akhila,

“I'm not telling you that women are weak. Women are strong. Women can do everything as well as men. Women can do much more. But a women has to seek that vein of strength in herself. It doesnot show itself naturally (LC 224).

Janaki has got married when she is eighteen and lives happily. Her married life is a comfortable one. Her husband is caring and she has a son and daughter in-law. Though she lives happily sometimes she feels irritated when her husband wants to control everybody even their grown up son. She gets angry and bursts out when her husband dominates the family members. She says

“You just want to control him you want to control everybody. You want everybody to do your bidding” (LC 30)

Anita Nair's novel *The Better Man* explores the search of a woman to fulfill herself basically as a

human being. It pictures woman's capacity to assert her own rights and individuality in marriage and develops into a full-fledged woman. Anita Nair makes her characters suffer but they have the capacity to come out of it and challenge the world with great vigor. Their sufferings become their strength and weapon to fight against their predicaments. It focuses on the fact that hope never dies, happiness can be found.

Anita Nair places Anjana in a liberal atmosphere. Before marriage she enjoys her world of independence which gives her a profound sense of fulfillment. But after her marriage she has lost her independence. She is eager to lead a healthy life with her husband, Ravindran. She longs for freedom and love but it is only a dream. She is patient and tolerant and endures several injustices perpetrated by her husband. She tries her level best to satisfy her husband but she fails. She wants to give the best to him-but he is not interested in her. Whenever she converses with him, he feels irritated and leaves the place immediately. Though he has done injustices to her she is always ready to perform her duty. She is very much interested to know about the likes and dislikes of her husband. She feels like a stranger in her husband's home.

After four months, for the first time in her married life her husband discusses with her for a longtime about his business. He plans to give up the house and starts a new factory on his own. She is really happy on that night and enjoys the conjugal bond with him. Anjana has to understand him because she stands for an Indian wife who is brought up in an atmosphere to follow her tradition and culture.

Ravindran's business fails and he decides to start a new one. He is a selfishman and wants to achieve his ambition in business alone but not in family life. He doesnot give importance to family and also doesnot care for the feelings and emotions of Anjana. He rarely spends time with her and their relationship is affected due to their lack of communication. There is misunderstanding between the couple. He lacks confidence in his business as well as life and so he attacks Anjana. Though her expectations are not fulfilled by him she is not depressed on the other hand she realizes that life has always been made possible. She finds a job for her and feels fulfillment in it.

Anjana has been victimized by the customs and practices of the society in which she lives. She feels that Indian marriage system brings only man and woman under one roof without any genuine feelings between husband and wife. Their life is incomplete because of the lack of true relationship. There is no exchange of ideas and it drives them to misunderstand each other. Her marital relationship with her husband is marked by loneliness and improper communication.

Anjana plans to break always from her married life which she considers it as a disaster. She is not ready to accept the traditional image of marriage as a pair of bullocks yoked together signaling a loveless couple. She becomes mature and analyses life in an optimistic manner . Through her realization she comes out of her deserted married life. She understands and focuses life in a crystal clear manner. Anjana is not a passive silent sufferer but she is more concerned in getting on her life. She views future positively and finds a meaningful existence. Finally Anjana breaks the traditional Indian consciousness and creates a world of her own. She is bold and courageous and comes out with full strength in order to free herself from her unsuccessful marriage.

Anjana meets Mukundan and falls in love with him. She gets from Mukundan everything what she has expected from Ravindran. He doesnot ignore her presence or dominate her thoughts. He helps her to regain her freedom and self-identify. When she is with Mukundan she feels comfortable and frees herself from her unhappy married life. Mukundan is an open hearted person and mirrors his character. When Anjana proposes her wish to him. He said,

“Anjana. You must listen to me. I know you think I am a good man, a gentle man. Someone you can depend on completely. I don't know if I am that man you make me out to be. My mother begged me to rescue her and take her away. But I didn't I was afraid of my father and so I make excuses. If I had done as she asked me, perhaps, she might be still alive. That is the kind of man I am . A weak and undependable creature. Do you want to be part of such a man's life?”

When he gives a clear picture of his character Anjana replies,

“All of us have our own weakness but we seldom have the courage to accept them. Or even declare it as you have done now. To me that makes braver than anyone else. I love you. My love tells me that this is right; you are right for me” (BM 244 245).

Anjana moulds to be the elements of both traditional and modern. She aims for uniqueness and autonomy. But she is denied to recognize her identify by Ravindran. So she architects a new lane for herself. She wants to be independent and stands on her own wishes and liberty. Her gratification and stillness urge her to take divorce from her husband. After a long struggle she transforms into a new leaf in the tree of her life. She makes her choices, takes decisions and prepares her mind to start a new life with Mukundan. She exposes everything to him about her past life with Ravindran. Anjana is a puppet in the hands of Ravindran and he treats her as he pleases. As far as he is concerned she is merely a servant who doubles as a whore. She expresses her happiness and comforts in the company of Mukundan. She says “I feel married when I am with you.” (BM 244).

She applies for a divorce so that she would formally marry Mukundan. But Anjana is ready to marry him but for Mukundan his reputation as a member of the community hall committee is more important than his commitment of marriage with Anjana. So he withdraws from her temporarily but later feels guilty of his separation. He meets her again for forgiveness and tries to get united with her. She said, “you are a coward” and moulds herself to face the world courageously. Though she is left alone she becomes self-dependent. She views her future positively to attain success. Her financial independence and self-identify helps her to go ahead with hope and optimism. She proves that woman can achieve anything, everything. Here it is appropriate to quote Swami Vivekanda sayings.

“All power is within her, she can do anything, everything”.

Through her self identify she achieves success in the end. It shows that the novel ends with the note of hope and optimism.

Anita Nair's characters are the symbol of feminine strength and grace. They assert their individuality with sparkling confidence. Though they have suffered from the repressive forces of the society, they revolted against the oppressions and resolved to discover themselves and establish themselves in the society. Finally they attained success and harmony in life.

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## A CRTIQUE ON REALISM AND EXISTENTIALISM IN THE NOVELS OF ANITA DESAI

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Anita Desai's novels are more occupied with thoughts, emotions and sentiments than with the outward actions and achievements. In the exploration of the inner life of her female protagonists, Desai imparts to the reader the whole of the internal aspect of a woman. The plots of the novels are not disconnected or even unrealistic combination of events. A systematic organization is found between the physical environment and psychological atmosphere of the protagonists.

Each of Desai's novels is created out of a specific inner reality and carries the stamp of contemporary times. The researcher feels that the author renews her own emotional and psychological conflicts and experiences as a woman, to communicate the longings of her characters. She connects it with the inner world of her characters. The study illuminates on this aspect of reality that a sensitive woman is dependent on her man to validate her life. Acceptance and genuine love provide for emotional health. Desai's novels reflect the behavior and the psychological make-up of many a woman. The characters are honourable women and they comply with the society's specified standards. But they fail to achieve happiness. In other words, Desai succeeds in procuring the empathetic consideration of the reader, for the frustrations of the female characters that are in a conflict to satisfy the demands of the family and the society. Desai's grasp of reality can be noted in the fact that any woman who cannot confirm to societal or family norms is ill-fated, as is seen in the examples of Maya in *Cry, the Peacock*, and Monisha in *Voices in the City*.

The reality of most marriages is factitious and a dissimulation with the wife walking the tight rope in majority of the cases. But eventually they come to the point where they turn out to be relationships of non-communication. They live under one roof, but without shared lives. The study reveals that the relationship is like the plight of an individual who is tethered to a hard nail, with a limited circumference for his movement. The woman finds it difficult to relate to society without a husband. The reality of the hypocrisy of matrimony is very clear through the study of some of Desai's novels.

The female protagonists are intellectual women who are capable of analyzing their thought processes and behavior patterns. They are always on the onward move. This defines a change in their thinking and actions. The researcher finds that as the novels of Desai progress chronologically, there is a growth of the woman into a liberated and independent personality. Thus the perusal of all the twelve novels shows that the protagonists make a movement from an intense preoccupation and mania with the self to the realization of their positive capabilities. There is evidenced a grand admission of all the assertive traits. Sophie in *Journey to Ithaca*, Lila in *Village by the Sea*, and Sarala in *Custody*, proficiently manage their lives. The climax comes with Dona Vera, Em, Betty and Eric's mother in *The Zig Zag Way*. This in turn leads to a better adaptation with the family and the community. The reconciliation begins with Sita in *Where Shall We Go This Summer?* In *Clear Light of Day*, Bim addresses herself to her worth within the community and the family. She embraces womanhood and at the same time opts out of marriage.

With the characters in *The Zig Zag Way*, the positive traits are clearly evinced. *Clear Light of Day* brings into focus a major issue of all times, that is the acceptance of the equality of rights and opportunities

between men and women. Here one witnesses that woman dwells on the fringes of patriarchy. This trend is seen more clearly in *The Zig Zag Way*. Thus Desai voices out an important aspect of realism—the movement of woman from the subservient wife to an assertive being. At the same time, they do not compromise on the values that sustain life.

A complete and perfect happiness is a delusion, but an amount of joy can be arrived at only through an inner poise. The immense materialism has taken its toll on human relationships. Thus the study proves that there is an aspect of negation or absence in human relationships; may it be a marital, parent-child or sibling relationship. This reality is found to be ubiquitous in modern life. Thus it is found that all relationships are fragile.

The ordeals and afflictions in varied forms, such as physical, psychological, moral or social, bring out in man, sometimes the best and sometimes the worst. *Baumgartner's Bombay* portrays the brutal murder of Hugo by Kurt, who is caught in the throes of addiction. *The Zig Zag Way* portrays Dona Vera as the protector of the Huichols. Dona Vera was once subjected to moral ordeals. Man's conscience is blunted on the one hand, and sharpened on the other. The author's concern for human relations thus, helps her to scrutinize them in various ways.

Man's struggle is not only limited to the outer world, but also continues to his inner self. Almost all of Desai's novels illustrate this point. All her characters suffer perennial agony and anxiety. But poverty and hunger is absent, except in *Village by the Sea*. Degradation of the human soul caused due to poverty, depravity and addiction is seen in *Baumgartner's Bombay* in the character of Kurt. The reason also lies behind the rootlessness caused due to war. One encounters the inadvertent and unwitting nature of life and of goodness.

Anita Desai depicts the Indian social scene in her portrayal of urban life in cities. The individuals reel under the burden of oppression and bondage of the sordid atmosphere of city life. Almost invariably, one finds his/her psyche bruised by the social and cultural pattern. The individual is carried through conflict, detachment and, again, a sense of attachment revolving one after the other. This occurs not only in the familial set-up, but also in the social set-up. The author effectively brings out the effect of childhood experiences and their upbringing on adult personality. The unhealthy behaviour on the part of the individuals could only be attributed to the unhealthy influences of their childhood. Desai's exquisite sense of characterization is evident in her portrayal of young people, children, and old people in a comprehensive manner. The novels are a witness to the author's ingenuity of transforming the female experiences into literature. The frustrations and anxieties, due to a lack of understanding and loving relationships are voiced out in a realistic way. Further the strength emanating from these disillusionments is revealed with equal authenticity. The author stands out as an excellent writer of psychological reality.

Anita Desai is considered as a grass root existentialist. Existential encounter with nothingness is prototypical of human existence. Macquarie diagnoses the human predicament as follows; “Existentialist philosophy had become the most common factor with intellectuals of post-independent India. Aspects of Existentialism are quite evident in the works of Desai. Desai is one of those who have tried to understand closely the predicament of women. During the last three decades her novels and short stories have won her detractors and defenders and a growing number of readers in India and abroad. The aim of my work is to examine the emergence of feminine sensibility as a concept of reality in the fictional world of Desai. Although there are several Indian women writer's writing in English. Desai is chosen for research work because, unlike other writers, she has laid emphasis not only on women characters but on men also. I have chosen the psycho analytical method for my thesis, because, it is interesting to study how complex a human mind is and how differently different characters react to the same situation.

She now ranks with celebrated writers e.g. R.K.Narayan, Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand and Kamala Markandaya and, has like them, made a significant contribution to Indo-Anglian fiction. She is one of the most distinguished women novelists writing in English language and comparable on the world-scene, with

women writers, like Irish Murdoch, Doris Lessing, Margaret Laurence and Elora Nwapa. In appreciation of *Fire on the Mountain*, Paul Scott (who has an established reputation for his own Anglo-Indian fiction) hails it amongst the most distinguished novels he read that year. In the *Times Literary Supplement* an enthusiastic perceptive review of her book, *Games at Twilight*, declares, ". . . she writes extraordinary delicate, lucid English which puts many English authors to shame." She has been awarded the prestigious Sahitya Academy Award for her novel *Fire on the Mountain*, and Author's Guild Award for *Where Shall We Go This Summer?* . Women writers have made considerable contribution to the development of English fiction. In the case of Indian English fiction, however, it is after the Second World War that women writers have enriched the genre, making it compatible in the context of the world literature. Indian women novelists in English, notably Markandaya, Sahagal and Desai have offered convincing creations of a world in which characters live and indicate that the novels written by women novelists have reached maturity.

They forge a style of their own, and reveal a power of artistic selection by which their novels achieve a harmonious effect. These writers particularly share the experience of women in general and transmute these experiences into the form of fiction. The awareness of individuality, the sense of compatibility and incompatibility with their tradition-bound surrounding, the resentment of male-dominated ideas of morality and behavior, problems at home and at places of work or in the society, all come up in the form of a discussion for these women writers. As, Prof. Malashri Lal rightly said: "Indian women writers have consistently refused to be named in the category of feminist writers".

These writers question the universal presumption of the western discourses on the basis that the West is unaware of the Indian traditions and problems of joint family, dowry, illiteracy, purdah, sati and childlessness. They aspire to pinpoint these problems and convey them to critics so that ordinary Indian women can carry out a movement and try to find out a solution. "In the realm of contemporary Indian English fiction", A.N. Dwivedi has rightly argued: "Anita Desai is the first among Indian English novelists to have forcefully expressed the existential problems of womankind; she is the first to have laid bare the inner recesses of human psyche; she is the first to introduce the deep psychological probing of her characters". (Dwivedi 29)

Anita Desai herself describes her creative writings as "purely subjective" thus avoiding those problems, which a more objective writer has to deal with since she depends on observation rather than on the private vision, which she tries to encapsulate in her works to see what the subconscious does to an impressionable person. She is not a social realist in the conventional sense of the term. She is more interested in portraying the response of a sensitive mind in the enveloping world. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar calls her novels: "The intolerable grapple with thoughts, feelings and emotions".

The purpose of her entire writing is to discover for her and then describe and convey the truth of life. Her writing is an effort to discover, underline and convey the truth and the significance by plunging below the surface and plumbing the depths, then illuminating those depths till they seem a more lucid, brilliant and explicable reflections of the visible world. She does not believe that literature ought to be confined within reality.

The fictional world of Desai is located in the corridors of the human consciousness. She is almost obsessively concerned with the dark uncannily oppressive inner world of her intensely introvert characters. Her characters, especially the females, have been portrayed on the verge of psychological breakdown. With a view to capture the prismatic quality of life in her fiction, she uses the stream of consciousness technique, flashbacks and interior monologues. These techniques are appropriately used in capturing authentically a psychological realm, an intensified impression, and a quickened multiplied consciousness. Desai is a subjective writer and believes that total objectivity is impossible. Her dependence on the instinct is so great that when she gets down writing her novel, she has no plot in mind. Her novels gradually and instinctively take their own shape. "Though very reticent about her personal world, Desai has extensively elaborated her views on creativity. She claims not to have any set theories of

the novels. She feels that a writer does not create a novel by observing a given set of theories', he follows flashes of vision and a kind of trained instinct that leads him, not any theories". She feels that writing is not an act of deliberation, vision or choice but a matter of instinct, silence, compulsion and waiting. As an artist she handles the raw material of life and conveys it through a pattern and a design. She is much interested in life with its hopes, frustrations, negations, rejections and chaotic flow of events as she is concerned with the art of giving shape, purpose and wholeness to life. Mrs. Desai elaborates her protagonists in an interview with Yasodhara Dalmia: "I am interested in characters who are not average but have retreated, or been driven into some extremity of despair and so turned against, or made a stand against the general current, it makes no demands it costs no effort. But those who cannot follow it, whose heart cries out 'the great No' who fight the current and struggle against it, know what the demands are and what it costs to meet them".

Anita Desai's characters reveal her vision of life. They share her perception and they set out in quest of meaning. She is often seen as an experimenter who deals with many existentialistic problems and predicaments. Primarily interested in exploring the psychic depth of her female characters, Desai may be said to be doing something unique among the contemporary Indian English fiction writers. Her novels, apart from focusing on the intricacies and complexities of human relationships, inevitably move around the theme of alienation and isolation. According to Usha Bande, her characters can be classified into two distinctive groups: Those who fail to adjust to the harsh realities of life and those who compromise.

The premise, which provides the momentum to her creative activity, is the basic human condition. In a novel, as in life, there are those who always remain outsiders because they cannot accommodate themselves in the world of realities. The complexity of form and theme of Desai's novels, conforming to the broad parameters of Anglo-American tradition of psychological novel, has attracted critical attention. These psychological novels retain the fundamentals of Indian sensibility and socio-cultural ethos. She focused her attention on the status of women in India in the male-oriented and male-defined social and moral codes. She portrays their quest of self-assertion and self-actualization in the face of rigid norms of behaviour in a conformist and status-quo society. Though Desai traverses a broad territory of themes, yet she mainly: . . . focuses on the trials and tribulations, fears and apprehensions, joys and hopes, dilemmas, predicaments, perplexities and paradoxes, in the physical and psychological lives of her characters in general and the protagonists in particular, to mirror the multidimensional reality in all its contours.

She is interested in characters that are not average but are driven into despair and as a result turned against the general environment and trend. She believes that a writer must have certain traits of the head and heart, which are essential for writing a novel. Besides having a creative genius, a novelist must be sensitive and have a power of keen observation so that he can give actual description and pick up the tiny details. In an interview with Jasbir Jain she says: "I think a writer simply has to be an observant person. If he is not going to write a novel any way, which entails so much acute description and also an eye for details. I find certain people tend to take in abstract ideas; others might take in some other aspect of the society they live in. A writer generally tends to pick up the tiny details that others might not notice".

Anita Desai lays special stress on the existential problems of womankind in general and Indian women in particular. Although she does not belong to any feminist movement, yet there is a touch of persuasive feminism in her writings. She marks a revolutionary departure without involving herself in any controversy and is contended to have women protagonists in her novels. She visualizes life for a woman as a series of obligations and commitments. Her themes and characters depict the existential reality and evoke the sensibility of her females. She is constantly concerned with the problems of communication between men and women and has a talent of probing the psyche of her women characters. She depicts the inner world of sensibility and the chaos inside the mind of characters with a special stress on female psyche. The psychological turmoil creates psychic imbalances, which in turn, handicap them in establishing harmonious and gratifying inter-personal relationships. B. Ramchandra Rao feels that in her novels,

environment only adds to presenting: “Each individual as an unsolved mystery.”

Desai's female characters are generally neurotic, highly sensitive but alienated in a world of dream and fantasy. They are separated from their surroundings as an outcome of their failure or unwillingness to adjust with the reality. She deals with the problem of meaninglessness in life and lack of communication not from the philosophical or sociological but entirely from the psychological point of view. As a psychological novelist she tries to delve deep into the emotional build up and crevices of her characters. She employs all techniques of a psychological novel like flashbacks, stream of consciousness, diary-entries, self-analysis and ruminations. She herself confesses about her novels:

“My novels are not reflections of an Indian society, politics or characters. They are part of my private effort to seize upon the raw material of life-its shapelessness, its meaningless . . . despair and to mould it.” (Desai 76) She stands foremost in the line of modern Indian novelists who have tried to portray the tragedy of human soul trapped in the adverse circumstances of life. In fact, we can even say that she employs characters and situations just to bring into limelight, the absurd realities of human existence.

Although Desai cannot be directly related to any feminist movement to secure the complete equality of women with men in the enjoyment of all human rights, moral, religious, social, political, educational, legal and economic, yet she is well aware of the fact that, for Indian women, hearth and heart are two extremes and now they have to strive against their circumstances to break apart from the cordon of customs and redefine themselves. Indian women, since the annals of history have been treated merely as objects to please men rather than to have an identity of their own. The idea of male superiority in India has received religious sanctions. The Rig Veda labelled women as the eternal temptresses driving males to the pleasures of materialistic world. The religious support given to the evils of 'sati', 'purdah', 'devadasini', and 'polygamy' took the enslavement of women a step further.

As Simone de Beauvoir has observed: “As soon as a girl child is born, she is given the vocation of motherhood because society really wants her for washing dishes which are not really a vocation. In order to get her wash to the dishes she is given the vocation of maternity. Many social movements have tried to change this position of women by pin-pointing their resultant helplessness, frustration, anger and rancour and there has been a change for the better albeit, a slow one” (Beauvoir 145)

Anita Desai does not portray women as being strong and self-sacrificing but as helpless and frustrated. She highlights their frustrations, sense of failure and keen awareness of the futility of existence. Her women characters are haunted by the deadly nightmares of imaginary apprehensions conjured up by their flawed nature and, in the process, they disintegrate themselves gradually. The fictional world of Desai is located in the vicinity of female consciousness. She is obsessively and entirely concerned with the depression and oppression of these intensely introverts female characters that are unable to give vent to their emotions. She may be called the spokesperson of our culture as she authentically conveys its problems, uncertainties, complexities and paradoxes and, as evident in her novels, an expert in depicting the reaction of women towards a given situation, for example, apathy of parents, ill-treatment by in-laws, and indifference of the husband. Post-feminists do not agree to the universality of women, their situations and to the solutions of their problems.

Desai's women grapple with social forces working against their individual identity. They definitely are not antifamily or anti-female. They only try to over-power their solitary, marginal and oppressed situation, for; their lives are full of turbulent passions, unfulfilled dreams and chaos. Desai can be considered as a social essayist, though not a social realist in the conventional sense of the term. She is more interested in portraying the response of a sensitive mind to the overshadowing world. There is a touch of persuasive feminism in her novels and she believes that creative literature is more interesting, more significant and overwhelming than the real world. A novelist primarily of thought, emotion and sensation, Desai is constantly concerned with the problem of communication between men and women, the individual and the social world and between parents and children.

Anita Desai has firmly established the psychological novel in the annals of Indo-English fiction. Her contribution, to Indian English fiction has earned both name and fame for her. Man-Woman dichotomy or relationship, East-West encounter, alienation, feminine sensibility etc. are the common themes that we find in her fiction. The novels which I have taken in my thesis are *Cry, the Peacock*, *Voices in the City*, *Bye-Bye Blackbird*, *Where Shall We Go this Summer?*, *Fire on the Mountain*, *Clear Light of Day*, *In Custody*, *Baumgartner's Bombay*, *Journey to Ithaca*, *Fasting, Feasting* etc. have exposed the evidence of the novelists' awareness of several problems related to women, which she has tried to tackle from a psychological point of view. Her novels present an explanation to the long smothered wail of a lacerated psyche. In these novels she deals with the dislocation of normal life of temperament, mal-adjustment in family life. Being a woman novelist she sides more intensely with the heroines of her novels. She is only interested in the exploration of psychic depths of her characters. They are generally neurotic, highly sensitive but alienated in a world of dream and fantasy, separated from their surrounding as an outcome of their failure or unwillingness to adjust with the reality.

*Fire on the Mountain* introduces a new dimension and technique employed by Desai in digging out the bitter relation of social life and the concealed inner tormented psychology and the strange nature exciting or over-burdening the mind of her characters. Thus, Gupta exhibits it as the lyrical fictionalization of the quintessence of existentialism. For, it really dramatizes the peculiarities of the lives and living styles of three women characters who dare to direct their lives completely. Being guided or prompted by their existential zeal, they choose to tread the unusual and less traveled path usually ever dared by an Indian woman in a conservative Hindu society. They encounter quite unexpected or too miserable ending. Thus Choudary blames *Fire on the Mountain* displays skillful dramatization of experiences of certain women embroiled by the cross way of life. The novelist, most unwillingly or out of sheer reality compels her central female protagonist, Nanda Kaul, an overage lady to a self-exile in a quite isolated uncivil mountainous village. To turn her existential view into authenticity, Desai exposes the futile life of a very tender girl Raka, who suffers in isolation without sharing her anguish with anyone. The testimony of Desai's existentialism is further intensified by the presentation of Ila Das, a completely failed careerist, who being quite compelled, chooses to fight back the forces quite dominating and unequal to her strength, resulting in her tragic death. A more intellectual pursuit of the novel will reveal to the readers, the aptness of Desai, exhibited in focusing the alienation of human existence by a hostile environment and the sheer toil one encounters to prove his/her survival of the fittest.

In *Bye-Bye Blackbird*, the concerns get more civilization bound. England and India are two phases or better, two faces of human condition. Surprisingly what we thought was more civilized, is all the more discriminative, ugly and conservative. India, however, is no solution either. Many of us emphasize that Adit and Sara come back to India and ignore the fact that Dev stays back. Adit's return gives us the recognition that our land is the real one and after the mirage, here lies the 'nirvana.' Whether this assertion is genuine or not, is debatable. In a brilliant movie, *Disha*, in which the protagonists were enacted by Raghbir Yadav and Nana Patekar, two laborers move to Mumbai from a village in search of bread. The puritan Nana hates Mumbai, remains knotted to his native place, and dreams of returning to green fields and fresh air once again. Raghbir Yadav is more relaxed. He enjoys Mumbai as much as he can, even its cheaper side. In the end the one who hated the cosmopolitan, is forced to stay there because his *family* (wife, to be particular) has adjusted to his absence. Raghbir Yadav, however, after happily enjoying, graduating to adulthood, laughingly returns to the countryside. So it happens in this novel. The erratic patterns of life are such that reverse racist Dev stays back and the one with English wife come back. Both are back. This staying back and coming back are strange things. It has several connotations. It denotes places. It also indicates coming and going away from one's own self, the true self. From all the three angels, Adit moves to England, marries an English girl, suffers humiliation, receives a friend, undergoes a headlong change in perceptions, stories all the complexes regarding colonizer-colonized mania and at last

returns to the land that frustrated his efforts in the first place.

*Where Shall We Go This Summer?* is one of the most outright Desai novels and Sita an equally typical Desai heroine. There is lavishness around. She is materially luxurious. The husband has no apparent drawback; the children are equally normal, assertive, and rebellious as according to their age. Things would have been perfect for Sita but for her itching within. A traditionally settled woman, in every respect, Sita is psychologically outraged. She is a sleepless, unsteady, and worried soul. She is pregnant. She does not want to give birth to the child in the unreal world of Mumbai. The island where her father used to be the overshadowing figure in her childhood, temporarily symbolizes for her the real world. As expected the real world shatters her hopes. The father comes very close to being revealed as incestuous as also tricky and manipulating. The island and its people are no innocent. Children are not a source of delight or pride for this dissatisfied woman. She returns to Mumbai in a resigned, tired, and defeated way. Mumbai or island peace or anxiety, father or husband, children or island people, memories or realities-everything is unsettlingly disastrous for Sita. A doomed Desai protagonist, Sita's quest is also doomed to go on forever.

*Fire on the Mountain* is a special novel and her story's unusual child character, Raka. While Nanda and her story with all its poignancy, stand for the Desai phenomena of unfulfilling experience. Raka is a natural entity. While in Nanda, the tension between her desired state and circumstances of life allow her no peace of mind, Raka, as a child, is not even aware of the duties that life demands. Nanda shows the carefree nature of wild existence. Raka's quiet house on the ridge of the mountain adopts and accepts her in a most natural manner. She belongs to this place which is full of wild beauty. Hills, rivers, the peculiar hilltop, stony hillside, grass or bushes of Spanish broom, insects, and leaves-all accept her in a unique way. Raka knows the forest. She knows many secret shortcuts within the jungle. She wants to inhale the grace of the jungle, all alone. This is the one joy, she cannot share with anyone. She simply loves solitude. The description is such that one feels that the relationship between Raka and Nature is that of a worshipper and her most private idol. Her grandmother had planned to ignore her, but the way in which Raka ignores her grandmother proves that she is not going through any deliberate course of action. It is her temperament to be alone. For her the forest is more real than human beings.

She ignored her so calmly, so totally that it made Nanda Kaul breathless. She eyed the child with apprehension now, wondering at this total self-sufficiency of nature and also of those who are one with her, the corrupting influence of human company, the joys of solitude, the dialogue of a human being with herself, the essential state of being are some of the dimensions that Desai adds to her vision of life in this novel.

*Fasting, Feasting* strikes one as a major statement on Desai's part. East and West are juxtaposed. Fasting reflects Eastern conditions and feasting connotes western habits. Through dietary symbols, the author has evoked, has effectively portrayed the spirit of two different parts of the world. Fasting, starving, lacking in means, depriving oneself of pleasures or getting them denied by others, negating self and its demands-these methods, which, are so common in India evoke repulsion. On the other hand, feasting, overeating, enjoying physical and material life, leading an unrestricted life, and uncovering flesh-these Western motifs do not bring peace and bliss. The idea of feasting has been clearly separated from sumptuousness. The barrenness of mind is compensated by gluttony. Of the two pointers, it is difficult to say, which one is fouler. The choice between Milanie's pool of vomit and Uma's hysteria caused by deprivation is no choice at all. We, as readers, can take these statements to be warning bells for cultures of extremes.

The crisis that Desai presents is that of the whole human race. It is the difference between 'is' and 'ought.' We may supposedly define 'is' but the 'ought' part always evades clarification. What a character in a novel thinks is the situation and whatever vague solution s/he envisages are forever incomplete and as discouraging as the problem itself. That, in my opinion, is the key to literary creations in general and this author in particular. We are endlessly baffled at our own flimsy, temporary, and unstable state. Whatever

we thought was substantial, we find to be evaporating. We build our lives on pillars of money, morality, reputation, recognition, reciprocity, power, pleasure, future planning and so on and so forth, only to find in the process their sheer failure and deceit. If this were philosophy, what would be practical wisdom? To my mind, Anita Desai, along with other thinking minds, questions our hopeless certainty at our imagined knowledge of worldly wisdom, our false notion of self-assurance, our false joy in the unproductive routine of life, in short, our state of being.

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## THE LOCALE: A NARRATIVE DEVICE IN THE FICTION OF VIKRAM SETH

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### **Abstract:**

*There is no exaggeration in remarking that the publication of two books of Indian English fiction heralded a new era of Indian English fiction; Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* in 1981 and Vikram Seth's *The Golden Gate* in 1986. These two books opened the gates of Western readability and marketability of Indian fiction. The present paper is an attempt to justify the experimentalist approach of Vikram Seth with regards to his fiction. Seth has travelled widely and lived in different geographical areas. His experience has provided him an opportunity to get familiar with the life and culture of Britain, California, India and China. He is the first Indian writer to write a verse novel, *The Golden Gate*, he wrote a classically realistic novel set in India of 1950s *A Suitable Boy* and finally he dealt with a modernist love story of a musician, setting the whole story in the musical world of *Baath and Beethoven* in England, *An Equal Music*. The present paper focuses on the locales of the three novels and tries to show how Seth deals with these different locales at ease. Thus, an attempt to prove the mastery of Vikram Seth in handling different cultural backgrounds is made. By shifting from one cultural background to other Seth seems to justify his position as a global writer.*

**Key Words:** *locale, cultural background, global, verse novel, counterculture.*

Indian English novel has passed through a tremendous form of transformation from its initial days to the present time and has attained a whole new intensity in terms of concept, marketing, presentation, business and impact on the Indian Culture. There is no exaggeration in remarking that the publication of two books of Indian English fiction heralded a new era of Indian English fiction; Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* in 1981 and Vikram Seth's *The Golden Gate* in 1986. These two books opened the gates of Western readability and marketability of Indian fiction. The publication of the classic novel *Midnight's Children* in 1981 jolted the very foundation of Indian English fiction. The tradition bound Indian novelists might have been shocked by the stylistic as well as linguistic innovations of the novelist. Rushdie develops the story of his protagonist along with the national story of India. Seth has travelled widely and lived in different geographical areas. His experience has provided him an opportunity to get familiar with the life and culture of Britain, California, India and China.

Seth is an experimentalist. He marks a departure from other Indian writers in several ways. Every new book of Seth creates a fresh departure in form as well as in content. He has dealt with variegated genre of literature; poetry, travelogue, libretto, novel, biographic memoir etc. Each book is set in different cultural landscape and breaks the ground in terms of form and genre. However, whatever form he uses, with whatever locales he deals with he finds himself at ease. He wrote some excellent poetry in perfect meter and rhyme, he is the first Indian writer to write a verse novel, he wrote a classically realistic novel set in India of 1950s and finally he dealt with a modernist love story of a musician, setting the whole story in the musical world of *Baath and Beethoven* in England.' GJV Prasad in his *Vikram Seth : An Anthology of Recent Criticism* finds difficult to place such a talented and promising writer "in the fast forming canons of Indian English Fiction or the Third World Novel or the English Novel or even in the contemporary Novel

(from around the World)" (Prasad 15).

Vikram Seth's first novel *The Golden Gate* is written in verse and the setting, the plot, the language, the characters, the style everything is purely Californian. It was a bold experiment to compose an entire novel in sonnet. Seth did it successfully. The novel has been highly praised by critics all over the world. Seth depicts the Californian life style with ease and lucidity of a native writer. His characters are people of different descent with variegated cultural background. John Brown is an American, Janet Hawaya is of Japanese descent, Liz Dorati is an Italian immigrant and Phil is a Jew. The story of the novel centers round John's search for a mate. The novel is remarkable in its detailed vivid descriptions. It deals with seemingly trivial to more serious social issues. Seth also sheds light on some serious social and political issues like world peace, nuclear weapons, homosexuality and the capitalist culture etc. By weaving the story of current socio-political with a modern man's desire to have a soul mate, Seth has created a masterpiece of the time.

Seth has used the locale of San Francisco as the setting of the novel. His familiarity with the life in the bay area of San Francisco equipped him to portray the life of people in detail. He successfully enlivens the life of Yuppies and urban officials, artists and ordinary people. He has vividly captured the people and places of the bay area. The beautiful and graphic descriptions of the city of San Francisco make it possible to regard the novel as 'a truly Californian novel'. Seth remarks that "... it was not his detachment but rather his love for California that was the most valuable to him in writing the book ... One can't come with a cold and objective eye from outside and then write with affection about a place. One must have lived in that place and not just observed for years" (Leslie 3)

San Francisco has often been a magnet for America's counterculture. During the 1960s San Francisco was the centre of hippie culture. Thousands of young people poured into the Haight Ashbury district of the city during 1960s. In the arena of rock music, San Francisco sound achieved international fame and name with such acts as 'Jefferson Airplane' and the 'Grateful Dead.' During the 1980s and 1990s San Francisco became a major focal point in North America.

After his early education in India, Seth went to Oxford and then Stanford. "I thought, oh my God, thick-headed beach boys and no intellectual conversations. But then I met people who were both very intelligent and interested in things of the mind, and also who would think nothing about teaching you to swim butterfly. For me it was like a revelation in a wonderful way. That's why *The Golden Gate*, in a way, for all its tragedy, it's a happy book."(np)

Seth takes into account the minute detail of the life in San Francisco. He gives the touch of Californian life and culture in the true sense. He depicts the socializing activities like house making parties and wine making picnics, their relationships with the pets, their past time activities etc. Seth includes all culture specific activities of the people in bay area to make it a purely Californian novel. Amid all these culture specific details he presents the raptures and cracks within the social fabric of the so called comfortable life of the professional class.

Seth portrays the life of the group of young professionals in the city of San Francisco in its manifold charm. He presents the A to Z of life in San Francisco. Even most trivial detail like the bumper stickers and billboard slogans seen while driving does not escape his notice. He takes into account the most contemporary disputes on moral standard also. His narration includes the issue of friendship, love, work, play, and sexuality, the nuclear age, single parent child relation, death, art, relationship with the pet etc. There are wonderful descriptions of the past time activities of scrabble and chess playing, symphonies and art critics, interesting party scene and personal resolution through personal dating advertisements. An anonymous reviewer from the Silicon Valley, California observes; "It is a total, unparalleled pleasure to wallow in the seductive cadences of Seth's poetic novel, and then marvel at the no doubt obsessive and somewhat twisted brain which has come up with the words, rhymes and humor in this book. In the style of long, long ago, this book is the only one that I have ever read which brings poetry totally and absolutely to

life. It is poetry which details and narrates, talks about punk rock bands, and watches love come and go. This is a great experience.”

His second novel *A Suitable Boy* is an epic of Indian panorama. The novel has a monumental length of 1,349 pages. It is structured into 19 well-craned sub sections. The novel centers round Mrs. Mehra's search for a suitable boy for her second daughter Lata but thematic preoccupations of Seth in the novel are multi-fold. The narration moves around the story of four families- the Mehra's, the Chatterjees, the Kapoors and the Khan family. The novel presents the panorama of India after independence. Seth very skillfully and artistically manages to interweave all the issues of political, social and even religious conflict and strife in Indian society centering the plot on the search for a suitable boy for Lata. He offers a huge, thick and multi-layered slice of Indian life in its veracity. The technique of narration employed in the novel is third person narrative style. At the time of modernist and post-modernist writings, Vikram Seth has preferred the traditional mode of novel writing. The realism presented in the novel is social realism; *A Suitable Boy* is a classic and has marked an important landmark in the hierarchy of Indian English fiction.

Seth has used the locale of an imaginary city of Brahmapur and Calcutta as the setting of the novel. The story moves between these two cities, with excursions to New Delhi, Kanpur and Lucknow. Brahmapur with its North Indian identity represents India as a whole. Brahmapur is situated in the fictitious northern state of 'Purva Pradesh'

This little fire was indeed the center of the universe. For here it burned in the middle of this fragrant garden, itself in the heart of Pasand Bagh, the pleasantest locality of Brahmapur, which was the capital of the state of Purva Pradesh, which lay in the center of the Gangetic Plains, which was itself the heartland of India... and so on through the galaxies to the outer limits of perception and knowledge. (ASB: 16)

In the locale of this representative city of India Seth has successfully presented a multi layered slice of Indian culture and life. The city of Brahmpur is located on the banks of holy river Ganga and the has the upriver attraction place Barsaat Mahal. The fictitious city has a major university, some urban shopping areas with theatres, parks and grounds for cricket and polo. The action of the novel also moves to other real locations of Calcutta, Delhi and Banaras. The political campaigns of the novel take place in the Salimpur-cum-Baitar region, which is an agricultural area, populated largely by the Muslim people. The fictional Barsaat Mahal is used to represent romance, either budding relationship or melancholy visits over lost love. To present the plight of the poor and lowest cast people in the country Seth has used the locations of the poor tenants area in Brahmpur and the zamindari fields in Salimpur-cum-Baitar. The upper class places like the mansion of the Nawab Sahib and Mahesh Kapoor, the Literary Society and night spots are portrayed to depict the life styles and luxurious ways of the upper class people.

The historical scale of the novel has led it to be compared with *War and Peace* by Tolstoy. Seth presents the history of post-Independence India. The scenes of political, social and religious turmoil are presented in realistic Indian manner. The wide sweep of the novel enables the author to portray various facets of life in a fictitious northern state. The locale of the narrative also moves to a remote village in the north, where Mann Kapoor spends a month in exile. Seth has also portrayed life in Lucknow, Calcutta, New Delhi and Kanpur. The setting of the novel gives the novel a sense of being a purely Indian novel. He has dealt with the variegated aspects of Indian culture and traditions. Apart from throwing light on the political, religious and social affairs of post-independence India, he has also presented the traditions of Indian classical music and poetry. Lucknow has always been considered as the center of all arts and cultures and Seth's Purva Pradesh cultural tradition is a reflection of this Lucknowian culture. However, Seth's portrayal of these classical traditions is ironic as he has presented the impact of modernization at one level and the deterioration of the ancient tradition at the other. He has also shown the gradual alienation of people from the classical music and attraction towards the light and filmy music.

Just as his *The Golden Gate* has received the remarks of lacking the sense of Indian sensibility, here

is a novel purely Indian with no influence of the life in the west. He has not made any special effort to make the scenes accessible to foreign readers, in spite of the fact that the book was first published in England and America. He has not translated many Hindi and Bengali words nor explained Indian references. In this respect Seth says; "When I wrote *The Golden Gate* I did not make any effort to make Californian life accessible to the Indian reader. So why should I do so for foreign readers? I can only hope that the characters and the story interest them sufficiently to make them want to read the book."

The novel is written in English as spoken by the people of India. The words of Hindi and Urdu origin are scattered throughout the novel. As the novel is rooted in India, Seth seems to retain the Indianess of the language also. Seth shows his mastery as a craftsman in handling the idioms, phrases and words. His mastery of playing with the words is best revealed in the depiction of the Chatterji family as means of toying with the vocabulary. He also uses some metaphors in the novel, for example, "... it would unto the threads of her goodwill with the blind torque of distaste (ASB: 628)". The novel also reveals Seth's habit of using unusual choice of words to delineate the situation. In spite of the use of idioms and phrases from Hindi, the language of the novel has been given a touch of simplicity and clarity.

The novel is also throws light on important social and cultural aspects of post-independence India, the emergence of English speaking middle class after independence is treated as one important consequences of British rule in India. The central characters of the novel belong to this newly emerged English speaking middle class. They do not merely speak English; they are familiar with a number of writers and poets of English literature. Pran Kapoor and Ila Chattopadayaay teach English literature, while Lata, Amit and Haresh are students of English literature. Mrs. Mehra sums up the birth of her granddaughter with a poem by Wilhelmina Stitch. Amit remarks that "Austen is the only woman in his life". Lata reads *Emma* during her journey, in the state of emotional crisis, she turns to Austen. Haresh is fond of Thomas Hardy and goes to watch a matinee show of *Hamlet* in Lucknow. In the department of English at Brahmipur, Pran and Prof. Mishra debate on the inclusion of Irish writer, James Joyce in the undergraduate syllabus. However these English speaking characters do not face any identity crisis as the result of their origin and attachment. They are not caught in the complexities of identity crux.

His third novel *An Equal Music* is based on the love story of an opera musician, Michel and his lost lover Julia. The locale of this novel is Europe and Seth has successfully inter weaved the love story with the world of western music. Here Seth has adopted the first person narrative. Seth has acknowledged the works of R. K. Narayan as having had a significant influence on his growth as a writer. It's true that as an admirer of Narayan Seth too makes use of 'Standard English' and is a perfectionist in his use of language. But if Indian critics expect the same Indian sensibility from Seth, where is the artistic freedom? Vikram Chandra in his article "Where the mind is without fear" (The Hindu) resents such expectation "to be more like their elder regional brothers and sisters" and opines that the dichotomy between the 'regional' and Anglo-Indian' writers is problematic one. The Anglo-Indian writers in a sense are from nowhere and who write in a non-language. They belong to nowhere and everywhere at a time. Such writers will inevitably be attacked by some critics for being not Indian enough, for being too Indian, too Westernized, too eroticized, and too rich, for being a foreigner.

Seth too asserts the right of a creative writer through the voice of Amit Chatterji in *A Suitable Boy*. When he was asked why he does not write in Bengali, Amit replies that his Bengali was not good enough for him to express himself in the manner he could in English. He adds, "Besides we are all accidents of history and must do what are best at without fretting too much about it. Even Sanskrit came to India from outside."

In the novel, *An Equal Music*, too Seth follows his inspiration and writes about the transcending and universal power and beauty of music, without fretting much about the critics. It is a love story of an opera musician, Michel and his lost lover Julia. The locale of this novel is Europe and Seth has successfully inter weaved the love story with the world of western music. Here Seth has adopted the first person

narrative. It is a memorable tale of love, lost and regained excellently interweaving the theme of loss, longing and power of music in the dramatic setting of contemporary London, Vienna and Venice. This novel combines a love story and the love of music as part of the narrative.

The action of the story moves between London, Vienna and Venice. The real life of the novel is the music; the novel takes reader into the world of music. It is indeed a tour de force of lyrical and emotive writing. It is a poignant love story of Michael and Julia and its events unfolding in the dramatic settings of London, Vienna and Venice. Seth has used the different locales for his novels. His first novel *The Golden Gate* is set in the bay area of San Francisco and the classical novel *A Suitable Boy* is set in the fictitious city of Brahmpur. As his novel, *An Equal Music* deals chiefly with the world of music, the Western classical music, he takes the reader in the realm of these musicians; the Europe. The various different settings used by Seth reveal his transnational personality. The first half of the novel is almost magical, with its melancholic descriptions of London's Hyde Park. The magical backdrop of the concert hall in Vienna and the canals of Venice are presented by Seth in evocative prose.

To write about diverse themes and diverse places is a challenge and an attraction in itself and Seth; the writer of not only one country but a writer of human beings with different national and geographic identities take this challenge and reveal his skill and craftsmanship as a creative writer. He says; "I know from an editor's point of view or a publisher's point of view it's easier to slot me into a particular niche. But I know that I would be bored unless I wrote a book that in some sense was a challenge. And this might mean I vary the form by writing a poem or a play or a novel. Or set the stories in different countries or write in the first person as opposed to the third or in the present tense as opposed to the past or a very long novel as opposed to a short form." However many critics on this ground questions his position in the categories of writers. Moreover, the Indian reader may have some familiarity with the world of *The Golden Gate* because of the widespread exposure of American culture through media, but the western classical music may create the gap of familiarity for ordinary Indian reader.

Such a writer who has treated the entire globe as his 'homeland' can be studied and understood in the context of more wider and applicable torn. He deserves a different category. He is an international traveler and explored many cultures. His journey across cultures has given him an opportunity to co-habit many cultures simultaneously. What interests him is the world and its ii affairs. He is cosmopolitan in his views and he enjoys specific features of the culture he is in, without any prejudice and bias. He is not a writer of only India deeply rooted in his Indian identity. Our country which is known all around the world for its cultural diversity and its openness for accepting other cultures only could produce a writer like Vikram Seth. He is in a sense a citizen of the world. Our cultural dictum, 'the entire world is one family', belief in the universality of man (*Vasudhaiv Kutumbam*) finds its best expression in the works of VikramSeth.

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## THE AMERICAN TRANSCENDENTALISTS' SOCIAL REFORMS

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America is a new world. The famous concept 'American Dream' speaks of opportunities for sincerity in America. It is a vast country with vast resources. America claims a true democracy. Besides, the element of secularism is the people's real achievement there. The American people have separated the state from the church. Even there the people have a scope for full religious freedom and socialism. Merit is honored. Class warfare is not seen. What more, the Natives, the Jews, the Blacks, the Latino-Haspanies and the Asians can live there with peace and happiness. It is no wonder, all kinds of people of the world live there amicably. Americans' only regret is that they lack any type of ancient cultural heritage of which the Europeans are too proud of.

American Puritanism was immensely vigorous and influential. The age 1600 to 1776 was the age of colonial days in America. Great Puritans, most of them, English and Oxford educated, established the Puritan church's hegemony in America. Even after America's independence in 1776, Puritanism continued to guide the common men as much as the intellectuals. The Connecticut writers, or Hartford Wits, the Knickerbrockers, then the great southern writers like Gilmer Sims and Edgar Allan Poe, were all guided by the Puritan way of life. Quakerism too. The Separatists as a group was subsumed by these. The 1850s age in America is the golden age in American literature. The literary-philosophical movement Transcendentalism is an evidence to this.

Ralph Waldo Emerson of Concord, Massachusetts (New England) was the virtually founder and pioneer of this golden age. Romanticism as a literary movement culminated in his writings and rightly ended with Transcendentalism with the beginning of the Civil War in 1860. Emerson was a puritan and a great Romantic writer. This was a kind of paradox. Emerson emerged as a great poet, essayist, lecturer and social thinker, and that way he was the spokesman of his times. He represented the individual's revolt against tradition and authority and yet he struck a balance between Benjamin Franklin's practical philosophy and Jonathan Edward's theoretical philosophy.

### **Transcendentalism:**

In the 1830s Emerson realized that he should discover himself just not for his wealth but for the commonwealth. He shifted to Concord, the town his great ancestor Peter Bulkely had founded in the 1630s. Concord was a small but cultural town. In so stimulating an atmosphere Emerson expanded and matured, producing the *Essays*, First and Second Series in 1841 and 1844. These in a very real sense were new works, dependent no more on the lectures. He befriended Thoreau, Hawthorne, Channing, Hedge, Alcott, Fuller, Peabody and others. These intellectuals gathered at Hedge's Firday Club and discussed about German romanticism, the principles like intuition and mysticism. They talked of transcending the man-made barriers, proper. The word, if not the concept 'transcendent,' as one member felt, was like going to heaven in a swing. These different members with distinct backgrounds, had not a similar objective when they all gathered a day in the week. Bronson Alcott, the Orphic philosopher, existed in an ethereal sphere which he shared with Plato; Thoreau came fresh from the woods and fields; Emerson from his study; Parker, 'our Savonarola,' and Brownson from their churches, the one a Unitarian, the other inclining toward Rome. Margaret Fuller and occasionally Hawthorne's sister-in-law Elizabeth Peabody shot bolts of aggressive femininity into the company with their radical notion that women are people, seeking friendship on a plane transcending sex.

The Transcendentalists started a magazine called *The Dial* in 1841 (which survived for four years). Fuller was its first editor followed by Emerson himself. The Transcendentalists were social reformers and experimentalists. George Ripley established a communist experiment at Brook Farm. Fruitland, was another example of the same kind. Alcott established the Concord School of Philosophy in 1879. Fuller and others had Conversations as well. Concord as an artist village too, turned into the seed pod of the nation in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Emerson was a pioneer Transcendentalist. Men then grew reflective and intellectual. There was a new consciousness. Emerson wanted to explain the movement's sense of newness, of what many felt to be the initiation of a new era in human history. Transcendentalism was a movement of reform and renewal. Transcendentalism represented one of the recurrent periods in which 'the party of the Past' and 'the party of the Future' collide. At times the resistance is reanimated, the schism runs under the world and appears in Literature, Philosophy, Church, State and social customs." David Robinson observes,

Emerson dramatized the mood of the period in his lecture on "The Transdentalist" (1842), portraying the "Transcendentalist" as an aspiring and stubborn youth who is pressed to justify a younger generation's hopes and actions before the skeptical inquiries of the 'world,' a voice of conventional common sense with a recognizably parental attitude. (Robinson 13)

The doctrines of innate depravity and election to grace were central to Calvinism, emphasizing that human nature was irreparably corrupt, and that certain sinners were 'elected' by God for salvation through the atonement of Jesus. Emerson did not agree to this. He did not believe in the doctrine of inner depravity of man nor in election for grace. This is like the Hindus' belief in fate and karma theory.

Many wise Puritans too did not believe in this. Transcendentalism aimed at the destruction of Calvinist theory about the depravity of human nature. When in 1786 the proprietors of Kings' Chapel in Boston voted to drop all reference to the Trinity from the Book of Common Prayer, they created the first Unitarian Church in America and freed mercantile respectability from both the fear of hell-fire and the unseemly doctrine of inherited depravity. Charles Chouny in 1740 protested against the Calvinist doctrine (Puritan) of 'election to grace' and atonement. Chauncy proposed a more positive view of human nature. Later Henry Ware, Hollis Professor of Divinity at Harvard led to a split in churches and the formation of the American Unitarian Association in 1825. The liberals like the father Emersons supported it. The Unitarian Minister William Ellery Channing of the Federal Street Church, Boston argued that the Calvinist doctrines stunted the individual's moral development. "It is plain," Channing wrote, "that a doctrine, which contradicts our best ideas of goodness and justice, cannot come from the just and good God, or be a true representation of his character" (Channing qt Robinson 15)

Emerson believed that the cold 18<sup>th</sup> century rationalism was another thing that dulled man's spirit. Howard Jones writes,

It was plain that they must be reunited. Rationalism, as in the cases of Hume and Holbach, had run into skepticism and thence into materialism and atheism; and the excesses of the French Revolution, which lost nothing in the reporting, were proof that godlessness might also end in a blood bath. The worship of the Goddess of Reason was, so to speak, a parody of *The Age of Reason* by Tom Paine; the fruits of deism were the godless Reign of Terror and the satanic Napoleonic Wars. (Jones 35)

The people felt surely religion was an experience above, not beneath, the rational faculty. To begin with Emerson did not want to go away from the orthodoxy, however. His eight early sermons are about liberal Unitarian doctrines. He followed Channing and began rebelling. This can be seen in 170 sermons as much as his early lectures. For example, an early sermon, "A Feast of Remembrance," which hints at his dissatisfaction with the ritual of the Lord's Supper as administered at the Second Church in Boston.

Emerson believed that everyone as an individual should be an individual. In perhaps the finest paragraph he ever wrote, one published at the end of his essays on "Illusion" in *The Conduct of Life* of

1860, he stated a principle of the immediacy of the individual soul to the divine order of the universe. Man is in fact set apart from the rest of nature by spirit, or, more accurately, by the consciousness of spirit. Emerson believed that everyone has a psyche (soul) and this psyche or soul is part of the oversoul. Instead, his view is strongly tinged with Oriental ideas of the soul as simultaneously apart from, yet within, the divine nature of God. According to Emerson God is the highest force in the universe. It is said, sometimes God is the Over-Soul that is, the absolute spirit that timelessly maintains the universe including man and his world.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century American transcendentalism was a late and local manifestation of that great movement for the liberation of humanity which, invading practically every sphere of civilized activity, swept over Europe at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century. It was neither social, nor political, nor industrial, nor economic, nor literary, nor scientific, nor religious. It was all of them at once.

Transcendentalism was the religious conversion of early 19th-century New England. And because of the relative cultural eminence of New England, it became indirectly, in some measure, the religious conversion of America. Emerson's address, *The American Scholar*, is called our intellectual Declaration of Independence. With far more fundamental truth his little volume, *Nature*, might be called our religious Declaration of Independence. Emerson should have begun his lecturing career quite earnestly as he had no other options. Emerson was a Man-Thinking, and often Man-Lecturing. Lecturing gave him opportunities which the book in print failed sometimes. Robert Milder writes,

It would be difficult to find a vision of social renovation closer to Emerson's own at the height of his reformism. We are to revise the whole of our social structure, the state, the school, religion, marriage, trade, science, and explore their foundation in our own nature," Emerson proclaimed in "Man the Reformer," adding, "What is a man born for but to be a Reformer, a Re-maker of what man has made...?" (Milder 51)

Emerson thought of human concern for art, literature, economics, politics and philosophy. However, Emerson believed in character and harmonious social life which was agreed upon by such proponents as Fuller and Frederick Douglass.

#### **The Dial:**

George Ripley and Bronson Alcott were involved in the literary activities. With *The Dial*, he and his colleagues hoped to "give expression to that spirit that lifts men to a higher platform." *The Dial* was eclectic in the extreme. It published reviews, literary essays, theological discourses, political commentary and theory and sometimes translations. *The Dial* helped many young writers like Thoreau, Jones Very, Christopher Pearse Cranch and others get published and publicized. Fuller herself got encouraged to give publicity not only for Goethe in America, but for her articles on feminism. Later she published it in a full-length book *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1845). *The Dial* was the Transcendentalists' one institution leading to the establishment of their other institutions and experiments. Theodore Parker preached one of the most radical and controversial sermons of the entire Transcendentalist movement, *A Discourse of the Transient and Permanent in Christianity*, as a Unitarian ordination sermon in 1841. Parker called for a new conception of religion. Frederic Henry Hedge and James Freeman Clarke were committed churchmen and committed reformers, engaged in both preserving the church and helping it adapt to the changes of the modern world. Bronson Alcott, Emerson's close friend and intellectual ally, founded the Temple School in the innate potential of his students. It was a much more student-centered approach to education than was common in the early 19th century. John Dewey, the famous educationist furthered the idea of student-centered education later. Emerson, Thoreau and Fuller often meditated about human relationship, in the 1830s and 1840s. They thought that friendship helps the fundamental issues of human development. Emerson's reflection on friendship culminated in his 1841 essay on "Friendship," included in *Essays: First Series*.

## A CRITIQUE ON POVERTY AND VILLAGE LIFE IN ANITA DESAI'S *THE VILLAGE BY THE SEA*

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Anita Desai is one of the most distinguished Indo-English writers of the post-colonial era. Her contribution towards the contemporary Indian English novel has been well acclaimed by the far flung literary community both in and beyond the Indian subcontinent. Interestingly, Desai seems to explore new horizons in the world of fiction through her unique approach with which she effectively portrays the critical issues prevalent in both rural and urban settings of contemporary India. Also, it is of prime importance to note that Desai's writings are featured by an essential conflict between and among her characters who, are challenged with the inevitable realities of life and even more exciting is the way she describes their mentalities thus penetrating the flesh of the humans to probe their psychological complications. The purpose of this research paper is to analyse, the thematic implications of Anita Desai's novel, *'The Village by the Sea'*, which is one of her award winning works of fiction. The present novel revolves round the story of a rural family in India which struggles tooth and nail to make ends meet and enjoys a delightful reunion in the end, thanks to the undaunted courage of the two children, Hari and Lila.

The theme of survival and adaptation is the paramount aspect of the thematic concerns in the novel. Also, Desai focuses on several other debatable issues pertaining to the contemporary Indian society through her novel, *'The Village by the Sea'*. It is apparent that Desai's vital thematic appeal, her strong emphasis on the complexities of the human existence and her incredible narrative style seem to have added immensely to the success of the particular novel thus signifying her excellence as one of the best writers of the twentieth century India.

Anita Desai is indeed a world famous Indian English novelist. Taking into account some striking testimony to her workmanship, she has thrice been shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize for Fiction. In 1978, she achieved a Sahitya Academy Award for her novel, *'Fire on the Mountain'*, from the Sahitya Academy which is the National Academy of Letters in India. Also, for the novel, *'The Village by the Sea'*, she was awarded with the 1983 Guardian Children's Fiction Prize which is a once-in-a-lifetime book award judged by a panel of esteemed British children's writers. Desai considers English as the "language of books" and hence English remains her language of self-expression. Although she had been involved in a writing career from her childhood, her role became prominent in the literary scenario of India after the independence. It is in a really authentic manner that Desai uses the novel to examine the complexities of the life of especially the child and the woman at the clutches of the burning issues in the contemporary society. Also, it is intriguing that Dr. M. S. Ansari in his paper, "A Study of the Themes of Alienation, Detachment and Relationship Crisis in Anita Desai's Major Novels", argues that in the hands of Desai, the novel is not a tool for escaping the reality, but a microscope with which she zooms in on the untamed complications of the human life and the inner psyche of her characters. Therefore, Desai's timely thematic concerns seem to have merged with her innovative approach and ardent sense of observation in establishing her popularity as one of the greatest writers of Indian literature in English.

Anita Desai tries to convey through her much lionized work of fiction, *'The Village by the Sea'*. The novel, set in rural village situated in Western India, poignantly relates the story of a family struggling for

survival amidst many hardships. The main characters in the story are Hari, a 12 year old boy and his eldest sister, the 13 year old Lila. They also have two younger sisters namely Bela and Kamal. Their mother is a bedridden TB patient while their father is an alcoholic who seems to have completely neglected his responsibilities as a father and a husband. This situation has forced Lila and Hari to take the family responsibility to their shoulders thus meeting the needs of their younger sisters and taking a good care of their sick mother. Seeking greener pastures, Hari, the protagonist of the novel along with his beloved sister, Lila almost like angels from heaven toil upward with unflinching courage in order to save their family from the misery they are currently undergoing.

The novel, *'The Village by the Sea'*, was read several times in order to allow for a thorough understanding of its settings, characters and episodes. Also, I went through some critical studies undertaken by several reviewers on the particular novel. Furthermore, an admirable amount of reading was done on the other writings of Anita Desai and the reviews of her novels by some well-known critics. Besides, I had some discussions with some of my colleagues and teachers where I could learn various and almost contrasting aspects relating to the thematic implications of the novel under scrutiny. In addition, I watched some Indian movies made in such languages as Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi and Bengali so as to be familiar with the cultural life of India in both urban and rural areas.

It is really encouraging to note that this research study produced promising results which led to the revelation of a number of significant aspects that Desai focuses on in her thematic approach. The importance of survival and adaptation seems to have been the writer's major thematic concern in the present novel. Desai tries to emphasize the theme of survival and adaptation mainly through the character of Hari. Thus, the thematic appeal of the novel, *'The Village by the Sea'*, sounds very vital, touching and convincing. It is clear that almost every theme conveyed through the story has a special relevance not only to the Indian society but also to the entire world at large. Desai's acute sense of observation and her essential preoccupation with the common man become prominent in her masterly characterization, vivid descriptions of the settings and the fine organization of a vigorous plot which is highly authentic. Also, the novelist's remarkable ability in the adoption of effective narrative techniques seems to have been immensely supportive in enhancing the richness of the thematic appeal of the novel. Hence, it is clear that the celebrated work of fiction, *The Village by the Sea* remains another feather in the cap of Anita Desai thus bearing ample testimony to her excellence as one of the leading Indo-English writers of the twentieth century. Therefore, I am of the belief that this research paper will be beneficial for all those who seek to analyze Anita Desai's novel, *'The Village by the Sea'* not only for academic purposes but for intellectual recreation as well.

Desai explores the complexities of the life of especially the child and the woman at the shackles of the burning issues in the contemporary society. As contended by Dr. M. S. Ansari in his paper, "A Study of the Themes of Alienation, Detachment and Relationship Crisis in Anita Desai's Major Novels", in the hands of Desai, the novel is not a tool for escaping the reality, but a microscope with which she zooms in on the untamed complexities of the human life and the inner psyche of her characters. Therefore, Desai's timely thematic concerns seem to have blended together with her innovative approach and keen sense of observation in enhancing her popularity as one of the greatest writers of all time of Indian literature in English.

According to the view of Professor G. Vaidyanathan in his book, *'The Village by the Sea': A Critical Study*, conveyed the most fundamental theme through the novel is survival accompanied by adaptation. Desai very cleverly and vividly reveals the importance of the need to adapt ourselves to the changing conditions of the environment where we live. Everyone has to further constant learning in order to enhance the necessary abilities to lead a successful life in an environment which seems to undergo revolutionary and almost inexorable changes at an unprecedented rate with the passage of time.

It is mainly through the character of Hari that Desai tries to emphasize more about the theme of

survival and adaptation. Hari is a small boy of twelve years. In spite of being such a youngster, he is intelligent enough to understand his responsibilities towards his family. Seeing no way out of their mounting poverty, Hari is forced to accept it despite his very young age and desperately makes a great effort in earning a living to preserve his family. Hari cultivates the patch of land owned by them, plucks coconuts, and fishes along the sea belt with his net. Unfortunately, the harvest reaped is not enough even for the consumption of his own family.

Even though he tries hard to catch fish, most of the time he has to go home empty-handed. Even when the going gets tough, it is very patiently that Hari, though with occasional reluctance, tries hard to survive the swelling heap of hardships and difficulties. Although a majority of Hari's attempts to sustain the family are in vain at the beginning, he never quits trying. At the climax of his dissatisfaction with the father's drunkenness and the never ending troubles at home, Hari leaves Thul and migrates to Bombay in search of a job and consequently Lila happens to grapple with the family situation all alone. The delightful reunion of the family and the stability that they attain in the end after a chaotic period of extreme difficulties show that no matter how small you are, there is always a remedy ahead of you if you are smart enough and persevere to achieve your goals. This is how the writer expresses the need to fight for the survival.

The use of a character of such a young boy who is only twelve to reveal her message, enhances the effectiveness of its appeal. The fact that adaptation is part of survival is a universally acknowledged truth. We live in a rapidly moving world and almost nothing remains the same as time passes by. Surviving in such a fast changing world is not an easy task because we should possess the necessary capacity to adjust ourselves to the changing conditions of the society. Towards the end of the story, Hari gains the ability to move ahead with the changing circle of life and society. A new factory complex is to be put up in Villegé.

The villagers are distracted by the feeling that it will be a doom on their farming and fishing industry. They begin to think of themselves as losers with the new factory to be built up. But Hari, being intelligent enough to learn and adapt to the societal changes in the context of rapid urbanization, doesn't worry at all. He learns the art of mending watches under the kind apprenticeship of Mr. Panwallah. Having gained a new and commercially valuable skill, now Hari is capable of venturing into the untouched field of watch mending in Thul. As thousands of people migrate to Thul to be employed at the coming factories, they will want to repair their watches thus paving the way for Hari to become a rich man. He further wishes to start a poultry farm which will provide him with an extra living. It is Mr. Panwallah and Sayyid Ali Sahib who teach Hari to shape his life according to the changing modes of the world. In fact, Hari would have happened to remain a frog in the well "if the shop next door had not proved friendlier" (Desai 94). Mr. Panwallah advises Hari that if a person is unable to suppress the changes from happening he must possess the ability to move with them. Mr. Sayyid Ali emphasizes this message in a vibrant manner by bringing out a really workable example. He says that a few years ago, the jungles where the birds like sparrows and pigeons lived were destroyed under the process of industrialization. Then, the birds who were threatened with nowhere to live, migrated to the cities and started depending on the leftovers of the people. This indeed is a remarkable example for the theme of survival accompanied by adaptation. The inevitability of the changes in a revolutionary world is also brought to focus through the novel. No one is strong enough to prevent them from happening except adapting to them. The world never halts a single minute for us, and hence we have to move with it. Anybody who goes out of the track will fail. Mr. Panwallah stresses on the changeability of the world as he says, "Things can change all the time, boy nothing remains the same. When our earth was covered with water, all creatures lived in it and swam. When the water subsided and land appeared, the sea creatures crawled out and learnt to breathe and walk on land. When plants grew into trees, they learned to climb them. When there weren't enough plants left to eat, they learnt to hunt and kill for food. Don't think that is how things have remained. No, boy, they are still changing they will go on changing and if you want to survive, you will have to change too. The wheel turns and turns and turns: it

never stops and stands still.” (Desai 129)

Thus the writer substantiates the fact that change is inevitable and the sole need is to make our guns ready to face the changing textures of the world. Desai uses the character portrayal of Biju who is the most affluent person in Thul in order to further consolidate the significance of adaptation and survival. Apart from him no one in the village seems to be aware of the need to adhere to the changing faces of the world. They prefer to live as the traditional farmers or fishermen. But, Biju constantly tries to upgrade his business through his timely adherence to the miscellaneous changing patterns of the commercial world. His new engine boat is equipped with a deep freezer too. Unlike the poor boats of the other villagers, which he refers to as “little matchstick boats” (Desai 124),

Biju's will provide him with the ability to go far out of the sea and catch fish for several days with the help of the diesel engine and refrigeration facilities of the new boat. Biju cleverly makes use of the loss of a few fishermen at sea during the monsoonal rains to demonstrate the value and the grand nature of his boat. It is depicted that almost all the farmers and fishermen of the villege are very much bothered about the forthcoming threat to their livelihood which is a consequence of the urbanization process. But, Biju has no need to repent because he knows that at least he can sail into the distant sea, if the fish living near the sea shoal of the villege, are to be killed by the chemical substances emitted from the coming factories. It is hence clear that Biju will not happen to destabilize his position under the impending circumstances. He seems to have an optimistic view regarding the development process as he declares “Things have to change.

Then they will improve. Yes, Improve! Change!”(Desai 124). Success through innovation is perceivable in his character as it is obvious that the secret of his progress is his flexibility and innovative thinking.

In addition, Desai effectively investigates the overall poverty of the lower classes in the society through the novel under discussion. A majority of the people in villege live, ghastly lives of abject poverty which has a tremendous impact on their lives. The underprivileged circumstances, in which the poor people in remote areas live, are exceptionally brought forth through the story of Hari's family. Their hut is in need of being rethatched and it is about to fall down. They are extremely suffering from the disastrous and disintegrating effects of poverty such as limited resources, lack of options, ignorance, malnutrition, and scarcity of nourishment and mental care. Hari and his sisters are not in possession of even a proper dwelling place. They don't get a breakfast and in place of a meal they drink only a cup of tea in the morning. Their lunch and dinner consist of a few dried chapatis. Lack of nourishment and malnutrition due to which the poor suffer is profoundly depicted through the pauper meals of Hari's family. Their mother's TB and anemia are due to starvation and their poor sanitary condition. She who herself is lying “like a crumpled grey rag” (Desai 10) represents the victims of lack of medical care. Lila and Hari have stopped schooling. Lack of education too is an ill consequence of penury.

They have only an occasional income that Hari earns by selling coconuts. So, it is clear that the dearth of options and limited resources of Hari's family representing those of a thousand poor lives point out that the penurious masses are insecure due to severe instability. Not merely the people in the village but also most of those in the city suffer from the adverse effects of poverty. Cross lights are thrown on the economic hardships of the poor urban dweller through the reference to the zopadpatti where people like Jagu live. The writer creates an awfully pathetic picture when she says, All the rain and slush and mud from outside had crept in the door and through the cracks in the walls and the ceiling as well. In fact, the mud floor was awash with rain water and debris it brought along. Jagu's family was huddled on a string bed as if it were a raft. (Desai 115 116)

Even though Jagu owns an eating house, he lives in a shanty made out of tin cans, plastic pieces and rags because the rents of even the smallest and poorest flats are extremely high. Desai substantiates the insecurity and the uncomfortable nature of their dwelling places as she creates a robust image of the shacks

that seem to be “coming loose and sliding into the choked gutter that separated the zopadpatti from the street” (Desai 115). It also revealed that poverty leads to drunkenness and broken relationships. The following lines uttered by Jagu's wife out of sheer helplessness imply this in a really poignant manner. “As if I can stop you. That's all you want to go to your toddy shop. All you want from me is an excuse. What do I care if you go and poison yourself? Go kill yourself with the poisons the shops sell you I will come and laugh at your funeral. I will take the children home to the village so we can starve in the fields and let the vultures pick our bones...” (Desai 116 117)

She speaks in an angry voice mixed with frustration and hopelessness. Her words appeal to the common people while revealing the sadness and deprivation experienced by the poor. Poverty has swallowed the blissful lives of the people while making them the most vulnerable and depressing section of the community. Having no way out of their increasing poverty, they are destined to live a hand to mouth existence and are unstable and insecure. Desai's preoccupation with the common people becomes clear from her keen observation of the life of the poor both in the city and the village. Moreover, the fact that Jagu has several children is effectively disclosed as the writer describes how “several pairs of eyes peered” (Desai 116) at Hari when he entered Jagu's house. Here, the novelist highlights another significant aspect of her thematic concerns the lack of awareness among the people regarding proper family planning methods which is a major issue that has been affecting many countries in the world. Raising a child is a great process which makes the parents responsible for providing him with shelter, food, clothing, medical care and education.

A child who lacks in such privileges is more likely to experience both mental and physical health issues, lower educational attainment and behavioral problems not just in their childhood but in their teen years too. In a context where the prices of goods and services are rapidly increasing, a poor family who lives in extreme conditions is not stable enough to meet the rising demands of many children. It is hence apparent that due to the lack of knowledge and access to effective methods of family planning, people like Jagu are faced with a long term issue that badly impacts their family life and financial situation. Another prominent theme conveyed through the novel is the helplessness that the innocent children have to undergo at the neglect of parental responsibilities. Being chronically ill and confined to bed, Hari's mother is not capable of supporting her family. Also, Hari's father is a notorious drunkard in the village who never attends to the needs of his poor children and sick wife except aggravating the situation. It is even more pathetic that his family is badly threatened by the alcohol vendors due to the mounting debts incurred by him for buying alcohol. Consequently, Lila and Hari have stopped schooling and their mother's condition is becoming acute. If Hari's father was a responsible person, his family would never undergo such a wretched fate. Thus, the writer successfully examines the detrimental impact of drunkenness on the lives of the children and how it paves the way for negative relationships, broken families and waste of money.

As is identified by Professor G. Vaidyanathan in his book, *The Village by the Sea: A Critical Study*, one very significant theme that is brought to discussion through the novel is the inherent goodness of people. Desai portrays this feature mainly through the character of Mr. Panwallah whom she appreciates as “a benefactor, the kindest and most helpful of all” (Desai 107).

In addition, the de Silvas, Jagu, Mr. Syyid Ali and HiraLal serve as the symbols of loving kindness and compassion in the novel. Mr. Panwallah, the owner of Ding Dong Watchworks is the most kind hearted and benevolent of all. He loves and sympathizes with children like Hari. He is very respectful and refined so that he sets a good example to Hari, and he is always like a father to him. He often directs Hari on the correct path by molding the traits of his personality. He is modest enough to share his art of watch mending with Hari who is a simple and poor village boy. Mr. Panwallah stands for universal love also. It is due to the kind gesture of Hira Lal, the watchman of Seabird that Hari safely goes into the hand of a good person like Jagu who assists Hari by offering him with a job in his eating house. So, it is clear that both HiraLal and Jagu also are very merciful. If it not for the de Silvas, Lila's mother will pitifully face an untimely death.

Being generous and good hearted, Mr. de Silva takes Lila's mother to the hospital at Alibagh by his car and pays for her medicine as well as for the running of Lila's family. The way he explains Lila the worsening condition of her mother seems very touching and understanding. He further extends a helping hand to Lila by arranging his friend, Mr. Sayyid Ali who is a bird watcher to stay at Mon Repos. Luckily for Lila, Mr. Sayyid Ali is also a very tender hearted person who pays the three sisters generously for running errands for him. It is therefore clear that all of them are symbolical of love, affection and humanity.

Thus, Desai showcases how such commendable human characteristics can serve as a blessing for the betterment of the society. Also, it is in a very effective manner that Desai reports the fearful atmosphere of the city through the character portrayals of Billu, the beggar and the coconut seller. The beggar says that Billu is very dangerous and delinquent though he acts as a person who sells coconuts by day. Paradoxically, the beggar also seems to be engaged in anti-social activities. What both of them do during the day is just a cover to their criminal activities at night. The people in the city cannot exist on the meager income earned by just selling coconuts or begging alms since the cost of living in towns is very high. Once they find it difficult to bear up starvation, they tend to steal or murder with which to make a living. Therefore, some people tend to make money by indulging in underhand dealings and criminal activities, while leading a double life which will protect them from the authorities. It is hence perceived that poverty drives people to be violent and resort to criminal acts. The injustice caused by the unscrupulous industrialists and politicians to the innocent people is another important dimension of Desai's thematic concerns in the novel. A factory is to be built up in Thul which will grab both the livelihoods of farming and fishing from the hands of the poor villagers. So, they get together and organize a protest campaign to go to Bombay in order to forward a petition to the Chief Minister. But, unfortunately all their efforts are in vain owing to the intervention of the self-serving politicians.

They never ever hesitate to hinder the poor people in the pursuit of their petty selfish desires. The poor are so helpless that they are not strong enough even to raise their voice against the injustices caused to them. They have always retreated before the powerful entrepreneurs and politicians just as "the mist of the mountain runs before the morning sun". In many instances of the novel, Desai invites our attention towards the customs, taboos, beliefs and superstitions of the Indian culture. Hari is greatly worried by the problem of earning dowries for his sisters. It is the Indians who are said to be the first people in the world to demand a dowry from the bride's parents. This is a practice which has been deep rooted in the Indian culture for centuries. Also, early in the morning, almost every woman in Thul goes to the cluster of the three rocks at the beach to offer kumkum powder and flowers to the sea god. They are of the belief that it is only if they venerate the sea god that their fishermen are able to be safe at the sea. Superstitions play a major role in their lives. This is clearly manifested through the character of the medicine man or the village quack who himself is a product of the mythical beliefs and ignorance prevailing among the villagers.

The efforts made by the quack quite meaninglessly to cure Lila's mother and the unhygienic, nonsensical and atrocious nature of his medicine indicate that superstitions are only a matter of old age beliefs. Religion is also a vital part of the life of the people hailing from both remote and urban areas in India. Even Bombay people celebrate festivals like Diwali, Coconut Day and perform poojas to the god. The religiosity of Indian people is well conveyed through such situations. It is thus obvious that Desai's attempts to represent the cultural life of India seem to have become successful. In the present novel, Desai also goes onto explore the impact of industrialization and urbanization on the society and environment of the country. It is almost inevitable that under the pervasive influence of industrialization, the society gets widely exposed to the phenomena of modernization, globalization and commercialization.

Thus the writer examines the plight of the rustic people in the rapid context of industrialization as she explains how the people in village consider the coming factory as a threat to their livelihood. Another significant aspect of this phenomenon of industrialization is the devastating impact that it has on the ecology of the country. To open up communication lines and put up factories, the land is devastated in an

indiscriminate manner. Natural habitats are being destroyed, degraded and depleted senselessly thus causing the loss of wild species including valuable flora and fauna. The once luscious forests are now fast disappearing from the face of the earth. It is the self-seeking entrepreneurs and power hungry politicians who cause such destruction to nature with the intention of feathering their own nest. To point out the detrimental consequences of industrialization, the writer makes use of the vivid comparison between the highly industrialized city, Bombay and the un-spoilt village, Thul which is brimming with the breathtaking beauty of nature. Desai very vividly brings to our limelight the aggressive disturbances of modern urban life marked with its enormous artificialities. The incessant sounds coming from factories, honking of horns, and the rubbing, squeaking and cracking sounds of the machineries penetrate through the ears. Desai further discusses the obstructing nature of the city as follows, but here there was everything at once as if all the traffic in the world had met on the streets of Bombay cycles, rickshaws, hand-carts, tongas, buses, cars, taxis and lorries shooting and screeching and grinding and roaring past and around him. (Desai 74).

In the above lines, the writer in an extremely brilliant manner paints out a strong picture of the interferences of the city life. At first, Hari finds it very difficult to get used to the life of Bombay because he has been familiar with a rustic life so far village, still untouched by the streak of industrial strategies is an extremely beautiful village which has no deficiency of the priceless assets of nature. Thul is a tranquil hamlet where man and nature cherish their relationship with the lush paddy fields, calm waters, dense forests, and the vast stretching majestic sea belt thereby capturing the harmony along the many footpaths. While living in this serene locality one can derive pleasure by experiencing the delicacy of natural objects and listening to the melodious songs of the wild birds. This natural magnificence and tranquility of Thul contrasts with the artificialities of urban life. The beauty of nature also emerges as an enticing theme of Desai's novel. She seems to be entrapped by the serenity of nature at the very beginning of the novel where she excellently captures the spectacular scenery of the sandy shore, fragrant flowers and the colorful birds. Then there were all the birds flying out of the shadowy, soft-needled casuarinas trees and the thick jungle of Pandanus, singing and calling and whistling louder than at any other time of the day. Flute-voiced drogues swooped and cut through the air... It was the voice of the village Thul as much as the roar of the waves and the wind in the palms. (Desai 9) In the above paragraph quoted from the first chapter of the novel, the writer gives a colorful image of the village Thul which is undoubtedly a blessing of nature. The stunning dance of the fragrant flowers caught in the wind is very attractive. The reader is heartened by the beauty of the "zebra-striped butterflies". The loveliest is the birds flying here and there while cutting through the air like "dazzling knives". The mellifluous chirping of the birds adds a musical rhythm to the dance of their sisters who are the flowers and butterflies. It is striking that lovely nature has lavishly gifted Thul with all these incomparable treasures of tranquil elegance.

The very title of the novel, *The Village by the Sea*, also sounds close to nature. Desai's redolent pictures of the sky in the monsoon and in the evening as well as the giant sea stretching up to the horizon are also really exceptional. Thus, she appears to be an ardent lover of nature. However, there may not be any debate for the fact that Desai's beautiful portraits of nature outshine those of a great poet. Thus, the thematic appeal of the novel, *The Village by the Sea* is very intriguing, touching and vital. Its themes carry immense importance highlighting the most critical issues pertaining to the miscellaneous layers of the social pyramid. Desai's acute sense of observation and strong powers of imagination become prominent in her masterly characterization, vivid descriptions of the settings and her fine organization of a pulsating plot which sounds highly authentic. Also, the novelist's remarkable ability in the adoption of effective narrative techniques seems to have been immensely helpful in enhancing the richness of the thematic appeal of the novel. So, it is quite evident that this exquisite work of literature explicitly exhibits Anita Desai's excellence and workmanship as a writer of fiction.

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## IDENTITY CRISIS IN MEENA ALEXANDER'S *NAMPALLY ROAD*: AN EXPLORATION

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Meena Alexander is well known for her lyrical writing that deals with migration, its impact on the subjectivity of the writer, and the sometimes violent events that compel people to cross borders. Though confronting such severe and thorny issues, her writing is corporeal, polyglot, and maintains a generous spirit. About her work, Maxine Hong Kingston has said: "Meena Alexander sings of countries, foreign and familiar, places where the heart and spirit live, and places for which one needs a passport and visas. Her voice guides us far away and back home. The reader sees her visions and remembers and is uplifted."<sup>1</sup> Alexander has been inclined and mentored by the Indian poets Jayanta Mahapatra and Kamala Das, as well as the American poets Adrienne Rich..

Meena Alexander (born 1951) is an internationally acclaimed Poetess and scholar. She is born in Allahbad India. Alexander lives and works in USA, where she is Distinguished Professor of English at Hunter College. She is the author of numerous collections of poetry, literary memoirs, essays, and works of fiction and literary Criticism.

Among her best-known works are the volumes of poetry *Illiterate Heart* (2002) and *Raw Silk* (2004). Her latest volume of poetry is *Atmospheric Embroidery* (2015). She has edited a volume of poems in the Everyman Series, *Indian Love Poems* (2005), and published a volume of essays and poems on the themes of migration and memory called *The Shock of Arrival: Reflections on Postcolonial Experience* (2006). In 1993 Alexander published her autobiographical memoir, *Fault Lines* (significantly revised in 2003 to incorporate new material). She has published two novels, *Nampally Road* (1991) which was a Village Voice Literary Supplement Editor's Choice and *Manhattan Music* (1997), and two academic studies, *The Poetic Self* (1979) and *Women in Romanticism* (1989). *Fault Lines* was chosen by Publishers Weekly as one of the best books of the year in 1993. *Illiterate Heart* won the 2002 PEN Open Book Award.

Her poems have been set to music. Impossible Grace was the lyric base of the First AI Quads Music Award, with music composed by Stefan Hackle and sung by baritone Christian von Oldenburg (First performed in Jerusalem). 'Aqua Alta' was set to music by the composer Jan Sandstorm and performed by the Serikon Music Group and the Swedish Radio Choir (First performed in Stockholm)

Alexander has read at Poetry International (London), Struga Poetry Evenings, Poetry Africa, Calabash Festival, Harbor Front Festival, Sahitya Akademi (India) and other international gatherings. She has received several National and International Awards.

Her book *Poetics of Dislocation* was published in 2009 by the University of Michigan Press as part of its Poets on Poetry Series. Also in 2009 Cambridge Scholars Publishing brought out an anthology of scholarship on her work titled *Passage to Manhattan: A Critical Essay on Meena Alexander*.

Her most recent collection of poems, *Atmospheric Embroidery* (2015), evokes themes of migration, war, dislocation, conflict, love and divinity in lines of precise grace. Her poem 'Bright Passage' included in this book was featured on the wall of the Smithsonian for the 2014 exhibition 'Beyond Bollywood: Indian Americans Remake the Nation'.

Haunting and lyrical, the novel *Nampally Road* vividly portrays contemporary India and one woman's struggle to piece together her past. At the heart of this novel, is the gang rape of Rameeza Be by

the police. The towns people rise up and burn the police station. This novel reissued in 2013 by Orient Blackswan has a powerful resonance with the recent tragic events in Delhi. When it was first published in 1991 the novel was a Voice Literary Supplement Editor's Choice.

*Nampally Road*: The story starts with young Mira, studying in England, getting a job to teach at the Golden Threshold in Hyderabad. She decides to take up the job and meets her friend Siddharth who is in England to study as well, has an English girlfriend and appears to be studying her more than his course. Siddharth directs Mira to his home near Abids where his mother Dr. Gokhale, a Maharashtrian gynaecologist who lives alone in an old house close to the Golden Threshold with her help. Mira is invited to stay with her and she accepts, meets and falls in love with a Marxist colleague, Ramu. (This relationship is a bit vague even with all the lovemaking scenes as I found no connect between the two characters.) The situation in the state is rather delicate with an authoritarian Chief Minister Limca Gowda and his band of musclemen who are named Eveready men. The government imposes all kinds of taxes and the common man is suffering. The law of the land is oppressive. Mira meanwhile is making love to her Marxist friend Ramu, wondering poetically about the doctor, her woman servant, her neighbour, her students at college - when somewhere in the background the gang rape by the policemen happens. The people are concerned, the police station attacked, the woman rescued and visited by the rather foggy headed Mira. At the same time the Chief Minister's birthday celebrations are on and in the end something happens to them in the end - a fire of sorts and Rameeza is avenged.

It is a poet's view of the story. It is her own indulgence with her feelings, her wants and needs and you never know when she is dreaming and fantasising, and when it is real. Though the story appears to be dealing with something real and outrageous, Mira appears concerned with how to write poetically the blood on the victim's hair. One feels nothing for the victim and perhaps we are not meant to. It is after all Mira's story - her interest in other people reflecting her own attempts at grappling with making some sense of it. The story comes packaged in a cloud, and passes on like that. I could not get the references to Limca Gowda, to the Eveready men though Rameeza is mentioned. (Why the doctor is called Little Mother I failed to fathom and not what one would call her normally.) What was interesting to me was the reference to almost all the landmarks I knew in the late seventies and early eighties (the same time the novel is set - obviously Meena was teaching then at the Golden Threshold). I studied at All Saints High School at the same time and walked all the way to the Exhibition grounds with my brother, window shopping. Husains bookstore, the sports stores near Taj Mahal Hotel, the theatres, the little toy store Wonderland on Nampally Road, the Asiad Sports Store on Nampally Road where I bought many table tennis balls, the CLS bookstore, Annapurna Hotel, the Supermarket, the impressive Golden Threshold and so on. Meena brings that area to life again - Sagar Talkies, CLS bookstore, Mohan's Bar, the GPO and it was so much fun to read of a Hyderabad I knew. The story by itself was not much to my liking but it is obviously for the more poetic at heart. Meena's language however is impeccable and lovely to read. It certainly serves a notice on me to incorporate more of that Hyderabad in my Hyderabad based novel 'The Misfit'.

*Nampally Road*, centers on various issues including feminism, cultural retention, politics, and history among others. One of the themes of her novels is obviously the portrayal of women's issues in India. By presenting women as mothers, political activists, and victims of a patriarchal society, she brings to attention the plight of women in a postcolonial nation. In the so-called decolonized nations, women's lives are still dominated by their patriarchs at home and in society at large. She describes Mira's attempts to escape an arranged marriage and her shunning of traditional values.

Alexander describes in minute detail the roads, crowds, shoppers and the everyday activities on the road. As Luis H. Francia puts it, "with its restless crowds, cinemas, shops, temples, mango sellers, cobblers, cafes and bars, *Nampally Road* becomes a metaphor for contemporary India." The novelist, Meena Alexander, is extremely critical when she sees institutions veering away from ideals. She sketches the deterioration in the personal and political areas of life as well. The narrative draws on many women

Durgabai, Raniamma, Laura, Maiteyi, Rameeza Be to build up a matrix of polyphonic narratives that reverberate through the text and lend efficacy to the (auto) biography of Mira. Conspicuous in the narrative is Durgabai, “Obstetrician and gynecologist and pediatrician all rolled into one”. She represents Mother India, hard-working, honest, upright and kind, staying in a run-down building, charging practically nothing in her clinic with a tin roof in one of the poorest parts of the town.” She is appropriately named Little Mother.

All the women in the novel are inextricably linked with her. **PROBLEM OF IDENTITY** Mira Kannadical, the protagonist is an English professor who returns to India after studying in England for four years and getting a Ph.D. on Wordsworth from Nottingham University. She feels distraught and out of place in England and decides to start anew in India. When Mira got a teaching job in Hyderabad, she gladly accepted it because she thought that going to India would give her a chance to establish a clearer identity for herself. Once she reached in Hyderabad, she felt that she was no more a girl in confusion but a woman of firm standing. When Mira started living in Hyderabad, she had minor problems about readjusting with the Indian society. Once Mira started eating with her left hand by mistake and this shocked many Andhrithes who saw it.

During her free time, Mira continued her attempts to write poems. She was very much confused inside her mind in spite of all her western education. She wanted to become a poet so as to establish for herself a new identity. Otherwise her mother will dress her up in silks and gold and marry her off to some rich engineer or estate owner. Mira strongly felt that she may not be able to survive such a marriage. According to Mira, marriage was a personal matter and she will commit into a marriage only when she is fully prepared for the arrangement. Mira's search for identity makes a sharp turn when she sees Rameeza Be for the first time inside the Gowliguda police station Maitreyiamma, where she was given good rest and medical attention She comes in contact with Ramu, a college teacher. They both teach English in Sona Nivas, a local college. He is highly unorthodox and rejects superstitions including what he refers to as “horoscope rubbish”. Ramu and Mira visited Rameeza in that house and her pathetic condition extremely influenced Mira. 'I wished', Mira wondered, 'I could give up my own useless life in some way that could help her'. Thus, Mira finally found her identity. She understood that she was nobody else other than an ordinary Indian. The suffering of Rameeza Be was the suffering of an entire nation and Mira's mission in life was to seek a solution to give relief to millions of Rameezas in India. Mira became half an Indian by returning to India and deciding to settle down permanently here. She became a full Indian when she understood that her mission in life was to serve India, her motherland. **POLITICAL, SOCIAL INSENSITIVITY and ADMINISTRATIVE APATHY** The main event in the novel is the birthday celebration of Limca Gowda, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. In the novelist's words, “Limca Gowda was an ambitions man and wished to turn himself into an absolute ruler . . . .”

His party which had been voted in four years ago, now rules with an iron hand. Dissent was strongly discouraged. Gowda assumes an almost Hitler-like persona and suppresses the marginalized. Rameeza is a young woman, accompanied by her husband to Sagar Talkies to see the celebrated Isak Katha. On their way back home, they are encircled by a horde of drunken policemen. She is gang-raped and her husband has his brains beaten out. But no one can raise their voice for any matter, till Limca Gowda's sixtieth birthday celebrations are over. The raped woman has no voice. Her suffering does have a language but who hears? When Rameeza, the victim is interviewed by Mira, that entire she can do is make little whispers and short cries. Ramu and Mira want to understand her pain. They tell her that those who raped her will be brought to justice and that people would rise up against violence.

Exploitation of Women: Rape is the most heinous crime committed by man against woman. Among others, some police personnel. Very soon someone carried away Rameeza to the house of and politicians have also been implicated now and then in rape cases. Sometimes, police officials and staff of civil services tend to claim most rape cases are not rape cases, but cases of consensual sex. For example, a

senior official of the Mumbai Police, Mr. Y. P. Singh, once remarked that “Except for a few violent rape cases where brutal force is used, most other cases involve some degree of consensus sex” (The Hindu, October 17, 2004).

This argument does not seem to convince many people, perhaps because of stories of various types of police atrocity. People agitate against “police atrocities” almost daily and we read about such demonstrations in our newspapers on a regular basis. A recent incident, On 16 December 2012 where a female physiotherapy intern was beaten and gang raped in Delhi raises furious questions on women's safety in the contemporary India. She died from her injuries thirteen days later while undergoing emergency treatment in Singapore for brain and gastrointestinal damage. Rape, as a form of personal violence, is not merely a physical assault and symbolic of the mistreatment of womankind, but a violation of the most sensitive part of a female psyche. In the novel, a woman is raped in police custody and two other women are raped and buried half alive in the shifting sands of the Arabian Sea. Despite strong recommendations by the Law Commission of India, several judgments in High Courts and Supreme Court as well as laws against rape, the police do not take any action, as they seem to be more worried about the birthday celebrations bash of the Chief Minister than about the tragic fate of a poor woman. A few days after Rameeza Begum's incident a small crowd gathers and agitates in order to rescue her. But very soon, many are quickly arrested and carried off in the black vans by the reserve police. Rameeza is declared a “source of turbulence”. Student leaders, workers and some intellectuals are also arrested. They were to be held in “preventive detention”, it was said, “until the Chief Minister's birthday was over . . .” We are introduced to Dr. Durgabai who is referred to as the Little Mother. The author seems to imply that India needs the healing touch of doctors like Durgabai. The Little Mother, perhaps, is symbolic of Mother India. The symbolism is made evident when Durgabai suffers from illness as the city goes through commotions and atrocities carried out in the name of politics.

Durgabai also evinces great interest in all the happenings and suffers mental trauma as she suffers variously in the sufferings of the oppressed. Her attention is wholly dedicated to a long-awaited transformation of India. “A new India is being born”, she claims significantly; she has a soft corner for women in trouble. Equipped with the influence of good educational background, both Ramu and Mira, ordinary citizens in the novel, are in a position to serve the nation. There is a barber shop on the right side of Little Mother's house and a bicycle shop on the left. The apprentices, small boys, sleep on the pavement using rugs. Mother feels happy in treating their small ailments. She comments on them thus: “They were all picked off the street. He's good man the bicycle fellow. He treats them as well as he can. But they eat so poorly, a bit of rice or roti and some dal if they're lucky. I have dreams of keeping a buffalo to provide them with milk, what do you think?” Not only the Mother, but even an illiterate cycle shop owner has something constructive to offer toward the building up of the nation's economy. Alexander underscores the point that it is every individual, rich or poor, who makes up the nation, and who should assume the responsibility to shape India into one of the outstanding nations of the world. She can sit and read the Wye valley poems, but she raises the question: “Why study Wordsworth in our new India.” Poetic sensibilities, fine arts, religion and culture become “luxuries” that well-fed plutocrats only can afford. The novel is a novel of protest and anger. Initially disagreement is registered through mild protests.

The novel tries to prove that the anger of the meek and the humble could rise to the level of a mass rebellion, which will ultimately decimate the perpetrators of injustice. The pomp and show accompanying the sixtieth birthday celebration of Limca Gowda, the Chief Minister's utter neglect of masses, and the plight of the millions who are condemned to live a destitute life in slums, all these culminate in the eruption of lava in which Limca Gowda's “Cardboard” city meets a fiery finale. What began as a mild protest in the form of orange sellers' march wells up with anger and determination against manifest injustice in the heart of millions and explodes, leading to such a violent end. In every colonial nation, human relationships have arisen from the severest exploitation, founded on inequality and contempt and guaranteed by police

authoritarianism. All administrative and political machinery is geared to a regime of oppression for the benefit of a few. For the colonizer, the most important area of domination is the colonized. The native woman is doubly marginalized by virtue of her relative economic oppression and gender subordination.

In all spheres of Indian society, women are dominated, dehumanized and de-womanized, discriminated against, exploited, harassed sexually, used, abused and viewed as inferior beings who must always subordinate themselves to the so-called male supremacy. Indian women still live under the shadow of patriarchal tradition that manifests itself in violence against women. To quote an example from the novel, an old cobbler woman, who is in no way linked to the birth day celebrations of Gowda, is threatened by an Ever Ready man. The poor old woman is concentrating sincerely in mending the broken chappal (sandals) of Mira. She is not only old and poor but suffers from leukoderma. The cobbler woman carefully works on the chappal without minding the slogans and the busy trucks carrying the cheering villagers, cheering for a promise of three free meals and a handful of rupees. But nothing seems to bother the woman who chooses a pavement to work for her livelihood. All on a sudden, the Ever Ready man comes and “stares at her, kicked some of her leather scraps into the gutter and then walked away, lathi in hand.” But the old woman is calm and composed and continues to do her work. Her non-violent attitude is amazing to Mira, the college teacher, whose passion rises at the flicker of anger. Mira, an educated, a college teacher, seems to derive her strength for action from the subaltern voices.

The final chapter of the novel pictures as how woman from a village, narrates the everyday atrocities in Hyderabad. She boldly raises her voice against the centre for the marginalized. This shows that the subaltern also can speak and it shall surely be heard. The next speaker in the crowd is Maitreyi, a sweeper in the police station. She is the only eye witness of the rape. She describes how Rameeza is “dragged up the steps” and later “thrown into the cell”. The next speaker is also a woman. She is introduced as Rosamma from the hill country. She says, “Overcome oppression, down with chains.” She pats on Mira's shoulder and says, “You must not be afraid to use knives. How also should we reach the new world?” Mira now understands that the marginalized have to sustain their anger so that a day will come for them to reap justice, liberty and equality, with the help of the sickles they carry. Alexander questions the value of non-violence of Gandhi, because it almost fails to bring a change in the lives of the poor and the subdued as seen in the life of the cobbler woman. In the mental domain of the novel, unless women take up the “knife of justice”, there is little chance for freedom and justice. The subaltern must speak, speak on louder and louder one by one and then must go in for action, just like the woman from a village, a Maitreyi and a Rosamma.

Thus Alexander suggests a path of recovery and healing through female solidarity and friendship. Alexander does not stop merely with the recording of female bodily trauma. This vision possibly stems from the influence of various Indian women's movements that she witnessed in her formative years.

Alexander suggests that there is a possibility of the uplift of the poor and destitute if only a little bit of cooperation is found in every individual. Mira is an ordinary woman who is ready to embrace the subdued wherever she finds them. Her heart wells up whenever she sees women being subdued in the hands of the cruel patriarchy. Her anger is beautifully canalized into positive actions and she is very much sure that there shall definitely be a cure though it may be a slow process. The novel ends with a positive note thus: “Her (Rameeza's) mouth was healing slowly.” Mira wishes a “heavy rain must fall” on the fire which had been lit in water.

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## JANE AUSTEN'S *EMMA* AS A REPRESENTATIVE NOVEL: AN OVERVIEW

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Jane Austen, whom some critics consider England's best novelist, was born in 1775 in Steventon, England. The seventh of eight children, Austen lived with her parents for her entire life, first in Steventon and later in Bath, Southampton, and Chawton. Her father was the parish rector in Steventon, and, though not wealthy, her family was well connected and well educated. Austen briefly attended boarding school in Reading but received the majority of her education at home. According to rumor, she had a brief love affair when she was twenty-five, but it did not lead to a marriage proposal. Two years later she accepted and then quickly rejected a proposal. She remained unmarried for the rest of her life. Austen died in 1817; at age forty-one, of Addison's disease.

Austen began writing stories at a very young age and completed her first novel in her early twenties. However, she did not publish until 1811, when *Sense and Sensibility* appeared anonymously, followed by *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) and *Mansfield Park* (1814). *Emma*, which appeared in 1816, was the last novel published during Austen's lifetime. (*Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* appeared posthumously.)

Austen's novels received little critical or popular recognition during her lifetime, and her identity as a novelist was not revealed until after her death. As admired as Austen's novels later became, critics have had a difficult time placing them within literary history. She is known for her gently satirical portraits of village life and of the rituals of courtship and marriage, but she wrote during the Romantic period, when most major writers were concerned with a very different set of interests and values. Romantic poets confronted the hopes and failures of the French Revolution and formulated new literary values centered on individual freedom, passion, and intensity. In comparison, Austen's detailed examination of the rules of decorum that govern social relationships, and her insistence that reason and moderation are necessary checks on feeling, make her seem out of step with the literary times. One way to understand Austen's place in literary history is to think of her as part of the earlier eighteenth century, the Age of Reason, when literature was associated with wit, poise, and propriety. Her novels certainly belong to an eighteenth-century genre, the comedy of manners, which examines the behavior of men and women of a single social class.

Rather than dismiss Austen as a writer who shuns the artistic and political movements of her time, it is perhaps more useful to think of her as an early feminist. Critics have pointed out that the Romantics, who were almost exclusively male, offered a poor model of literary fulfillment for the ambitious woman of the time. While male writers such as Percy Bysshe Shelley and Lord Byron possessed the freedom to promote their own individuality through wide travel and sexual and military adventurism, women were largely denied these freedoms. For women, the penalty for sexual freedom was social ostracism, poverty, and worse. In *Sense and Sensibility*, Austen describes explicitly the danger that cultivating emotion posed for women of her time.

In this social context, Austen's commitment to reason and moderation can be seen as feminist and progressive rather than conservative. The intelligence and resourcefulness of her heroines stand in constant contrast to the limits of the constricted world of courtship and marriage defining their sphere of action. While reading *Emma* it is interesting to consider to what extent Austen accepts or questions the idea

that marriage represents a woman's maturity and fulfillment.

Some consider Emma Austen's best and most representative novel. It is also her longest novel, and by many accounts, her most difficult. Long praised for its rich domestic realism, Emma also presents puzzling questions: how can a character as intelligent as Emma be wrong so often? When does Austen expect us to sympathize with Emma, and when does she expect us to criticize her? Is the ending as genuinely happy as it is presented to be, or does Austen subtly inject a note of subversive irony into it? That these questions are on some level unanswerable ensures that Emma will be read again and again.

Emma Woodhouse has just attended the wedding of Miss Taylor, her friend and former governess, to Mr Weston. Having introduced them, Emma takes credit for their marriage, and decides that she likes matchmaking. After she returns home to Hartfield with her father, Emma forges ahead with her new interest against the advice of Mr Knightley and tries to match her new friend Harriet Smith to Mr Elton, the local preacher. First, Emma must persuade Harriet to refuse the marriage proposal from Robert Martin, a respectable, educated, and well-spoken young farmer, which Harriet does against her own wishes. However, Mr Elton, a social climber, thinks Emma is in love with him and proposes to her. When Emma tells him that she had thought him attached to Harriet, he is outraged. After Emma rejects him, Mr Elton leaves for a stay at Bath and returns with a pretentious, nouveau-riche wife, as Mr Knightley expected. Harriet is heartbroken and Emma feels ashamed about misleading her.

Frank Churchill, Mr Weston's son, arrives for a two-week visit to his father and makes many friends. Mr Knightly suggests to Emma that, while Frank is clever and engaging, he is also a shallow character. Jane Fairfax comes home to see her aunt, Miss Bates, and grandmother, Mrs Bates, for a few months, before she must go out on her own as a governess. She is the same age as Emma, but Emma has not been as friendly with her as she might. Emma envies her talent and is annoyed to find all, including Mrs Weston and Mr Knightly, praising Jane. The patronizing Mrs Elton takes Jane under her wing and announces that she will find her the ideal governess post before it is wanted. Emma begins to feel some sympathy for Jane's predicament.

Emma decides that Jane and Mr Dixon are mutually attracted, and that is why she has come home. She shares her suspicions with Frank, who met Jane and the Campbell's at a vacation spot a year earlier, and he apparently agrees with her. Suspicions are further fueled when a piano, sent by an anonymous benefactor, arrives for Jane. Emma feels herself falling in love with Frank, but it does not last to his second visit. The Elton's treat Harriet badly, culminating with Mr Elton publicly snubbing Harriet at the ball given by the Weston's in May. Mr Knightly, who had long refrained from dancing, gallantly steps in to dance with Harriet. The day after the ball, Frank brings Harriet to Hartfield, she having fainted after a rough encounter with local gypsies. Harriet is grateful, and Emma thinks this is love, not gratitude. Meanwhile, Mrs Weston wonders if Mr Knightley has taken a fancy to Jane but Emma dismisses that idea. When Mr Knightly mentions the links he sees between Jane and Frank, Emma denies them, while Frank appears to be courting her instead. He arrives late to the gathering at Donwell in June, while Jane leaves early. Next day at Box Hill, a local beauty spot, Frank and Emma continue to banter together and Emma insults Miss Bates.

When Mr Knightley scolds Emma for the insult to Miss Bates, she is ashamed and tries to atone with a morning visit to Miss Bates, which impresses Mr Knightley. On the visit, Emma learns that Jane had accepted the position of governess from one of Mrs Elton's friends after the outing. Jane now becomes ill, and refuses to see Emma or accept her gifts. Meanwhile, Frank was visiting his aunt, who dies soon after he arrives. Now he and Jane reveal to the Weston's that they have been secretly engaged since the fall but Frank knew that his aunt would disapprove. The strain of the secrecy on the conscientious Jane had caused the two to quarrel and Jane ended the engagement. Frank's uncle readily gives his blessing to the match and the engagement becomes public, leaving Emma chagrined to discover that she had been so wrong.

Emma is certain that Frank's engagement will devastate Harriet, but instead Harriet tells her that she loves Mr Knightley, although she knows the match is too unequal. Emma is startled, and realizes that

she is the one who wants to marry Mr Knightly. Mr Knightly returns to learn Emma's reaction to the engagement. When she admits her own foolishness, he proposes and she accepts. Now Harriet accepts Robert Martin's second proposal and they are the first couple to marry. Jane and Emma reconcile, and Frank and Jane visit the Westons. Once the period of deep mourning ends, they will marry. Before the end of November, Emma and Mr Knightly are married with the prospect of "perfect happiness".

In contrast to other Austen heroines, Emma seems immune to romantic attraction, at least until her final self-revelation concerning her true affections. Unlike Marianne Dashwood, who is attracted to the wrong man before she settles on the right one, Emma generally shows no romantic interest in the men she meets and even her flirting with Churchill seems tame. She is genuinely surprised (and somewhat disgusted) when Mr Elton declares his love for her, much in the way Elizabeth Bonnet reacts to the obsequious Mr Collins, also a parson. Her fancy for Frank Churchill represents more of a longing for a little drama in her life than a longing for romantic love. For example, at the beginning of Chapter XIII, Emma has "no doubt of her being in love", but it quickly becomes clear that, even though she spends time "forming a thousand amusing schemes for the progress and close of their attachment", we are told that "the conclusion of every imaginary declaration on his side was that she *refused him*". View is that of Emma, a necessary one if Austen is to explore the character of a willful and somewhat snobbish young lady and at the same time keep the reader's sympathy for her. Only thus can we be convinced that Emma's character really blends honesty and goodwill with its negative qualities; it is thus too that we can best view the effects of emotion rather than dwell upon climactic emotion itself.

At times the point of view is that of the author. Though this subject comes also under Style (see below), it should be said here that, in order to get the necessary ironic distance from her characters, the author not only very occasionally gets briefly into the point of view of other characters but also skillfully pulls the reader back to her own point of view in order that he see things in terms of ironic satire. If he is too close, his reader involvement may lead merely to critical disgust. At the proper distance, he is involved only enough to appreciate the comic satire. When necessary for proper distancing, then, Austen simply moves into authorial point of view as, for instance, in the scene where George proposes to Emma: "What did she say? Just what she ought, of course. A lady always does. She said enough to show there need not be despair and to invite him to say more himself." This shift to authorial point of view avoids sentimentality and allows both humor and irony in reference to the coyness and indirection that a consistently social person may give to a vital and personal occasion. And it does all this better than in the details of dialogue, where the point might be lost without brevity.

Point of view, then, is omniscient when it is to the author's purpose (we do not, for instance, get into the points of view of Jane or Frank, for doing so would give away too much), but the character whose point of view is most before us is Emma, the focal personage of the novel.

One can, and with truth, say that *Emma*, like Jane Austen's other novels, deals with the subject of young ladies finding proper husbands. On the surface this is what the story line of *Emma* is about, but the total subject matter of the book concerns much more than that. Within the chosen limits of upper-middle-class society and within the even more limited strict feminine point of view for telling the story (all the events are presented from within a domestic or social context, though not, as has been claimed, merely from within a drawing room), Miss Austen is fervently preoccupied with the way people behave. And this is the broad area of the moralist. If the moralist chooses, as Miss Austen does, to focus on the common rather than the exceptional behavior of people, he is more likely to write comedy than tragedy. If he is furthermore, a serious moralist, perceptive and understanding enough to keep a part, but only a part, of himself disengaged from the contradictory entanglements of his subject matter, his comedy has a good chance of being realized in terms of ironic satire.

The purpose of satire is to point a humorous finger at what is wrong, thereby indicating by implication what is right. Irony, as a method of achieving satire, makes use of contradictory, and

sometimes ambiguous, opposites. Throughout *Emma* a deeper theme than that of woman finding the appropriate man for herself pervades the action: Emma Woodhouse's story is a progression in self-deception. Having since childhood been obliged to manage her father, she still likes to manage things and, particularly, people. In fact, among her associates she feels confident to manage everyone except Mr. Knightley. In her long-term attempt to preside over the marriage-ability of Harriet Smith, the natural daughter of hitherto unknown persons, Emma pits herself against something in which she fundamentally believes, the eighteenth century belief in class status whereby one simply should stay in the class into which he is born. (She is also incidentally pitting herself against the process of natural selection of a mate.) She deludes herself that Harriet's parents *may* have been of importance and hence tries to marry her off to people above her station in life. With absolutely no foundation in fact, this delusion stems solely from Emma's willful imagination.

Mr. George Knightley, on the other hand, in his sedate and kindly way accepts the social status quo and governs himself accordingly, even cautioning Emma about what she is doing. On this major thematic point, then, Emma represents imagination and Mr. Knightley stands for realistic reasoning (some would say merely realistic acceptance), two human characteristics that are so often in opposition that a contrasting pairing of them leads to irony. The story, of course, belongs primarily to Emma, for her willfulness most readily lends itself to satire and it is the feminine point of view that Jane Austen knows best. Still, for contrast, Mr. Knightley is often enough on the scene to keep us reminded of the other side of the coin, and Mr. Woodhouse, Emma's father, is constantly before us as an extreme example of one who wants to keep things the way they are. Of the two men, it is Mr. Woodhouse, so fearful of the least change that he bemoans the very thought of marriage and urges reason of health for not leaving his fireside even in good weather, who is the main object of satire on this side of the opposition.

What Miss Austen has done is to take two human traits and put them in different characters in order to make her contrast highly effective. They of course belong to human nature in general and represent those ironical mixed qualities of humanity and human relationships. Throughout the story a reader feels that somehow these extremes ideally should be able to meet on common ground and be resolved into something right. From her realistic point of departure as a storyteller, however, Miss Austen knows that relationships are tangential: hence the irony in the fact that the willfully imaginative Emma is the closest of blood relatives to the sedentary and senilely reasoning Mr. Woodhouse. There is doubtless significance far beyond the surface plotting of a love story in the fact that Miss Austen finally marries Emma and Mr. Knightley that is, marries imagination and reason. Having realized her self-deception to some degree, Emma, with Mr. Knightley beside her, may now develop a proper balance within herself. Mr. Knightley, with Emma beside him, now seems to stand a good chance of never ending up on that dead-end street of static, senile reasoning at which Mr. Woodhouse has arrived. It is a common-ground marriage of reason and imagination, of head and heart, of common sense and goodness.

The ending of the story is, then, what we call a happy one. Or is it? In consideration of the bulk of the story about human foibles, Miss Austen gives us reason only for hope. She concludes the book with a final sentence about "the perfect happiness of the union." But this is said with at least a certain amount of tongue-in-cheek. Emma will not marry without her father's consent, and that comes only after the robbery of a nearby turkey house one night convinces Mr. Woodhouse that Mr. Knightley's living with them will be a needed protection. The close juxtaposition of this small causative event and the closing statement of the book connect the ridiculous with the more sublime and should at least make a reader wonder. Based on a moralistic realism as Miss Austen's satiric comedy is, it is not untypical of her in one twinkling to see both a robbed turkey house that will doubtless be replenished and a human household which, while it encloses a "perfect happiness of . . . union," also includes Mr. Woodhouse and the displacement of Mr. Knightley, who will now forego the ease and security of his own finer home, Donwell Abbey, in order to placate Emma and Mr. Woodhouse. Miss Austen's satire ends with an indication of what *might* be right; but she only points,

for her moralistic realism will not let her be certain. She has seen too much of life for that. After all, who can say that Emma will never again try to manage things and people? In spite of robbers (and bridegrooms) this world is still full of turkeys, and Miss Austen knows that.

A brief word remains to be said about the ambiguity of opposites as Miss Austen sees them, and perhaps the best example is Emma's willful imagination, which stands in contrast to the reason of someone like Mr. Knightley. The ambiguity lies in a further contrast which embodies a contradiction. A lively imagination, in its purity, is an admirable and interesting quality. Perhaps willfulness, too, has its good points. But imagination can be too unfounded upon reality, and willfulness is perhaps too often misdirected because of its tendency to become presumptuous if not arrogant. Thus, on any one side of Miss Austen's oppositions there is ambiguity in that that side contains both good and bad inextricably fused. For this reason we can like and even admire Emma for the lively energy of her imagination, for her readiness to make amends, her benevolence, her affirmative sense of direction, while we are also critical of what she is doing.

Similarly we may feel that Mr. Knightley's reasoning does not make allowance for an adequate degree of imagination. Miss Bates' interminable talkativeness, which so comically places the petty and the significant on the same level never, includes a merciful consideration for the listener in spite of the fact that she is one of the kindest and best intentioned people who ever lived on or off a page. In Miss Austen's world (and who can prove that her world is not ours?) no good quality seems to be without some negative alloy. For this reason her satire not only probes the contradictory nature of opposite human qualities (contradictory because they are of one world and one humanity), but also considers the ambiguous mixture of good and bad in any one of these opposites.

Just as she never presents an actual emotional love scene (the one exception is found in *Emma* when Mr. Knightley declares the passion of his love to Emma) because her interest is in discovering the *effects* of emotion, she seems never to question *why* contradictions and ambiguities exist because she is basically a realist rather than a theorist. Rather than write of man and his relation to God or politics or abstract ideas, she wrote of human relationships. This may be why, in a letter to her nephew, she once referred to her fiction as "the little bit (two Inches wide) of Ivory on which I work with so fine a Brush, as produces little effect after much labour." Such a statement may, of course, be merely tongue-in-cheek modesty; but it is indicative of the fact that she deliberately limited her writing efforts not only to the provincial society which she knew and to the feminine point of view that was naturally hers but also to the mundane level of human behavior. Nonetheless, most readers of *Emma* find there the rich opacity, the delicacy, and the true polish of fine ivory, but few would agree that it is only two inches wide.

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**CULTURAL RECALIBRATION INTO THE HOST SOCIETY: A STUDY OF  
DIASPORIC DIMENSIONS IN *SOUR SWEET* BY TIMOTHY MO AND *THE  
NOWHERE MAN* BY KAMALA MARKANDAYA**

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**Abstract:**

*Diaspora which is otherwise called “theory of migrancy” has gained currency over the contemporary age. It not only aids to generate aesthetic evaluation, but also negotiate with cultural constructs and further paves way for the emergence of new hybridity. The characters presented in Sour Sweet by Timothy Mo and The Nowhere Man by Kamala Markandaya can achieve different levels of success or failures by culturally transplanting and adapting themselves into the host society. These texts are a kind of embody discourse that mainly tries to serve as an outlet to the pent up passions, emotions and feelings of expatriates eventhough their physical and psychic involved in being dislocated and relocating across boundaries.*

**Key Words:** *Alienation, Assimilation, Adaptation, Cultural identity, Immigrants and Biculturalism.*

One can make a comparative study of *Sour Sweet* by Timothy Mo and *The Nowhere Man* by Kamala Markandaya in order to explore people, who assimilate lead a happy life and people who adapt to alien culture end up in failure and become victims of environment in the alien land. Mo's novels address matters of universal significance and examine the problems of immigrants while encountering foreign culture. Markandaya's novels in general dramatized the clash between East and West and the tragedy that resulted from it, or the problems facing ordinary middle-class Indians, making a living and finding inner peace.

Culture is unique for all. Everyone has their own way of activities and habits. For example, Barbara Miller, in her book *Cultural Anthropology* says that, “The eating habits of the people depend upon their culture. It is the culture, which shapes the people, as when to eat, what to eat and the meanings of food and eating.” (Miller 2000 : 10). The characters presented in both the novels can achieve different levels of success or failures by culturally transplanting and adapting themselves into the host society. The operation of this process of cultural transplantation may occur in four ways:

They are:

1. Successful adaptation.
2. Failure in adaptation that leads to the alienation and isolation of the individual from the rest of the society.
3. Failure in adaptation followed by the return of the individual to the native country.
4. Assimilation as an extreme end of adaptation.

Successful adaptation and failure in adaptation followed by the return of the individual to the country of origin do not take place in both the novels. But, 'Failure in adaptation that leads to the alienation and isolation of the individual from the rest of the society' and 'assimilation as an extreme end of adaptation' takes place in both the novels. For the former, one can take the example of Srinivas in *The Nowhere Man* and Chen in *Sour Sweet*, Laxman in *The Nowhere Man* and Mui in *Sour Sweet* are examples for the latter.

Yogesh Atal in his article, talks about immigrants. According to him,

The outsiders either acclimatize to the place or else develop a resistance to it. Some outsiders try to become insiders by way of intermarriage, adoption of name, religion and language of the host society, adoption of food habits and developing taste for host food. On the other hand some outsiders try to conserve their identity and maintain some distance from the host culture such as retention of mother tongue and use of the native script, promote greater interaction with the members of the in-group, provision of separate educational facilities for the children, pursuit of parental religion, continuation of food habits and taboos associated with eating, retention of cultural diacriticals particularly in the manner of dressing (Atal 2004: 134).

Technically we can view the first concept as assimilation and the second concept as adaptation. Assimilation is a concept which foresees the complete loss of the original cultural identity to be replaced with that of the members of host society. And Adaptation is a state of reconciliation and of coming to terms with the new socio-cultural environment by making “adjustments” in one's cultural identity which generally occurs to the immigrants all over the world

Srinivas, the protagonist of the novel, *The Nowhere Man* unlike his wife Vasantha, always tries to adapt to the alien culture. Even when he hears the news of his first son's engagement with an English girl Pat, he is not shocked like Vasantha. He just takes it easy. In an incident, when Srinivas's son comes to invite him for Christmas, Srinivas replies at once: “Christmas is a Christian religious festival,” he said simply “I shall not celebrate it. Or expect to celebrate it with others” (NW: 61).

But, at the same time, he does not disapprove, Mrs. Pickering, who stays in Srinivas house to celebrate Christmas. He even helps to decorate the Christmas tree. By this one can get a clear view that, Srinivas is not against alien land's tradition and culture. He does not accept alien functions as his own functions but he adapts them and he also participates in the function when others celebrate them. Even he goes to the extent of adopting England as his own country, he allows his two son's to participate in the English war, as a result, he has lost his second son Seshu in the war and to some extent, he has also lost his first son, Laxman, who assimilates and accepts England as his motherland.

Individuals who find it difficult to accept the culture followed in the new land will cut a sorry face and ultimately end up their life with lots of bitter experience. Even though Srinivas tries to adapt and tolerate alien culture, the attempts made by him is not successful and thus he at the end of the novel, literally becomes 'Nowhere Man' and also becomes the victim of the environment.

If one has a strong affiliation towards his motherland, it will be harder for them to attach themselves into the alien land. Chen in the novel *Sour Sweet* is one such character. His main aim, on coming to England, is to earn more money in restaurant business and return to his homeland. But Chen unknowingly gets trapped into Triad group. Even after this incident he does not want to run to his country, but just wants to stay in England and make his living. This clearly shows that he also, to some extent, adapts alien culture. But at the end, he does not succeed in achieving cultural authenticity, a state of assimilation or successful adaptation and he is killed by the Triad group and thus Chen is also made as the victim of environment.

Existentialism propounds the fact that each individual is responsible for his/her own actions, and his actions determine his/her characters and way of life. Dislocation creates the need to acclimatize oneself with the new land and culture. This is a process of establishing an identity in the new ambience so as to survive. The quest for relocating the lost identity may leave an individual with a total sense of estrangement. Hence assimilation is always a better option. For the second state, that is 'assimilation' as an extreme end of 'adaptation', one can take Laxman in *The Nowhere Man* and Mui in *Sour Sweet* as best examples.

In *The Nowhere Man*, Laxman is the elder son of Srinivas. Laxman's character, from the beginning of the novel to its end, has been pictured as the character, which likes and accepts alien culture more than

his own Indian culture. As in English culture, Laxman informs their parents about his engagement. He does not ask for permission to marry an English girl, but he just informs them that he has already engaged and will be married soon.

Even Laxman is embarrassed about his mother's dress and hair style. He wants her to stick strongly to English culture instead of sticking to Indian culture. Laxman celebrates Christmas as his own function and even he goes to invite his father. All these factors clearly show that, he adapts and assimilates firmly to alien culture.

Harping upon one's homeland never creates an opportunity to survive in the new society. In order to lead a successful life, it is essential to immerse completely into the new world. Mui in *Sour Sweet* readily accepts all the new found cultural trends in the Foreign land. She can be compared to Laxman in *The Nowhere Man*. In a sense Mui, like other immigrants is eager to assimilate, according to her, practicing all Chinese culture in England is a stupid thing: She says to his sister Lily that, "Wicked things you teach him. Nobody should know these things" (SS: 234).

However, Man kee is Lily's son and she decides that he needs to attend a "Chinese person school" so that he does not "grow into a foreign devil boy". When she asks Mui to drop-off Man kee at the school on her way to Mrs. Law's house on Saturdays, Mui stoutly refuses, saying, "Man kee is very important to me, younger sister" (SS: 236).

At the end of the novel, Mui's cultural assimilation seems to have triumphed over Lily's reliance on herself and the culture. That is, Mui has married to Mr. Lo, one of Chan's friends. And with a help of the loan from Mrs. Law, they plan to open a restaurant of their own. Significantly a "fish and chip" is not a Chinese restaurant. Finally Mui makes her position on Chinese verses English culture clearly: "I am taking out citizenship naturalization. This is my home now" (SS: 276).

Thus the characters presented in both the novels by the authors are moving to England as immigrants. And both the novels discuss widely about the entire major characters attitude towards alien culture. As Ainsah Mensah in her article, *The Many Faces of Multiculturalism* says that, "Multiculturalism is a welcome addition to human dignity. It fosters a better understanding of human kinds. It disintegrates ignorance and distrust between or among human kinds. It builds the edifice of culture on a new ground full of vitality" (Ainsah Mensah 2000 np). Immigrants have to assimilate to the situation; they should have the will to face new society; which consists of both good and bad people.

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## USING COMPARISON AND CONTRAST IN TEACHING PLAYS

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The aim of the study of comparative literature is not just to compare two national literatures. The comparison must be based upon scientific principles. Moreover one can compare literature on the one hand and the subjects like history, philosophy, fine arts and sciences on the other hand. Comparative literature would also confirm the fact that the creativeness and literary experience would remain the same anywhere in the world. It gives an account of the similarities found between two literature. At the same time it examines the meaningful diversities also.

Henry Remak defines comparative literature as follows:

Comparative literature is the study of literature beyond the confines of the particular country and the study of the relationships between literature on one hand and other areas of knowledge and belief, such as the fine arts, philosophy, history, the social sciences, the sciences, religion etc. on the other. In brief it is the comparison of one Literature with another or others, and the comparison of literature with other spheres of human expression (1961, 1)

According to K.Chellappan comparison is a source of knowledge and method of enquiry used by all sciences. Similarly a comparative study of literatures across cultures could be considered an extension and intensification of healthy critical procedures adopted by sensitive readers of literature in all periods and cultures. (1985,1)

According to Owen Aldridge. "Comparative literature can be considered the study of any literary phenomenon from the perspective of more than one national literature or in conjunction with another intellectual discipline or even several" (1969). Wellek and Warren recognize the comparable aspects found in the literatures of different countries:

We recognize that there is one poetry, one literature, comparable in all ages, developing, changing, full of possibilities. Literature is neither a series of unique works with nothing in common nor a series of works enclosed in time cycles of Romanticism or classicism, the age of Pope and the age of Wordsworth. Nor is it, of course, the 'block universe' of sameness and immutability which an elder classicism conceived as ideal (1970,43).

In Tamilnadu V.V.S.Iyer was forerunner in the field of research related to comparative literature. He compared the Tamil poet Kamban with Homer, Virgil, Milton and Valmiki. Kailaspathi compared Cankam Poetry with Western epic poetry. T.P.Meenakshi Sundaram motivated many scholars to undertake research in the field of comparative literature. K.Chellappan compared Shakespeare with the Tamil Poet Ilango. Many scholars came forward to compare the Tamil poets with the English Romantic poets. V.Sachithananthan compared Whitman with the Tamil Poet Bharati. N.Subramanian compared Robert Frost with Bharati. Research works were undertaken comparing English and Tamil novelists. Moreover Essayists were also compared by the scholars. Krishnan compared Emerson with Maraimalai Adigal.

Archetype is a universal symbol. It may be a character, a theme, a symbol or even a setting. Many

critics opine that archetypes have a common and recurring representation in a particular human culture or entire human race. According to Carl Jung, the root of the archetype is in the collective unconscious of mankind. The term collective unconscious refers to experiences shared by a race or culture.

In Shakespeare's play *Macbeth*, one could find archetypal ambition in the speeches and acts of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. Similarly, Rupert Brooke in his play *Lithuania* exposed the archetypal ambition of a group of family members. Lady Macbeth wants to kill the king so as to make her husband king of Scotland. In Lithuania, father, mother and daughter want to dispose of the stranger who seeks food and shelter and plunder his jewels and money. Both the plays contain the element of dramatic irony.

In the play *Macbeth*, Scottish king Duncan's Generals Macbeth and Banquo defeated two separate invading armies. Later they met the witches as they crossed a moor. The witches prophesied that Macbeth would become Thane of Cawdor and eventually king of Scotland. When Macbeth arrived at Inverness, Lady Macbeth persuaded him to kill the king who was their guest. While King Duncan was asleep, Macbeth stabbed him. When Duncan's death was discovered next morning, Macbeth killed the chamberlains and easily assumed the kingship.

*Lithuania* describes the tragic story of a young man. The murderers were no other than the parents and the sister of the deceased. The only son of the family who was thought to be dead long ago, returns home a wealthy man. He wants to keep his identity secret until the following day and enacts the role of a guest stranger with an ostentatious display of his riches. He wants to give his family members a thrilling surprise. But the family members could not resist the lure of instant wealth after a prolonged spell of misery. They conspire to do away with the stranger and succeed in killing him. The stranger cries, "Mother mother". But his sister goes on hitting him. Later, they realize their terrible mistake when the vodka shopkeeper visits their house and informs the fact.

After comparing the incidents which happen in the two plays *Macbeth* and *Lithuania* the students could be asked to find out the similarities. The ambition of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth could be compared with that of the family members in the play *Lithuania*.

The play *Lithuania* could be taught by contrasting its theme with the short story written by Maxim Gorky. In Maxim Gorky's short story, a mother kills her own son for the cause of her native country. The son has revolted against the king of the country and defeated the army of the king in various battles. The mother goes to meet her son. Not knowing the real purpose of her visit, the son takes rest on the lap of his mother who stabs him to death. The students could be asked to compare and contrast the noble act of this mother with that of the mother in *Lithuania* who plots to kill her own son for selfish purpose, though unknowingly.

Further, the students could be asked to compare the act of the mother in *Lithuania* with that of a mother in another short story where the mother smothers her crying child in order to rescue the lives of many hiding revolutionists from the searching soldiers. After studying the plays *Macbeth* and *Lithuania*, students could easily infer the fact that murder for gain crime has been delineated in those plays. But in the short stories, the mothers had been depicted to evince selfless act. The play *Lithuania* could be compared with Sophocles' play also.

In Sophocles' play *Women of Trachis*, Deianeira, the wife of Heracles is distraught over her husband's neglect of her family. As he is involved in some adventure often he rarely visits them. Deianeira learns that Heracles laid siege to the city of Oechalia just to obtain Iole, whom he has taken as a lover. Unable to cope with the thought of her husband falling in love with the young woman Iole. She decides to use love charm on him, a magic potion that will win him back. Hyllus, her son informs her that Heracles lies dying due to her gift. Deianeira feels enormous shame and kills herself. In the end, Heracles is in so much pain that he is begging for someone to finish him off. He makes a final wish which Hyllus promises to obey that Hyllus is to marry Iole.

In *Lithuania*, the family members did not recognize the young man. It was a mistake that he was

killed. Similarly, Deianeira did not plan to kill her husband. It was also a mistake committed by her as she was misguided by the lie of Nessus. Thus, by comparing the similarities and dissimilarities found in different works the students could appreciate literary works appropriately.

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## THE CONTRADICTIONS AND HYPOCRISY IN THE WESTERN IDEAS OF CIVILIZATION WITH REFERENCE TO AIME CESAIRE'S *DISCOURSE ON COLONIALISM*

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**Abstract:** In “*Discourse on Colonialism*”, Césaire reviews European colonization; colonialism was never benevolent movement whose goal was to improve the lives of the colonized; instead, colonialists' motives were entirely self-centered in terms of different levels of exploitations. Césaire suggests that the power of the colonized people in the face of colonial subjugation and control on the colonies, rests in the fact that it is known that Europe is lying. The process of colonialism is a totally destructive enterprise.

**Key words:** *Discourse on Colonialism, Aime Césaire, Capitalism and Socialism.*

Aime Césaire who is universally famous for his poetic and playwright skill and one of the most influential authors from the French-speaking Caribbean was born in 1913 on the island of Martinique. Césaire's identity is associated with a term “*negritude*” standing for the Black youth's attempt to maintain a positive racial identity. He published *Discourse on Colonialism* in 1955, marked as a passionate and coruscating piece of prose with dense; however, justified criticism on Europe, the oppressive classes and justifiers of such oppression. Extending its scope, the term is also applied to racial struggles and struggles against capitalism and imperialism. Moreover, it deeply influenced the scholars and activists of liberation struggles in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. It was published for the first time in English nearly twenty years later, *Discourse on Colonialism* again exalted a generation engaged in the Civil Rights and Black Power and anti-war movements. Fundamentally, Aime Césaire shows the barbaric impact of capitalism and colonialism on both the colonizer and colonized exposing the contradictions and hypocrisy inexplicit in the Western ideas of “progress” and “civilization” upon “savage”, “uncultured,” or “primitive.” Stepping ahead, Aime reaffirms African values, identity, culture and their relevance; putting forward extremely complex relationship between consciousness and reality; and need to decolonize minds, inner life and society.

Césaire opens *Discourse on Colonialism* with a severe statement of Western civilization suggesting that the Western civilization is guilty of all three 'crimes'. He writes:

*A civilization that proves incapable of solving the problems it creates is a decadent civilization. A civilization that chooses to close its eyes to its most crucial problems is a stricken civilization. A civilization that uses its principles for trickery and deceit is a dying civilization.* (Césaire 34)

The European colonial powers have created two main problems by establishing these colonies and then exploiting them: the problem of the proletariat (Susan, 1973) and the colonial problem; while he describes the colonial problem created by the European civilization, he addresses Europe as “indefensible”, whose colonizers cannot be misinterpreted as positive. The power of the colonized peoples in the face of colonial oppression and repression in the colonies, according to Césaire, lies in the fact that they know that Europe is lying and therefore weak. Thus, Colonialism is nothing more or less than:

*“A collective hypocrisy that cleverly misrepresents problems, the better to legitimize the hateful solutions provided for them”.* (Césaire 32)

Césaire was influenced by Marx's historical materialism and theoretical framework of analysis to suggest that the Western civilization and depicts the mode how colonization gives way to capitalism;

which, leads in creating the relations of domination and subordination. According to Christina Belgrave and Angela Hurdle:

*To the extent that this is so, Césaire addresses the persistent nature of the economic system called capitalism and ways in which the power of the bourgeois has.* (Belgrave and Hurdle, 89)

Césaire is aware that within the economic system of the bourgeois, lies the class structure which determines the institutional and ideological framework of capitalist society. Marxist interpretation focusses on the idea that classes are antagonistic when the places they occupy in the system of social production are such that one class obtains wealth at the expense of the other; thus, Césaire notes that ideological inducements are used to falsify relationships of domination and subordination. He associates it to the Marxian political, educational and legal systems existing within capitalist society wherein the dominant ideology of the society in question lies. This is how the ruling class is able to maintain and impose whatever ideas they see fit in order for them to retain their control of power.

Césaire opens an argument that colonization is nothing more than an agent of proletarianization and mystification seeking to impose its ideas upon the proletariat who unthinkingly assimilates them; however, the Western civilization of Colonialism lie that they have civilizing mission. He points out that one must recognize that colonization was not what it was disguised to be. He intends to state that the act of colonialism cannot be justified at any level; it cannot be justified either as evangelization, nor a philanthropic enterprise, nor a desire to push back the frontiers of ignorance, disease and tyranny, nor a project undertaken for the greater glory of God, nor an attempt to extend the rule of law. The sole objective of the colonialism is planned and designed to explore, to dominate, to exploit, by trickery and force, the lands, goods and persons of other peoples, pushed on by the shadow of a civilization that at a certain point in its history, finds itself obliged, for internal reasons, to extend to a world scale the competition of its antagonistic economies. It is also characterized by an act of hypocrisy inherent in colonialism. ". The Western claimed that colonialism placed civilizations in contact was of doubtful veracity. Even if it did bring civilizations into contact, it certainly was not the best form of contact as the contact of civilizations colonialism brought about was devoid of "a single human value" (Césaire 34) Colonization spreads the concept of racial inequality stressing on the superiority of the European race. As Césaire says that the colonizers acted on their belief that "Christianity = civilisation, paganism = savagery". They considered the colonized as an uncivilized, brutal, uneducated and inferior people to be conquered. This real view gives the readers with the reality of colonization by examining the ideology at its foundation and its consequences for the colonizer and colonized. He states that it is important for one to "see clearly, to think clearly" about colonization to avoid deception by lies. Césaire put forth the Western claim and states that for civilizations "exchange is oxygen." However, it was considered that while Europe was the great "locus of ideas, the receptacle of philosophies and the meeting place of all sentiments" and therefore "the best center for the redistribution of energy. The process of Colonialism decivilizes, dehumanizes, brutalizes and degrades the colonizer in the form of violence that there is a corresponding corrosion and degrading of the colonizer's humanity and civilization. He says:

*"A poison is distilled into the veins of Europe and slowly but surely, the continent proceeds toward savagery."* (Césaire 35-36).

It is a dehumanizing impression of furiousness on the oppressor. The similar exploration is also made and examined by Albert Memmi in *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, and by Frantz Fanon in *The Wretched of the Earth* and *A Dying Colonialism*.

Césaire continues that relating to the consequences of colonization, "Europe is morally, spiritually indefensible" (Césaire 172). He establishes a link between colonialism and Nazism. Césaire refers to Nazi Germany when it unleashed its war machine on the Jews and other nations of Europe, the colonial powers reacted with horror and indignation. Till then the people of Western Europe were confederates to dreadful crimes comparable to the crimes of the German Nazis and Italian Fascists. But before then, they did not call

it Nazism or Fascism. Cesaire's argument is that people should view colonization and Nazism as equally cruel and inhumane because both have the same ideology at their foundation, that one race is superior to another and therefore should dominate. He traces the roots of Nazism in culture of colonialism; Nazism has its roots in the culture of colonialism and before the people of Europe were the victims of the daily barbarism of Nazism. He writes:

*They were its accomplices; . . . they tolerated that Nazism before it was inflicted on them, . . . they absolved it, shut their eyes to it, legitimized it, because, until then, it had been applied only to non-European people. . .*" (Cesaire, 174).

People tolerated Colonization because it was directed at non-European races; likewise Nazism was also tolerated. People hid the truth from themselves; they tolerated Nazism before it was inflicted on them, legitimized it. Cesaire points out no one protested to different notions of racism and as a result they developed further and Nazism was founded on them. The reason why Nazism is viewed differently, is not because of the act itself and that it was committed against mankind, but that "it is the crime against the white man, the humiliation of the white man, and the fact that he applied to Europe colonist procedures. There was a rise of pseudo-humanism in Europe; which diminished the rights of man. Europe is restricted its concern with the rights of man in relation to the White man, not Coolies and Niggers. Thus, the concept of humanity was narrow and fragmentary, incomplete and biased and, all things considered as sordidly racist. The fact, according to Cesaire, is that capitalist society is incapable of establishing a concept of the rights of all men, just as it has proved incapable of establishing a system of individual ethics. Thus, claiming to civilize barbarism, colonization negates civilization.

Cesaire extends his statement regarding colonialism and argues that colonization has negatively affected not only the colonized but the colonizer as well. He states: *the colonized were 'othered', that is, they were considered inferior to the Europeans.* (Cesaire 177) Colonization, Cesaire posits, equals "*thingification*". The relations inherent in colonization are relations of power and domination. He uses an equation to demonstrate this: colonization = '*thingification*'. The colonized are not human beings worthy of human rights or human respect, but things merely to be used, driven around, beaten and, when the need arises, killed in the name of a law and order rooted in injustice and barbarism.

The colonized individual was dehumanized and reduced to "an instrument of production; thus, the indigenous people also lost their culture. The process of colonization has a "boomerang effect of colonization". He justifies the statement as follows:

*No one colonizes innocently, that no one colonizes with impunity either; that a nation which colonizes, that a civilization which justifies colonization and therefore force is already a sick civilization, a civilization that is morally diseased, that irresistibly, progressing from one consequence to another, one repudiation to another, call for its Hitler, I mean its punishment.* (Cesaire 176) Cesaire describes colonialism is a totally destructive enterprise. Throughout his work, he reinforces the decline which faces European civilization because of colonization. He refers to it as a "decadent", "stricken" and "dying civilization" (Cesaire 172). For him "old societies" were better before European intervention in that they were "ante-capitalist" as well as "anti-capitalist", "democratic", "cooperative" and "fraternal societies".

In his essay, Cesaire claims that the racism of Europe did not bother him; he just examines and he is aghast at the hypocrisy and ignorance with which the cream of French society pretended that the French people were a superior race, destined to rule the world and to keep the black and yellow peoples in their own places. He sees that Colonialism could only contemplate the idea of other cultures being integrated into the French family and contemplates that the idea of France being integrated into other families was too monstrous to imagine, because a superior civilization cannot possibly be integrated into an inferior civilization. Cesaire feels that the entire gamut of European elites from journalists to sociologists, theologians and academics share responsibility for the crime of colonialism. He argues that colonialism's civilizing mission, with all its Hitlerian undertones, was simply the parting whimpers of a dying

civilization. He writes: a dying class, for "*it is an implacable law that every decadent class finds itself turned into a receptacle into which flows all the dirty waters of history; that it is a universal law that before it disappears, every class must first disgrace itself completely, on all fronts, and that it is with their heads buried in the dunghill that dying societies utter their swan songs*" (Cesaire 64). However, Cesaire warns the danger of re-colonization that while the colonized peoples are rejecting Europe and breaking the chains of colonialism they must be aware of the emergent "liberator".

Thus for Cesaire, the colonial struggle was not a fight between capitalism and socialism in the orthodox Marxist sense; however, it is a battle for the total bring down of a racist colonialist system which would open the way to a bright new world of freedom and equality.

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## BEYOND THE THRESHOLD: FINDING 'LIFE' AND A VOICE IN SABITA GOSWAMI *ALONG THE RED RIVER*

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### **Abstract:**

*This paper analyses *Along the Red River (2013): A Memoir* by veteran journalist Sabita Goswami. The book is an extremely frank account of her life that includes professional, familial, emotional experiences. The utter frankness with which she articulates her personal life limited by socio-cultural norms and the emerging perspectives on the contemporary political climate of Assam and the Northeast is what makes her life writing extraordinary.*

**Key Words:** *Voice, life, emotional experience, utter frankness, Assam.*

This paper focuses on the subject of female identity formation within the concept of 21<sup>st</sup> century femininity. Though overtly the text does not push for a feminist agenda, one can trace a distinct movement in the individuation process in reading Sabita Goswami's representation of the self as object in her early years to reclaiming, a sense of identity vis-à-vis the 'I'. The questions of identity formation, truth, self-representational writing, gender, feminism are therefore intersecting concerns that need to be addressed not just from the point of view of topical details embedded in the text but a fruitful pedagogic engagement with the genre of life writing and its relation to gender.

The contemporary Indian discourse of women and their subalternity is premised upon the fact that knowledge about women's body, sexuality and identity is the effect of specific regimes of power, here patriarchy. And it is precisely this understanding that accounts for Mrs. Goswami's frustrations and challenges when engaging with the 'woman' question. Her inward journey of self discovery/recovery is problematized by the notion that the 'self' in question is a gendered subject. In critical debates gender has emerged as a loaded concept inhering the revised theoretical parameters over time and accordingly appropriated by groups with different ideologies. Theorizing gender from an essentialist position to understanding gender as a social construct, as 'performance', has opened up critical space to voice feminist concerns. Gender and gendered identity has become the focus of feminist discourse and Sabita Goswami's autobiography in narrativising the self seeks to understand and resist the underpinnings of power that legislate the dominant ideology of gender and use the textual device as resistant discourse that seek to deconstruct the same.

The earliest memory of (her)self is a testimony of Sabita Goswami's tacit assumptions of the hegemonic codes that define patriarchy and regulate female bodies/identities. The discourse that processes the female body into a feminine one by reinscribing notions of 'wifeness', 'motherhood' into the sexed body is co-opted by Goswami in her personal life and the extent of such internalization is evident in her declaration, "I plunged into the fairly run-of-the-mill life of marriage, home and hearth" (Goswami,p.5) and elsewhere "I had a deep desire to be a journalist I settled for a teaching job so that I could shoulder my responsibilities and take care of my daughters"(ibid,p.4). Conventional marriage is another site of oppression where women are subdued by unlegislated rule of subservience. Ms. Goswami too confesses "The mental torture that my husband inflicted on me was beyond the provisions of law" (ibid,p.6). Her friend's advice on the eve of her marriage that "From now on you have to live your life only for others"

(ibid, p. 10) points to the coercive nature of power that programs and regulate women's identities.

Despite struggling within the constrictive contours of home and marriage, Sabita Goswami cannot undermine the effects of socialization. She remains reconciled “Why did I not leave him? The status being a single woman that was so unacceptable to society then” (ibid, p. 43). She strives to be a 'good' wife and mother for it is that which constituted her identity rather than her conscious self. Women, as de Beauvoir notes, are defined in terms of their physical capacities: “When woman is given over to man as his property, he demands that she represents the flesh purely for its own sake. Her body is not perceived as the radiation of a subjective personality” (p. 189).

The systemic oppressions that Goswami faces as a woman within the private sphere of the home is primarily structured around the female body which becomes the embodiment of a cultural sign. This cumulative experience of exploitation and repression causes complete objectification of the self as when the writer recalls the ritual of aarti when she is worshipped as Goddess Durga by her husband. On reliving it she remarks, “It was his way of showing his ownership and authority over my body and soul” (Goswami, p. 7). This causes the mind-body split where the 'women' as a social category has no semblance to the 'real' woman and the trauma of her lived body.

The sense of a fractured self is heightened when she makes the transition from the private to the public sphere as a journalist. The sexist economy that pervades both the spheres plays to the praxis of power/domination formula aimed at denying women visibility and agency. Therefore she remarks: “several of my male colleagues found it difficult to accept me as their equal. They looked hard for any opportunity to pull me down” (ibid, p. 95). The same is echoed by a CRPF jawan when she visits Dhubri in 1984 to take stock of the simmering tension between Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and the Border Security Force (BSF), wherein he says, “Kahan yeh BBC ke reporter hai! Yeh toh auratein hain!” (ibid, p. 201)

The resilience to submit to stereotypes of normative femininity is also an attempt to negotiate power. The incipient gesture of her refusing to cover her head before seniors in the family or breaking the taboo of reciting the gayatri mantra can be conflated with her masquerading as a makhela chadar wearing protestor during Assam Agitation or postulating as a Bengali when visiting Chaulkhowa Chapori in 1983 for professional mileage, are access to power, albeit limited one. By taking on multiple identities Sabita Goswami challenges woman as an ideological gendered construct by reinscribing the constructivist premise to contest her marginality. Her gendered identity as Judith Butler says becomes the “necessary scene of agency, the very terms in which agency is articulated and becomes culturally intelligible” (Butler, p. 145) The survival strategies planked on subversion and inversion of the patriarchal discourse is what qualifies Raghawan's comment on Sabita Goswami “You are a great survivor” (Goswami, p. 267).

The multiplicity of the singular subject is one of the stylistic and structural choices by which as Estelle Jelinek in her essay, “Political and Personal Autobiography Integrated. The Fusion of Kate Millett”<sup>1</sup> argues is a means by which women's selves-coherent, fractured, and multiplied are represented outside of the traditional prescriptive form. However the decentering of the subject 'I' pose the woman autobiographer with a peculiar problem of adhering to the conventions of a genre that presumes the 'self' as subject and the method that reveals the subject as fragmented decentered and unstable. Talking about this double discourse in women's life narratives, Helen Buss in “Reading for the Doubled Discourse of American Women's Autobiography” argues that to negotiate the demands of the double discourse of the 'I' as a unified self and 'I' as an unstable construct resulting from a history of oppression would be to engage with such self and structural fragmentation. Similarly caught in this double bend is *Along the Red River* where Sabita Goswami represents the self as plural, identity as multiple and discursive with a subjective point of view that falls back upon the sense of self 'I' that gets defined/re-defined in the interstitial space of this double bind.

The autobiographical subject, the 'I' of the narrative by positioning oneself within the autobiographical genre is able to constitute one's moral framework and self referentiality. The circular

relationship between subject and autobiography is reinforced by what Germaine Bree claims autobiography to be, “a retrospective reconstruction through language of a developing sense of self” (Bree, p. 173) This development of the self can be traced to Ms. Goswami's autobiography in where the 'I' is conceptualized in the metaphor of the “caged bird” (p. 13), the disabling cultural faces that make her ponder “where had that 'me' got last?” (p. 18) and her musings “I sipped my drink and thought, will I find my life” that prefigures definite feminist interventions on the part of the author.

Ms. Goswami's self-invention necessitates the invention of a speaking subject that is both ideologically and textually conditioned. I suggest that this speaking subject is to be identified with the first person perspective. In *A Room of One's Own*, Woolf emphasizes the necessity of portraying women's lives from the woman's point of view (p. 89). This rethinking of one's life history as in *Along the Red River* affords intention (contention) which in turn is a subject making process. Gail Scott says, of how her concept of the writing self has changed, that she thinks of “not the 'self' as a predetermined figure, but a complex tissue of texts, experience, evolving in the very act of writing” (Scott, p. 11). The point of view or the narrative inscribed in the 'I' is what makes a consistent relationship between the self and the outside world. Ms. Goswami's experience of the outside/public world is to be understood in terms of self/identity where the autobiographical act legislates meaning(s)/interpretations in a way which is self-reflexive. The critical posturing in response to the political turmoil of the times suggests subjectivity within the narrative framework. Ms Goswami maintained a critical strain, be it of the 'leaders' of different extremist groups of Northeast who according to her had “donned a larger than-life role on the pretext of negotiations with the government and later began to lead luxurious lives” (Goswami, p. 200), or her views on Assam Agitation where she criticizes student intake without having “looked at the qualitative aspect at all” (p. 86). The ULFA too comes under her critical lens when she muses “I am doubtful that even the senior-most leadership of the ULFA had ever understood the essence of “scientific socialism” (Goswami, p. 171). Her reflections on the outer world marks the emergence of a voice suppressed by disabling structures but doling out truth(s) erased/omitted by history. This subjective perspective clearly marks the individuation process where the voice and the self become identical. As William Spengemann asserts of self and autobiography that “the autobiography is not just a manifestation of the self but its embodiment” (p. 122).

The intertextuality of a political discourse alongside a personal intimate story makes the autobiography a politicized feminist text. The intersecting concerns can be understood within the framework of Carol Hanisch's feminist slogan, 'the personal is political and the political is personal.' The preoccupation with selfhood and identity is reflected in the issue of Assamese identity and the Assam Agitation in the early 1980's. The secessionist movements in the Northeast triggered by unequal power relationship with the centre has a semblance to the hierarchied sexual economy that Sabita constantly has to fight in her personal or professional life. The contradictions, ambiguities brought forth in investigating the problem underline the malleable nature of identity/identities as when in one of her journalistic stints while talking to a lecturer from Nagaland who referred to her as an “Indian” and on being asked about who he was answered “I am a Naga” (Goswami, p. 36). The same is appropriated by Goswami who while speaking about herself seeks to speak from outside the dominant discourse. The feminist perspective relates the discourse of politics and suffering specially when referring to the woman's body which becomes the site of political negotiation. Sabita Goswami's recounting of the massacre in Nellie where women were the casualty or rapes committed by CRPF personals at different places of Northeast. In the conflict between the totalizing discourse of a modern nation state and the numerous dissention within it, the woman becomes only a trope of this power struggle compounding the denigration of the female body and the structure of denials relating to issues of politics, identity etc. As Tharu and Lalita argue women's texts are “engaged in negotiations, debate, and protest invariably in areas that directly concern or are closely related to what it meant to be a woman in each historical moment” (Tharu & Lalita, p. 36) In investigating the socio political terrain as a journalist personal experiences for Sabita becomes politically relevant manifestation

of the same.

However ambiguity marks Ms. Goswami's text. The writer/author is caught in the double bind of self assertion and submission. Aronson confirms that women, "tend to be depoliticized and individualistic...they typically focus on individual solutions and express feminist ideas without labelling them as such ...viewing gender disparities as illegitimate, rather than in collective terms" (Aronson, p.905). One assumes a certain kind of reluctance on Sabita Goswami's part to be bracketed as a 'feminist' or an 'empowered' woman to elude another scripted role. One may argue that feminism for her is a personal experience aimed at finding individual solutions. The scope of herself (feminist) although is evident in her assertion "Today, my daughters are not only my friends, I have got from them emotional security, support and a carefree independent life. I realized today, that I am a complete woman" (Goswami, p.304). But this sense of self-hood is undermined in her frank confession "I resolved to tolerate everything for the sake of my grandson" (ibid, p.290). This contradiction seems to fit what Aronson describes as 'third wave' feminism characterized by "hybridity, contradictions and multiple identities." (p.905)

#### Notes:

<sup>1</sup>See Cassie Kosarek. Field Review-Women's Autobiography(From a Feminist Standpoint) Englishthesiswanderings.blogspot.in/2013/03/field-review-womens-autobiography-from.html

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**STRATEGIES FOR WRITING SKILLS IN ENGLISH**

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**Abstract:** *There are four communication talents. It is critical to first learn to listen, then speak, then read, and ultimately write. The four basic "linguistic talents" are referred to as such. The four language skills are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. We have an immediate need to improve our language skills in order to communicate effectively. Receptive skills are often seen to come before productive skills. Communication is an interactive activity. It necessitates the application of all abilities. All abilities are addressed and combined in a realistic fashion in the learning materials, which take a multi-layered skills approach. Listening and reading are receptive abilities, whereas speaking and writing are expressive. It is a set of useful abilities. It is believed that practice makes perfect, thus if you want to enhance a particular talent, you must practice it. You will need to master all four language abilities as a starting learner: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The fundamental purpose of teaching speaking skills is to improve communication efficiency. To master these four fundamental language abilities, you must immerse yourself in English at all times: at home, at work, and in your spare time. Well, one approach to achieve this is to consider the things we do on a daily basis and observe how they naturally involve various talents. The present article aims at examination of fundamental strategies for writing skills English in teacher-education through Pedagogy of English.*

**Keywords:** *Basic Language Skills, Writing Skills, Teaching Strategies, Teacher Education.*

The British brought the English to India. It arrived in India from another country. In India, English is taught as a second language. The topic of whether English should be taught as a foreign or second language emerges. The distinction between learning a foreign language and learning a second language must be understood. When learning a second language, students should be able to apply it in all aspects of their lives. Because English is spoken throughout India, it should be taught as a second language. A teacher's goal is to educate students and impart information about a subject at the most basic level. It's not just about regurgitating textbook information; it's about finding ways to make lessons more entertaining and involve students. Teachers must be able to pivot their lesson plans, making them more applicable to students by relating them to current events or customising classes to better fit different grade levels or learning styles.

Teachers must build lines of communication with students in addition to lecturing them on course materials. A teacher should be able to create trust with their students and use their communication skills to support students who are feeling alienated or bullied. The primary goals of English instruction are to equip students to use English in a global context, or in other words, to use English in all settings. Teachers and students should keep in mind that the proficiency necessary in a second language is nearly comparable to the proficiency required in the first. The examination of fundamental strategies for developing writing skills in English in teacher education through Pedagogy of English has been the focus of this work.

Scaffolding is a method by which teachers can build on a student's strengths, according to Vygotsky (1987). They should be contextual, social, and transient frameworks that enable successful learning in a particular academic topic, such as writing.

According to Theresa A. Dean-Rumsey, in their research paper titled "Improving the Writing Skills of At-Risk Students Through the Use of Writing Across the Curriculum and Writing Process Instruction," in classes where little direct instruction in writing strategies or process took place, time constraints of the curriculum or the teacher's philosophies or preferences may have prevented direct instruction in writing strategies or process. Teachers reported finding gains in students' usage of the writing process and writing skills in content-area classes where writing instruction was intensive, such as science. Jenny Cole and Jay Feng conducted study on 'Effective Strategies for Improving Writing Skills of Elementary English Language Learners,' and found that the strategies used with the experimental group were successful and effective because the kids' writing skills improved. According to the studies, writing is the most valuable talent in education. The reader is impressed by good handwriting. However, in the primary level of education, specific writing abilities must be taught.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- 1) To introduce the basic language skills.
- 2) To explore the Writing skills in English for day-to-day life.
- 3) To introduce teaching strategies for writing skills
- 4) To suggest recommendations for the writing skills in English.

The current research study's technique is carried out in phases of framework. It is detailed by the objectives that have been established. Teaching tactics are used to help students improve their writing abilities. Writing is one of the most difficult linguistic skills to master. It entails more than simply writing down individual signs, letters, the alphabet, or words and phrases. Writing necessitates the ability to produce language in chunks; it necessitates the careful structure of ideas and their logical progression, as well as the use of proper language and meaningful expression. We search for lexical range and syntactical correctness in a good piece of writing, as well as adequate format or layout development and content movement, and finally, style. When it comes to improving learners' writing skills, these are critical factors to consider. Choosing a subject, investigating ways to develop it, and designing organisational and style tactics are all part of the first step, 'thinking.' The second phase, doing, is referred to as drafting, while the third, 'doing again,' is referred to as 'revising.'

Writing is a difficult task. You're already selecting words and constructing phrases as you consider a topic-in other words, you're drafting. The thinking continues as you draught and revise: you come up with fresh ideas, realise you've gone down a dead end, and notice an implication you hadn't noticed before. It's beneficial to think of writing as a three-step process, in a broad and general sense. However, keep in mind that you do not proceed from one stage to the next in a smooth and steady manner. Back and forth you go. You will be focused on one phase of writing at a time while you work on a piece.

Every writing skill is broken down into three categories: The beginning of the writing process; an concept for writing that is in the middle and completion of the writing.

It is considered in the second middle notion, according to the exact writer. The author's message is considered in the final paragraph of the work. After successfully implementing these concerned teaching tactics, a learner would be able to recognize the significance of writing ability; understand the phases and steps of the writing process; the ability to distinguish between formal and informal language; comprehend the various techniques to teaching English and writing stages or writing process.

The scholars have put forth the strategies to use for writing English with command through commanding in the mother tongue first; reading as much as one possibly can in English; making a mental note or a set of running notes; keeping an English dictionary on your person or using online dictionary; improving grammatical skills; before and after writing, double-check spelling; keeping an English-language journal; knowing how to use a grammar checker on the internet; learning how to turn simple statements into more complex ones; learning how to put a paragraph together; making a rough outline and ready to switch writing styles and make corrections.

Because writing is the vehicle via which we communicate our ideas, thoughts, and feelings to others who are far away from us, it is the most important of the four abilities in learning a language. In reality, learning a language is incomplete without knowledge of how to write it. For a second language student, writing in the second language is utilised for certain purposes, while his mother tongue is used for all other purposes. The writing process is sometimes described as consisting of three main activities or groups of activities:

**Pre-writing-** Before putting pen to paper, a skilled writer considers two critical issues. A good writer prepares for writing at this time, but the amount of preparing varies, as we've seen. We may create a scale that ranges from somewhat spontaneous writing to really well-planned writing, and place different styles of writing in appropriate spots on the scale.

**Writing and Rewriting:** The second step of action is writing, which includes composing a first draught for proficient writers. There is a lot of recycling throughout the process, from planning to drafting, analyzing, re-planning, modifying, and so on. Good writers prioritize getting the material right first and worrying about spelling, punctuation, and grammar later.

**Editing-** After you've finished writing, go through it again and try to put yourself in the shoes of a reader to assess how well the ideas are expressed. The editing process corrects any flaws and makes the material as accessible as possible to the reader.

**Writing in a conversational tone:** Informal writing is similar to a casual conversation. It's acceptable to utilize slang, figures of speech, broken syntax, asides, and other features of casual writing. Short sentences are appropriate and often essential in informal writing to make a point. To shorten words, contractions and abbreviations are likely to be employed. When it comes to the difficulty of a notion, the author can show empathy for the reader and lead them through it.

**Writing in a Formal Style:** When writing in a formal style, a student must be as specific as possible when addressing each problem. Each significant topic should be introduced, developed, and concluded. Exclamation points, ellipsis, and other forms of emotive punctuation are not allowed unless they are quoted from another source in a formal writing style, which expresses a limited range of emotions. No contractions should be used to make words easier to grasp. Abbreviations must be written out completely. Formal writing is not a style of writing in which one can express oneself. The formal writer does not write in the first or second person and is uninterested in the subject.

**How to Write a Short Story:** Use your five senses to represent a fascinating location and time: sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell. Make use of descriptive adjectives that are vivid. Here are a few intriguing settings to consider: A deserted beach, a deserted classroom, and a crowded party are just a few instances. Use exciting words to characterize the characters in your tale. The main character confronts and then overcomes a substantial challenge in a typical story thread.

**Poem writing:** It is not necessary to have a license, education, or expertise to write poetry. To get their students began, all teachers should give them a pen and paper. Many poets discovered their calling after being compelled to write poetry as a child. However, there is a critical distinction to be made between writing poetry and writing good poetry. The art and craft of good poetry can be viewed from a variety of perspectives. Some people hold poetry to a high intellectual or literary standard. Others cherish the ability to express oneself in a creative and healthy way through poetry writing. In the sense that everything that comes from the heart or expresses the truth is good, all poetry is believed to be excellent. Even if the poem doesn't win any awards, the act of writing it has the power to improve one's mood, heal one's body, and even change one's life.

**Writing in a Journal:** Individual or even historical personalities' diaries often provide insight into their deepest thoughts and feelings. They are capable of offering an objective account of events that occurred at the time they were written. A teacher should encourage his students to keep diaries since it allows them to practice their writing skills on a daily basis, which will boost their confidence.

**Writing a Notice:** A notice is a brief piece of writing that is usually written in a formal tone. Schools utilize it to publicize events, celebrations, make pleas, and disseminate information. Writing an effective notice is a skill that can be learned through practice and by keeping a few fundamental factors in mind while doing so. A notice should contain all necessary information and be written in a clear, straightforward, and understandable manner.

**Writing an Article:** Article writing is an art form, and it is not for everyone. An article normally follows a systematic framework, which includes an introduction, a major body with a development of the topics, and a conclusion. The introduction's purpose is to simply introduce the subject, explain how you understand the question, and briefly outline how you propose to address it. The major body of the article contains the entire mental process.

**Dialogue Writing:** Dialogue writing requires dramatic strength since the writer must not only perceive both sides of a topic, but also place himself, so to speak, inside a fictional person in order for them to communicate their opposing viewpoints naturally. He has to take turns being each of them, seeing their point of view on the issue and reacting accordingly. A textual dialogue should be created in such a way that it appears natural and appropriate for the situation. As a result, crafting a dialogue necessitates meticulous planning. Making a rough framework of dialogue is always a good idea.

**Writing a Speech:** The basic speech format is straightforward. It is divided into three sections: an introduction, a body that contains the majority of the content, and a conclusion.

**Writing a Letter:** Letter writing is an integral part of an educated person's life. Everyone writes letters, whether they are personal, social, official, or business-related. Letters to relatives, friends, and acquaintances, as well as invites, fall within this category. Students should learn how to write letters that are both clear and readable. Applications, business letters, and letters to local civic officials and periodicals are examples of official letters. It's a good idea to think about the individual or audience to whom you're sending a letter.

**Report writing:** Report writing has just been added to the list of writing skills at various levels. A report is not the same as an essay, which is often overlooked. It entails the application of a variety of research techniques and methods for data gathering, tabulation, analysis, representation, and conclusion. As a result, a report is an objective explanation of events published in a predetermined format.

**Dictionary:** A good dictionary and the ability to utilize it are vital tools for reading independently, especially when studying a foreign language like English. After the learner has progressed through the stages of thoroughly glossed and meticulously graded readers, as well as simplified abridged novels, he will be asked to read unabridged texts, which are more realistic. Even if someone has been taught and encouraged to infer the meanings of words or expressions using contextual cues, this may not always be sufficient. It is at this point that knowledge of how to utilize a dictionary becomes useful. He may require aid and advice in reacting swiftly to the use of the alphabet's letter order as well as the catchphrases at the top of each page.

**Encyclopedia:** An encyclopedia is a valuable source of knowledge and information. By subject, an encyclopedia is organized alphabetically.

**Thesaurus:** A thesaurus is another reference book to have on hand. A thesaurus is a type of dictionary in which, given a concept, one can locate the word or words and phrases that best express the concept. This organisation is based on word meanings; it lists all synonyms in terms of meaning groups.

**Online Sources-** Online sources for the English language are now available. Teachers and students must learn about them in order to prepare, correct, and comprehend English writing skills.

### **Conclusions:**

Writing is a skill but for the perfect writing teacher have to see their students' progress from the primary level education. According to the findings of this survey, the majority of students believe that they learn best from teachers who have good communication skills or who use good communication skills

while dealing with students both inside and outside of the institution. Loss, J. (2000), who stated that effective communication skills increase the relationship between students and teachers by raising the degree of understanding between teacher and students, supports the current research study. Sng Bee. (2012) did a study that supported the current study by suggesting that effective communication skills are vital not just for teachers but also for students' academic achievement. According to the findings, effective teaching is dependent not only on the teacher's knowledge base, but also on the manner and style of the teacher's communication abilities. The findings of Cohort Nominat's (2016) study are also in line with the current study because he concluded that teaching is often seen as only fifty percent knowledge and fifty percent interpersonal or communication abilities. Similarly, a teacher does not need to be well-versed in all subjects, but he or she must be able to communicate effectively. The current research investigation discovered that effective communication skills are required not only for teachers, but also for pupils. David Andrade,(2015), came to the same conclusion, claiming that communication is the most important component influencing students' academic accomplishments. The author went on to say that strong communication is vital not only for teachers but also for students in order to advance academically. Using impressive words, writing style, handwriting and paragraph making gives identity of writer. It is known to us that teaching children to write is a complex process that includes many activities such as initial probing into experiences, structuring of ideas into meaningful sentences, and confident and easy presentation of thoughts and feelings by students.

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